

4 Ways to Help Your Parent Adjust to Assisted Living

Use this resource to help guide you and your parent through the physical and emotional transition to a senior living community. This info is not exhaustive and should not be used in place of professional guidance.

1 Don't yield too quickly

Experts suggest it can take as long as three to six months to adjust to assisted living. If your parent is unhappy in their new surroundings, encourage them to be specific about their problems, speak with the community's staff about introducing solutions and seek out events that appeal to their interests.

2 Resist being a helicopter

Instead of frequent in-person visits, consider weekly phone calls and occasional lunch or dinner meetups, encouraging close friends and family to do the same. Giving your parent space will provide them with more time to make new friends, participate in events and settle into community living.

3 Make their home feel like home

Help your parent decorate their new apartment with cherished items, such as a favorite piece of furniture, heirlooms and family photos. Other ways include going shopping together for finishing touches on their new space and requesting if a favorite comfort food can be added to the daily menu.

4 Expect good days and bad days

Adjusting to assisted living will take time, but remind your parent – and yourself – that it's better to have an occasional bad day in a safe, caring environment than being at home by themselves. The transition to community living can be a difficult process, but rest assured the challenging days are temporary.

Take care of yourself - Giving your parent all your free time can lead to caregiver burnout. A move to assisted living allows you to spend more quality time together, but if you find yourself experiencing feelings like anxiety, insomnia or guilt, consider seeking guidance from counseling or a support group.