

# Retirement Can Be a Bed of Roses...

## ...and a thorny proposition.

Change can be exciting and scary. Remember what life was like when you tied the knot? How about when you learned you were going to have a baby? Or, when you changed jobs? When your kids moved out?

Most people face many changes along life's journey. A 2012 article in the *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy* noted retirement tends to include both expected and unexpected events, and the potential to create issues that may not have been anticipated.<sup>1</sup>

Here are a few suggestions that may help you avoid some of the thorns:

- **Before deciding whether/when to retire, take a leave of absence.** “The decision to retire is one of the most important decisions that people make in their lifetimes, especially if they...find meaning and satisfaction in their work and their friendships with coworkers. By taking a year's leave of absence, those pondering retirement can get a taste of absence from the workplace before making their decision to retire.”<sup>1</sup>
- **Work through marital concerns together.** Adjusting to new roles, renegotiating domestic duties, and resolving retirement-related identity issues can take some time, but it's worth the effort. AARP opined, “...The third act can be absolutely terrific. There are going to be some hard thumps, too. Maybe a touch of death at the end. And that may be easier if you're with someone who knows you pretty well. Do what you must, but hanging on to family should be your default.”<sup>2</sup>
- **Stay in touch with friends.** This is particularly important if you relocate. While new friends can be wonderful, friends who have a shared history offer a rich social network that can provide support when it's most needed.<sup>1</sup>
- **Look for engagement and purpose.** Find opportunities to participate in activities you enjoy. Learn more about new topics. Master old hobbies. Help raise your grandchildren. Decide to become a mentor, volunteer, or an entrepreneur. You know what suits you best. Follow your passions.<sup>1</sup>

It may take time to adjust to life in retirement, and that's okay. Don't be disappointed if retirement isn't smooth sailing from the very start. As Frank Lloyd Wright once said, “You have to go wholeheartedly into anything in order to achieve anything worth having.”<sup>3</sup>

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ969555.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2016/emotional-brain-health-happiness.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/486869?ref=anything-worth-having>

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