

# Supporting Your Parents in Their Next Chapter

Top Five Roadblocks  
and How to Move Past Them



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Are you worried about what the next chapter of your parents' lives might look like? If you want to help ensure that they have the support they need and the quality of life they deserve, and you'd like to help them plan for the future, BUT you're having trouble getting traction, you're not alone! Regardless of the obstacles you're running into, they don't have to keep you from taking action.

**There are so many things to do and so much to consider – it makes sense that you're feeling overwhelmed and don't know where to start.** There are lots of checklists out there, and lots of guides providing direction on what needs to be done to prepare. That's not what this is. Because many, many people have those guides but still feel stuck. They pick up the checklist and know they need to work on it, but then they set it aside for the time being. In most cases, it's because of one of five common roadblocks.

As a family transition coach, I know that there's absolutely no advice I can give that will work for everyone, all the time. No one's plan is going to look exactly like anyone else's. But when we're talking about our aging parents, it's important to make sure there IS a plan. This plan may (and most likely will) change over time, but it gives us a starting point. For many people, finding that starting point is challenging.

The following five common roadblocks – thoughts and beliefs that are weighing us down -- often keep us from taking that first step. Considering which roadblock(s) may be holding us back and learning to look at our situation from a different perspective can help prepare us to move forward.



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# 1

## You're Kicking Yourself for Not Having Made a Plan Sooner.

It's so easy to wish that we'd handled things differently – to wish that we'd been able to convince our parents to move years ago when they were healthier and adjusting to a new environment might have been easier. We may wish that we'd talked with them about their wishes before they started to decline cognitively, or that we'd coordinated with our siblings to make sure that everyone was on board with the plan.

But we can't turn back the clock. While it's true that our parents' situation may have felt more manageable if plans were already in place, it's NOT too late! Each day presents new opportunities for taking action, and it can be helpful to take a deep breath and tell ourselves, "Yep, with the benefit of hindsight, I could have been more proactive. But I've been doing the best I can, and I'm focusing now on what makes the most sense moving forward." **No matter where we are, looking forward is always more helpful than looking back.**



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# 2

## Your Hands Are Tied Because Your Parents Are Refusing to Talk About the Future or Your Siblings Disagree With You (Or Both!).

It's really tough when we want to put things in place that we know will benefit our parents, but we run into resistance. It's important to remember that this isn't an all or nothing situation. Our only options are NOT to either take care of things as we think they should be handled or to throw in the towel. We may need to acknowledge that, "this isn't ideal, but there's only so much I can do at this point." We can continue to have conversations, planting seeds and revisiting discussions over time, we can research and explore options, we can identify resources, and **we can feel good about the fact that we'll be prepared to step in with solutions when others are on board or when the situation necessitates a change.**



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# 3

## You Simply Don't Have Time to Take Care of Everyone and Deal With Everything That Needs to Be Done.

In almost every family, there's one person who feels like they're bearing the brunt of their parents' care. When we find ourselves in that position and are already busy juggling the multiple demands of career and family, adding our parents' care can feel overwhelming. We don't have time to take a breath, let alone make a plan. So instead, we take care of the most critical issues as they arise, essentially putting out one fire after another, but never gaining any ground. We know we can't keep up this pace, but we don't see any alternative. Others in our family are either unwilling to help out, unavailable, or incapable.

This doesn't mean we have to try to do it all – we still have options. Are we doing things that are no longer absolutely necessary? Can we ask friends, neighbors, or members of our parents' faith community for help? Could we hire a professional -- perhaps a geriatric care manager, a daily money manager, a housekeeper, a home health aide, a companion, or a driver? **It's simply not possible to do everything on our own, and it's OK to ask for help.**



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# 4

## It's Impossible to Make a Plan When You Have No Idea What the Future Holds in Store for Your Parents.

It would be so much easier to make plans if we knew exactly what to expect! Investing time and energy into a plan that, ultimately, may not be viable, can feel like wasted effort. But tweaking an existing plan is a lot easier than starting from scratch. Since none of us has a crystal ball, the best we can do is to use the available information and resources to make reasonable decisions. It's tempting to delay doing anything until we have more facts, and it's natural to fear making the wrong choice.

The truth is, it's impossible to know with certainty what will be in the best interest of our parents. Professionals can give us a good sense of how effective a particular course of action may be in addressing a condition or situation, and we can consider all of the potential benefits and drawbacks. In order to make an accurate assessment, we need to be very clear on our goals and priorities. **Evaluating options with this end goal in mind can make it easier to accept that, while there may not be a "perfect solution," there could be multiple "good options."**



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# 5

## Thinking About Your Parents' Future Is Just Too Sad and Depressing. You Don't Have the Emotional Energy to Go There.

Watching loved ones struggle with health challenges is sad. There's no way around that. Losing them gradually to cognitive decline can be heartbreaking. It's unfair and depressing, and it's natural for us to want to avoid all of the uncomfortable feelings that we're faced with when we think about it. But the feelings will be there whether we acknowledge them or not. We can try to put things out of our mind and delay having conversations, but we end up spending a lot of energy trying NOT to worry.

When we focus instead on accepting our emotions as normal and understandable, we may initially experience more intense discomfort, but this opens up space for us feel other things as well. We find that we can feel sad, annoyed, resentful, guilty, or frustrated, and ALSO feel grateful, hopeful, calm, content, or confident. **Identifying and accepting our feelings allows us to begin planning for the future without our thoughts being monopolized by all of the uncomfortable emotions.**



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# Free Discovery Call

Discover the Secret to Helping Your Parents Make a Plan – Despite Any of the Roadblocks You May Be Encountering!

The future is filled with uncertainty, and that can be scary. As our parents age, we often find ourselves caught off guard by having to play an uncomfortable role that we feel ill-equipped to handle. Trying to figure things out alone can be overwhelming. Because we're so enmeshed in the situation, it may be difficult to clearly identify priorities, to recognize our options, or to determine the best plan moving forward.

That all changes when you have a professional by your side to help you move forward, and with my Free Discovery Call that's exactly what you'll get.

- We'll talk about where your parents are now and how their situation is impacting your life.
- We'll create a clear picture of everything that's on your plate, exploring what's working, what's not, and what's sustainable for the future.
- Then I'll share insight about changes that will not only make your life feel manageable now, but will also help you feel more prepared for the future.

**SCHEDULE NOW**

Click the button below to schedule your free session.

**BOOK YOUR  
SESSION**