

The Care Clarity Workbook

A Guide to Making the Right Choice for Your Aging Parent

Section 1: The Safety Baseline

Objective: Determine if the home environment is safe or a hazard.

1. The 3-Minute Test

Imagine a fire or a power outage happens at 2:00 AM tonight. Can your parent get out of the house or call for help without assistance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I'm not sure (This is usually a "No")

2. The Medication Reality

How many times in the last month have you found pills on the floor, in the wrong bottle, or forgotten to have taken?

Answer: _____

3. Physical Hazards

List the last three "near misses" (stumbles, burns, forgotten stove, getting lost):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Section 2: The Thriving Scale

Objective: Determine if "Home" has become a "Cell."

On a scale of 1–10, how engaged is your parent with other people (outside of you)?

(1 = Total Isolation, 10 = Active Social Life)

[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]

What does their "average" Tuesday look like?

Hours spent watching TV: _____

Hours spent talking to friends: _____

Hours spent outside the house: _____

Section 3: The Caregiver's Gut-Check

Objective: Acknowledge the cost of staying the course.

Complete these sentences with the first thought that comes to mind:

- If I keep doing this for another six months, my health will...

- The thing I miss most about being just a "son/daughter" is...

- I feel guilty because I think moving them means...

Section 4: Comparing the "What-Ifs"

Compare your current fears with the reality of a professional care setting.

1. Physical Safety

- The Fear at Home: I'm constantly on edge. I worry every time the phone rings that they've fallen, left the stove on, or wandered out the front door.
- The Reality in Care: There is a 24/7 professional team on-site with emergency pull cords, fall-detection technology (sometimes), and secured exits.

2. Social Connection

- The Fear at Home: They are lonely. Their world has shrunk to four walls, and I am their only source of entertainment and social life.
- The Reality in Care: They are surrounded by peers. There are daily activities, group meals, and social events designed to keep their brain active.

3. Nutrition & Health

- The Fear at Home: They aren't eating right. They rely on "tea and toast" or frozen meals because cooking is too dangerous or exhausting.
- The Reality in Care: They receive three chef-prepared, nutritionally balanced meals a day, plus snacks and hydration checks.

4. Your Relationship

- The Fear at Home: I am drowning. I've become their nurse, housekeeper, and medication manager. I'm losing the "child" role to the "caregiver" role.
- The Reality in Care: You get to be the son/daughter again. You can visit to share a meal, look at photos, and enjoy their company while the facility handles the labor of care.

Which of these four points hit you the hardest? Describe why.

Section 5: Your "Next 48 Hours" Action Plan

"If you've gone through all of these sections and feel a care facility may be the right choice for your loved one, don't look at the mountain.

Just take these steps:

1. **The Google Search:** List 3 facilities within a 15-20 minute drive of your home or work.
 - _____
2. **The Call:** Call one of them today and ask: "Do you have an opening for a tour this week?"
3. **The Conversation:** Who is the one person you need to talk to about this (Sibling, Spouse, Parent)?
 - Name: _____

Closing Message:

Guilt is a feeling, not a fact. Making a safe choice for your parent is the ultimate act of love.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this workbook is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as medical, legal, or financial advice. Every family's situation is unique; please consult with a qualified healthcare professional, geriatric care manager, or elder law attorney before making significant care transitions. The use of this checklist does not guarantee a specific outcome, and the author assumes no liability for decisions made based on the content of this guide.