

Struggling to Choose Senior Living for a Parent?



Don't Feel Guilty

The decision to move a parent to senior living isn't easy. In fact, it's one of the hardest decisions you'll ever make, and with it comes a slew of emotions. One minute, you may feel relieved knowing you can go back to being their son or daughter again.

Next, you may feel anxious and guilty about their move and unsure of what to expect.

If you're feeling guilty about helping to choose senior living for your parent, you are not alone.

Guilt is common among adult children, and while it's a natural reaction to a difficult decision, there are things you can do to relieve your anxiety. Whether you're still considering senior living or your parent has already moved, below are a few common concerns and how you can reframe them to give yourself peace of mind.

“I wasn't able to take care of them. I've failed them.” Self-blame is common among adult children who decide to help choose a senior living community for a parent, especially for children who acted as caregiver before the move. Perhaps you feel like you weren't able to provide sufficient care at home.

This sort of **negative** self-talk might sound like,

“If only I'd been less selfish, I could have spent more time taking care of Mom,” or ***“My parents raised me for 18 years and I couldn't repay them.”***

The reality is that many older adults need 24/7, specialized care as they age, especially as health issues become more complex. Meanwhile, you are in your 40s or 50s, still working a full-time job, are busy saving for retirement and still caring for your own children. You likely don't have the time or resources to provide 24-hour care. Needing more assistance is a natural part of aging that even the best caregiver can't prevent — or handle alone. It can take a dedicated team of professionals to provide care. **Your decision to move your parent to senior living isn't a failure.** It's helping to ensure that your parent gets the full, undivided care they need and deserve.

“I should have invited them to live with me instead.”

While many people choose to care for their aging parents in their own home, the truth is, being a live-in caregiver is a tough job, and it's not for everyone. While caring for a parent can be extremely rewarding, it can also be extremely stressful. This is especially true for those who have demanding careers, personal health

concerns, small living spaces, or limited financial resources.

Being honest with yourself about the time and resources you have available is one of the most loving things you can do for a parent. Senior living can alleviate the strain on your relationship by ensuring that both of your needs are met, so you can continue to grow and enjoy being together as they age.

“I’m afraid Mom is lonely. She should be living with family, not strangers.”

You might feel guilty about your loved one moving away from friends and family to live in an unfamiliar place. But senior living communities are exactly that — a community. If you’ve never visited a community, you might be surprised to learn that senior living is often more like a college campus than a hospital.

Communities are designed to keep seniors active and as independent as possible with fun social calendars, caring, round-the-clock staff, home-like living spaces and new neighbors who are eager to make friends.

“Dad isn’t in the best health. He needs care, but he needs his family too.”

As parents age, health issues will naturally arise. When they do, you might feel guilty about moving them into a senior_living community where you’re not always there to help. Moving to_senior living may not only lift the burden of caring for someone alone, it may also help your parent get the care that fits their needs.

Remind yourself that you’re doing your best. **If you’re struggling with guilt, anxiety or sadness about moving your parents to a senior living community, just remember this: you have their best interest at heart.** At the end of the day, you’re simply trying to make sure they get the care and attention they deserve.