

Learn more at www.AgingWisdom.com

Do you have “helicopter kids”?



Do you feel defensive when your kids visit? Notice them exchanging knowing glances when you don't recall a date or name? Perhaps you feel reluctant to approach them when you do have concerns, because they overreact. So you keep your distance. That isn't good, either.

It's a fine line between feeling that your adult children love you and want to protect you, and feeling smothered or

even invalidated by them in terms of your competence and self-sufficiency.

Noted geriatrician and author Atul Gawande, MD, observes that while adult children worry most about safety, older adults worry about autonomy and independence. Put another way: Adult children think in terms of “caring for.” Older adults prefer to be “cared about.”

How to find a middle ground. Ideally, you and your children work together as a team to maximize your independence and control of your life while also realistically addressing the challenges of aging. The essential ingredient is candid communication that respects each other's concerns.

The uncomfortable truth is that adult children often are the first to notice a real problem. But they don't have the expertise to put the signs in perspective. You, like most older adults, may not see the problem because you have accommodated, perhaps unconsciously, over time.

Start with an Aging Life Care™ Manager facilitating a conversation. Families who work with an Aging Life Care Manager find that an objective assessment of an expert in aging gives both you—the older adult—and your children a better understanding of how serious any concerns may or may not be. Everyone comes away with a better context for understanding normal aging.

An Aging Life Care Manager can provide knowledge and resources, as well as supportive facilitation. This typically results in a more productive discussion of future scenarios. The earlier you have this conversation with your kids, the better. You don't want to have it in the middle of a health crisis. Nor do you want things to escalate to the point that you are avoiding your children.

Create a plan for peace of mind. Working with an Aging Life Care Manager, you and your family can develop proactive plans for addressing potential problems while simultaneously ensuring that you get to live life on your terms.

**Would you like help talking with your kids about aging?
Give us a call at 206-456-5155.**



Aging Wisdom —
Your Experts in
Aging Well

206-456-5155

Aging Wisdom supports individuals and families in King and south Snohomish Counties as they plan for aging.



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