



LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Aging Parents,

We love you. Sometimes we say things that annoy you because you don't want us to worry or to point out the losses, but you need to know that we do it because we care and we do worry. It is just as hard for us to express our concerns as it is for you to hear them.

There are some things you can do to help with this conversation:

1. Know when it is time to limit, and then to stop driving. We know this is one of the hardest things to do. Let us ride with you, and agree to an evaluation if it is recommended. We don't want you to hurt yourself or someone else.
2. Accept help when you need it. This might be help with the lawn, or a housekeeper, or some hours of a caregiver. It might be using a cane or walker to prevent falls, or hearing aides so you can stay active in conversations.
3. Get care when you need it. Poorly managed chronic conditions make everything worse. Take care of your physical and mental health. Eat a healthy diet.
4. Use the tools that are available. There are many available tools that help you keep track of appointments and medications, stay in touch with friends and family, and be safe in your home.
5. Stay connected. This may include in-person visits, letters, email or video chat.
6. Keep learning new things. Healthy aging requires care of physical health, mental challenge and social interaction.
7. Keep a sense of humor. As they say, aging isn't for sissies. But don't take your frustrations out on those who love you most!
8. Be willing to engage in conversation with us about our worries and your plans. Have a plan for when you need more care, which we hope you have saved up for. And a Plan B!
9. Have all your documents in order, and let us know where to find them. Talk to us about what you have written so we can be confident we are doing the right thing when the time comes. Also, try not to set up conflicts between us as siblings.
10. Start downsizing NOW! Don't leave us a five-bedroom house with garage, attic and basement to clear out later.

11. Let us help. We can help with technology, bill-paying, transportation, social connection, and so much more.

12. And then most of all, forgive us when we over-step. Let us know when we have, and let's work through it.

Thanks. You have taught us so much over our lifetime.

Love,

Your adult children