

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, creating a modern, dynamic feel. The central area is a clean, white space where the text is placed.

Promoting Independence

Tips for Promoting Independence

- ▶ Create a Daily or Weekly Schedule
- ▶ Make Time for Mental Health
- ▶ Plan for the Future
- ▶ Safety Proofing the Home
- ▶ Find Ways to Relax
- ▶ Don't Let Age Define your Life
- ▶ Exercise on a Daily Basis
- ▶ Connect with Friends
- ▶ Find New Hobbies

Create a Daily or Weekly Schedule

- ▶ When people get older, they may feel like they no longer have a purpose.
- ▶ Common reasons include their children growing up and moving out, they retired from work, and/or they lost a spouse.
- ▶ To help them have a reason for getting up each morning, it's a great idea to create a daily or weekly schedule. This can include eating breakfast, reading the mail, going for a walk, or even calling a close friend.

Make Time for Mental Health

- ▶ Older adults may find that they have more doctor appointments to go to, which is necessary for staying healthy. While these appointments are important, remember to make time for your mental health.
- ▶ Everyone needs time to relax, spend time with friends, and do something they enjoy. Fun hobbies may include reading a favorite book, gardening, or learning a new recipe

Plan for the Future

- ▶ It's never too late to make important plans about your future. You can meet with a financial planner or lawyer, who can help guide you on these life decisions. As you plan on your future, consider the following factors:
 - The type of healthcare you would like to receive
 - Choosing your power of attorney
 - Choosing your health care proxy
 - Choosing the types of home care and assistance you would like to receive if needed
- ▶ Keep in mind that doing this will also significantly reduce the stress and pressure on your loved one's that would be in charge of making these important healthcare decisions if you hadn't planned it out already.

Safety Proofing the Home

- ▶ To maintain your independence for as long as possible, it's important to create a safer home environment. This involves minor changes to your home that will make it safer to get around on your own.
- ▶ For example, you may consider installing non-slip floors, handrails, and using a shower bench in your bathroom. To make it easier to see at night, make sure to use nightlights in the hallways and bathrooms. You may also want to consider wearing a safety alarm, which is a nice safety net if you were to fall.
- ▶ As you continue to age, you may find that living on your own is no longer the safest option. That doesn't mean you have lost your independence though. You can move into a senior community home where you can still live at home, but receive assistance with housekeeping duties.

Find Ways to Relax

- ▶ It can be stressful at any age, which includes older adults too. It's important to find effective, safe ways to help you relax. For many seniors, they find that meditation and practicing mindfulness are excellent ways to reduce their anxiety, depression, and overall stress. With less stress, it's much easier to maintain one's independence.

Don't Let Your Age Define Your Life

- ▶ When you stay active, you are less likely to feel your actual age.
- ▶ This includes spending time with friends, exercising, making decisions about their lives, and practicing mindfulness.
- ▶ Feeling younger is a great benefit because it will help you maintain your mental and physical health.

Exercise on a Daily Basis

- ▶ It's recommended that you talk with your primary care doctor to determine if you are healthy enough for regular exercise.
- ▶ If you are, ask them for specific suggestions for how you can stay fit. By exercising on a daily basis, it will be easier to maintain your balance, mobility, and weight.
- ▶ You will also reduce your risks of falls, which is a main reason that causes seniors to lose their independence

Connect with Friends

- ▶ While family and caregivers play a key role in helping you stay healthy and maintain your independence, it's essential that you make time to connect with friends.
- ▶ By socializing, it will help keep your brain healthy and help reduce your risk of mental illnesses later on. Who knew spending time with others was so important?

Find New Hobbies

- ▶ Aging can lead to new challenges regarding what you do for fun. If you can no longer participate in certain hobbies, this is a great opportunity to find a new hobby. This will help give you a purpose and likely lead to making new friends!
- ▶ We hope you enjoyed this week's article about tips for promoting seniors' independence. It's never easy getting older, but you can still enjoy life and maintain your independence for as long as possible. By using these lifestyle tips, you can take the steps to maintain your long-term health and wellness too.