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Have you ever thought . . . "I'm Not Ready Yet!"

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a little bit of help. The Lamorinda Village offers a way to stay engaged, which is extremely important to one's quality of life and health status and allows a place to engage in volunteerism that also extends life and has shown to reduce pain.

While the monthly fees are very affordable, many people say they are "not ready yet." My answer is this: All of us over the age of 65 should participate in the Lamorinda Village. Together, we need to build the community we want in the future. It is a small monthly expense for the "peace of mind" we each need for that time of "need." This is especially true for all of us who want to age our way, and in our own homes.

For more information go to www.LamorindaVillage.org. There are Villages all over the country, so if you have family in other areas, go to www.vtvnetwork.org and search for the location nearest them.

Being "ready" is a progressive process. We usually move between being open to change to just a little further into willingness, when we see the possibilities of what could happen. Being prepared can free us from some anxiety or worry.

What is it that makes us fiercely independent individuals say we are not ready for something? Remember when we were young and playing with friends or on the playground we heard the saying, "Get ready, get set, go"?

Once we pass age 65 or 70, we may find that managing life requires more dependence than we want to admit; our mindset is "not ready" for that. Being ready does not necessarily mean "go" - it means getting your ducks in a row. It is the "get set" part of the equation - not necessarily the need to take immediate action, but to make plans for those "what ifs."

In reality, we can't be ready for everything or all of life's challenges; if we did, our sense of adventure and exploration might be stifled. However, there are some individuals, me included, who procrastinate about signing up for services, or finalizing legal documents or even contemplating moving because we are "not ready yet"!

I have heard over the years many adult children of aging parents say that their elderly parents (in their 80s or 90s) are not "ready" for a caregiver or even moving to a supportive senior housing community, yet the parent is calling more often with vague needs for family support or help in understanding an important document. When these calls happen more frequently, it is usually a sign that it is time to "get set" - maybe not "go" - and to start to put together a plan for eventual support, ever so gradually.

In Lamorinda, we have a wonderful grassroots program called the "Lamorinda Village" which is an inexpensive way to get support when you need just

Remember we are odd mortal creatures and usually resist when others make decisions for us, even when they are good decisions and in our best interest. Making changes can be scary, but preparing for change can be a way to stay in control and have life our way.

If you want to make a suggestion for someone else, be sure to use "I messages" - saying what you are concerned about, not what they should do. Let the other respond, validate their feelings and ask if they would like some options to think about.

Preparedness is a virtue - build a support system to have life as you wish. Get ready, get set - and go.

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