



PRESBYTERIAN
SENIOR LIVING

Your Retirement, Your Way:

How Senior Living Communities Support Personal Identity and Independence



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Introduction

Moving to a senior living community doesn't mean giving up individuality or independence. In fact, with the variety of options available today, older adults can create a retirement that meets their unique needs and interests.

For many, that means finding a community that promotes independence and personal freedom while also providing safety and security. It allows older adults to thrive and gives their loved ones peace of mind.

Inside this Guide

From making your space your own to understanding the amenities and services offered, this guide will give you an objective look at modern community life. It will also put to rest outdated ideas and popular misconceptions about retirement living.



Making a New Space Feel Like Home

When you are moving to a new place, especially if it is far from your current house, it might be tempting to purge everything and start over. In most situations, that might not be the best idea. Bringing part of home with you can help make the transition feel less emotional. Here are a few ways you can make your apartment or villa in a senior living community feel more like home.

Bring personal belongings.

If possible, bring a few pieces of your favorite furniture with you. You won't be able to bring everything, so choose items that are most important to you and will provide comfort and continuity. The same applies to photos, artwork, and keepsakes.

Some examples might be:

- A favorite recliner or love seat
- Family photos
- Handmade quilts or heirlooms
- Personal décor or small collections

Design a personalized living space.

Senior living communities typically allow residents to make their space their own. While there might be some rules surrounding safety, fire hazards, and accessibility, you are generally free to decorate according to personal taste. Communities usually allow flexibility in room arrangements and encourage self-expression through décor.

Maintain daily routines.

Another tip for making this transition go smoothly is to try to maintain some of your old routines while also taking advantage of the lifestyle programs offered at a senior living community.

Prospective residents are often concerned that they will be required to participate in programs and activities. The reality is senior living communities are designed to support independence. You have the freedom to choose how you spend your days, including what time you get up, what you eat, and which activities (if any) you participate in.

Pets as Family: Why Pet-Friendly Living Matters

For many people, pets are part of the family. Senior living communities recognize and understand the important role they play in people's lives. They provide companionship, offer a sense of purpose, and help reduce stress. Here's what you should know about pets and senior living.

Understand pet-friendly policies in senior living.

Many communities welcome cats, dogs, and small pets, such as small, caged birds and fish in an aquarium. Most have amenities that support pet care, including:

- Walking areas and green space
- Pet stations (e.g., water bowls or fountains)
- Dog walking service for an additional fee

Inquire about rules and extra fees.

When you are searching for a senior living community that's the best fit for your needs, be sure to ask about pet policies. You'll likely need to place a pet deposit. Most communities also have size and breed restrictions.



Continuing Hobbies, Interests and Passions

One question prospective residents often have is how they will spend their days after a move to a senior living community. They wonder if there will be opportunities to learn new hobbies without giving up old ones. Fortunately, life plan communities like PSL are known for encouraging both.

Stay connected to lifelong interests.

Residents are encouraged to continue activities they love and reconnect with interests they let slide while they were busy with a career or raising a family. In many cases, access to community programs and activities makes it easier to thrive during retirement.

Examples of hobbies you might find on the community calendar include:

- Gardening
- Painting
- Cooking
- Woodworking
- Music
- Reading groups



Take advantage of opportunities to learn something new.

An important part of healthy aging is protecting brain health. One way is to keep learning new hobbies and skills. Some avenues for doing that in a PSL community include:

- Current events programs
- Art workshops
- Book clubs
- Technology training
- Lifelong learning opportunities

Maintain a sense of purpose.

Finally, it's essential to remember that staying actively engaged in the world around you provides purpose. That is something older adults may struggle to find during retirement. It's important for both emotional and mental health. Participating in community activities, including on-campus volunteer work, also builds confidence.



Independence with the Right Level of Support

Encourage self-sufficiency.

Encouraging self-sufficiency means supporting residents in maintaining control over their daily schedules and personal choices while promoting independence and autonomy. Residents have the freedom to participate in activities according to their interests and preferences, allowing them to remain engaged in meaningful ways. They are encouraged to come and go independently, fostering a sense of confidence, dignity, and personal responsibility while preserving their quality of life.

Get support that enhances freedom.

Providing residents with accessible living spaces, emergency response systems, and assistance in areas such as housekeeping, meal preparation, transportation, and medication management supports safety without sacrificing freedom.

Personalized care plans tailored to each individual's unique needs and preferences help ensure that they receive the right level of support to maintain as much independence as possible. That's another key to successful aging.

All of these support services reduce the stress and burden of daily tasks, allowing residents to spend more time enjoying activities, hobbies, and social opportunities that are meaningful to them.





**View Our
Community List**

Conclusion

Senior living communities play an important role in supporting personal identity and independence by providing a balance of assistance and autonomy that allows older adults to maintain a high quality of life. By fostering independence, promoting meaningful engagement, and respecting each resident's unique preferences, senior living communities create an environment where older adults can age with dignity, confidence, and a continued sense of fulfillment.

**Call a PSL location to learn more
and set up a private tour at your convenience!**



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