

Dear Age Sage,

My mother lives alone in Pennsylvania since my father died 6 months ago. My brothers and I are worried about our mom being alone. I am trying to convince her to move to New Hampshire to live with me. We plan to build an “in-law” apartment for her. She insists she wants to stay in Pennsylvania. How can I convince her to move?

Worried Daughter

Dear Worried Daughter:

I know you have the best intentions for your mom’s safety and well being, after all, look what she did for you all those years; now it’s your turn to give back to her...

Here are some quotes from parents that have moved from their homes to live with or near their children:

1. “I know John meant well when he suggested I sell the house and move to another state to live with him. I just moved, and I’m alone all day since they both work long hours. I’m well cared for but I’m in the middle of nowhere, with no car, and no friends.”
2. “It’s great to be closer to family. I miss my old home but I’m starting to make a new life for myself and now, I can’t imagine being anywhere else.”
3. “I feel like a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel”, like I am a constant guest. I can’t relax while I am living in someone else’s house.”
4. “My daughter moved me to a nice retirement community near her. I don’t see her every day because she works and has her own family. It’s great to see her and her children but it sometimes feels like she is running over to see me because she has to. Still, I’m glad I moved.”
5. “It’s nice for me to be close to my family but I miss my friends, driving the familiar route to do my errands, my church, and the community where I lived with my husband for 30 years. I miss driving by the ball fields where I can remember the good times standing and watching all of those games.”

Before you “insist” that your parent give up their home and community to be nearer to you, take the time to consider all your options with them:

- Get Lifeline personal emergency response service while you decide your next steps so she is safe at home. Call 1-800-LIFELINE or [www.lifeline.com](http://www.lifeline.com)
- Find an organization that will be your eyes and ears, by checking in on them and/or providing some support. Call your local Council on Aging. [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org)
- If you’d like to speak to someone for advice, contact a Geriatric Case Manager in your area. [www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org)
- If you feel someone really should not live alone at home, consider an Independent Living or Assisted Living community near home or have them

come up to visit facilities in your area, and then let them decide based on preferences. [www.alfa.org](http://www.alfa.org)

- Does your parent's current house lend itself to having a friend who is also living alone move in - shared living is an up and coming concept for all of us as we age.

Bottom line is, "There's no place like home." (Dorothy wasn't kidding...) but you can help establish the right new home setting if you take your time to consider a number of options.

**TIP:**

Every time you are about to SPEAK to a parent, in an attempt to INSTRUCT, OVERPROTECT or SCOLD, fast forward to the day when you are that older adult, about to hear from your own grown up child what you are about to say, and see if you still want:

- to say it
- to say it the way you are about to say it
- to say it in the tone you are about to say it
- to say it in front of the whoever is about to also hear it

Until next month,

The Age Sage

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