

RETIREMENT:

Secure Your Dreams

Picture Your Future

When you picture your future retirement, you may see hundreds of possibilities. If you start planning today, you can customize one of those pictures and work toward securing your dreams for the future. Ask yourself the following questions.



What do you want your retirement to look like?

- Do you plan to travel?
- Do you plan to volunteer your time for a special cause?
- Do you have a second career in mind?
- Do you want to continue in your current job and slow down, just a bit?
- Will you be caring for grandchildren or elderly parents?
- Will you take classes or enjoy sport activities?

The preceding questions and others that follow will help you shape your plan and identify what's important to you. Then you can begin to identify specific goals you would like to achieve.

If you write your goals down and make the necessary plans, you are more likely to achieve those goals. If you include "to-be-completed-by" dates in your plan, you will find those dates to be helpful for your long-term success. Remember to review your plan annually.

When do you plan to retire?

- At what age do you plan to begin retirement?
- What is your life expectancy?

Do you expect to retire at age 55 and live to age 95 without working again, or do you plan to work until age 70?

How you approach saving for retirement will depend on when you plan to retire and how long you expect to live. For people who are in the 40 to 60 age range in the year 2000, life expectancy is approximately 80 years. Providing they live to age 65, they can expect to live another 20, 30, or more years.

Where do you want to live?

- Do you plan to live in your current house? Will it be paid for when you retire?
- Are you thinking of moving to another state for all or part of the year? If you are thinking of living somewhere new, have you visited during several different seasons to see if you would like the changes?
- How might your housing needs change over time? If you need to use a walker or wheelchair, will your current home accommodate this change?

How does your family fit the picture?

- How close by are your children and other people who are important to you?
- How often will you plan to visit them?
- Where will they stay when they visit you?

As you age, will you need help from these important people? If so, will you plan to move closer to them at some point in your life?

Do you plan to travel?

- How often and where would you like to travel?
- What type of activities and accommodations interest you?
- How much will travel, activities, and accommodations cost?

Some travelers work their way around the world. They trade their skills and talents for opportunities to travel or pursue other interests. Think about the possibilities.

When many of us think about retirement, we think about the early years when our health is

good and there is a whole new world to explore. It is important to think about what you want to do during those years. Likewise it is important to think about the later years.

How's your health?

- Does your family have a history of certain health conditions?
- What are the chances that these or other health concerns will affect you?
- Can you find ways today to reduce your chances of these conditions occurring?
- Can you pursue activities such as exercise, cross country skiing, bowling, or golf that can be enjoyed today and will provide a healthy lifestyle in the future?

Planning for later life means thinking about all aspects of life. Ask your doctor about the health outlook for your future.

What changes might you need to make as time goes on?

- What activities of daily life might become more difficult over time?
- Who will perform daily tasks for you? For example, will you need help to climb stairs in your current home or maneuver through bathroom doorways too narrow for a walker or wheelchair? Would you need to leave or remodel your current home to remain independent?
- If you could no longer drive, how could you access transportation to visit the doctor, buy groceries, take care of personal needs, and participate in the activities you enjoy? Will you be reluctant to arrange transportation a day or two ahead or walk a short distance to be picked up?

For those of us who drive, it is hard to realize how dependent we are on our vehicles. Spend some time thinking about how you might get around, if you can no longer drive. Ask how people who do not have a driver's license get around in your community. Take time to visit with someone who does not drive.



Activities like shopping in the winter, replacing a shingle that blows off the roof, cooking on days you don't feel well, cleaning the house, mending clothing, and other tasks you currently do may become more than you can handle. Spend some time thinking about the everyday activities you may take for granted. Ask older family members how they manage.

Who will you depend on for help later in retirement?

- Where do your adult children or significant people in your life live?
- How much time can they devote to caring for you?
- What other responsibilities do they have?
- Are you willing to move to live near adult children or others important to you?
- How would you feel about living with your children or having them live with you?
- How would living together change your relationship with your adult child, grandchild, or other special person?
- How do you feel about living in a retirement community, assisted living, or a nursing home? How much will it cost you to live? Have you visited any senior living facilities lately?

Consider your goals, wishes, wants, and desires as the beginning point in planning your retirement years.

If you need money, what will you do?

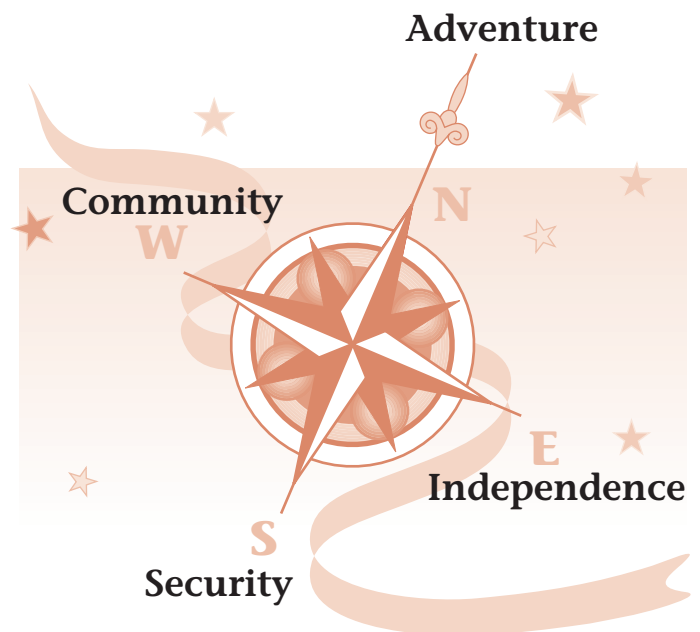
- Are you willing to sell assets? For example:
 - Would you sell your current home and live somewhere else if it would be less costly?
 - Would you sell other investments?

- Would you sell your business or farm?
- Are family members planning to continue the operation of your business? Consider:
 - How much money can you expect from the operation each year?
 - Can the business generate enough money to support two or more families?
- Would you be able to borrow money from family members?

Navigating the sea of choices will be easier in retirement if you spend time now thinking about the possibilities. It is up to you. Ask for additional titles in this series to learn more about finances in retirement.

Source:

Vital and health statistics. Series 22, Data from the national vital statistics system / National Center for Health Statistics. Published No. 1-No. 15., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service: for sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. Also, see Web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/Default.htm>



This is one in a series of publications written to challenge your thinking about retirement. You can also find several other Iowa State University Extension publications that can help you design your future. Ask at your local county office of ISU Extension for additional publications. Also follow the publications link on the ISU Extension Web site at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu>.

- PM 1816 *Begin by Planning Today*
- PM 1817A *Picture Your Future*
- PM 1817B *When Life Changes*
- PM 1818A *Retirement Income: How Much Do You Need?*
- PM 1818B *Estimating Your Retirement Expenses*
- PM 1819 *Money Math*
- PM 1820 *Where Will Money for Your Nest Egg Come From?*
- PM 1821 *Growing Your Nest Egg: Risk and Return*
- PM 1822 *Retirement Investment Options*
- PM 1823 *Painting Your Retirement Picture: Special Considerations for the Self-employed*
- PM 1824 *Update Your Home for a Lifetime of Living*
- PM 1825 *Decisions at the Time of Retirement*
- PM 1826 *If You Want to Know More*

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