



A Better Life News

Aging in Place: Planning is Key by: Lori Hauge

Most people want to “age in place,” grow old in their own home with their friends, neighbors and families involved in their lives. Most folks want to continue shopping at the stores they like, attending their own church, using their own hair stylist, and participating in their regular groups and clubs.

At the same time people want all of these things, many fear and dread the time when keeping their lives the way they want to means getting help from other people. They dread it because they feel that depending on other people is a sacrifice of their independence. They dread it because they fear being a burden to those they love. They dread it because it reminds them of their mortality.

This dread and fear can result in failing to plan and prepare relationships, homes, and finances. This failure to prepare often results in the outcome people fear most... having to go to a nursing

home or move from their home to a family member’s home.

This article will be the first installment in a three part series devoted to providing strategies for helping you prepare to “age in place.” First, we will address how to go about preparing relationships.

When people think about preparing their relationships, it is important to consider spouses or significant others, people who can be natural supports and children or other interested family members.

Begin with your spouse or significant other. First, have a frank discussion with him or her about their dreams for aging. It is important to compare and contrast their desires to yours and work to reconcile any differences. Once you agree upon a plan to meet both of your needs and desires, consider who you have in your life who could easily and naturally support you.

Work to anticipate what kinds of help you will need from others as you encounter changes in your health, changes in your ability to drive and changes in the way you process sensory information, vision, hearing, taste, balance, etc. Thinking about how your skills and abilities may change over time, will help you identify those people and organizations who can be natural supports for you as you age.

Finally, prepare your children or other family members by discussing your goals and dreams for aging in place. You should share your vision of how you’d like your life to “look” as you “age in place.” Include the supports you have identified to help make it happen and the role you would like for family members to play in the process.

Remember, this is a discussion, not a mandate. Keep in mind that your family members love you and want you to live the

life you love, but they also have lives of their own and dreams of their own. Their vision of their roles in your life may or may not line up with their vision of their own lives. So, be open to working, with your family, so everyone accomplishes their goals. The synergy that occurs with this process can be an amazing tool for strengthening family relationships.

Check out our January edition of *A Better Life News* to learn how to prepare your home to Age in Place.

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Caregiver's Corner: Remember Say Yes!

The holiday times can be stressful, particularly for caregivers. Caregivers not only continue to care for their loved ones, but they also deal with the typical holiday stress.

In this season for giving, some caregivers might find that they are getting more offers to help out than usual. Their first instinct might be to say no. However, the healthiest thing for the caregiver and the one they are caring for is **TO SAY YES!!!!** There is nothing wrong with saying yes when someone offers to help. You are not inconveniencing them. If they couldn't help then they wouldn't offer. Taking a break, even if it is for a few hours will help you recharge your batteries and stay healthy. It gives you a chance to take care of yourself. If you are not taking care of yourself, then you won't be able to take care of your loved one.

So join in on the season of giving, and give back to yourself. You have done so much for your loved one, let others give back to you. The next time someone offers to help out, **SAY "YES!!!"**

How to prevent the Holiday Blues by Julie Beaulieu

It is common for seniors to experience the holiday blues. To some it seems inevitable, but there are some things someone can do so they avoid the holiday blues this year.

- **Don't isolate yourself.** If you don't have family nearby, invite friends over.
- **Volunteer.** There are many organizations that are looking for help this time of year. It's a great way to help and meet new

people.

- **Avoid Alcohol.** Alcohol has a tendency to intensify the feelings of sadness.
- **Create a Budget.** It's very important to have a budget this time of year, and know how much you can spend on gifts. Once you create one, stick to it!
- **Share your feelings.** Trying to hide your feelings because you are embarrassed or ashamed just makes things worse. Tell

a friend or family member. Talking about your feelings to someone might help you work through your holiday blues.

- **Write your feelings.** If you are a little uncomfortable talking about your feelings write them down. Writing down your feelings is a good way to express how you are feeling. It is important to have some outlet to discuss your feelings, because keeping them bottled up will not help.

Following these guidelines will help ensure a fun and happy holiday season for you.



**Happy
Holidays!**

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H O M E C A R E

Great Gift Ideas for Seniors by Julie Beaulieu

Having trouble thinking of the right gift for the senior in your life? Here are some suggestions that hopefully will lead you to the perfect gift.

- **Scrapbook**- A scrapbook is a fun way to preserve wonderful memories. This can also be a great gift for someone with Dementia.

- **Electronics**- This might be a surprising item on this list, but it's a great way to help grandparents stay connected to their family.
- **Handmade Gifts**- Handmade gifts are a great way to show how much thought and effort you have put into their present. Consider making a homemade picture

frame.

- **Books**- Books are a great way for seniors to spend their quiet time. If their eyes are starting to get bad, consider large print or audio books. Most books today have an audio version as well.
- **Airline Tickets**- Does your loved one live out of state? Fly them down so they

can spend the holidays with you.

- **Hobbies**- Think about the hobbies they like to do, and get them something they will be able to use for it.

Whatever gift you decide on, just remember it's the thought that counts.

Recipe of the Month: Eggnog

Eggnog	
Ingredients:	
- 4 cups milk	- 5 whole cloves
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract	- 12 egg yolks
- 1 1/2 cups sugar	- 2 1/2 cups light rum
- 4 cups light cream	
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract	
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg	
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon	

Directions
1. Combine milk, cloves, 1/2 tsp. vanilla, + cinnamon in a saucepan over low heat for 5 min. slowly bring to a boil.
2. Combine egg yolks + sugar. Whisk until fluffy. Whisk hot milk mixture into eggs. Pour into saucepan and cook over medium heat for 3 min or until thick. Strain to remove cloves and cool for 1 hour.
3. Stir in rum, cream, 2 tsp. vanilla, + nutmeg. Refrigerate overnight before serving.

Lend A Helping Hand by Removing Your Clutter by Julie Beaulieu

This time of year is *the season for giving*.

Sometimes, we WANT to give more than we CAN give because of financial and other limitations. If we want to help but are limited on cash, we can go through all our "stuff" at home.

Outgrown clothes and unused household items

make great donations and can often make a very positive difference in someone else's life.

The good news is, not only does your donation help others, but it also helps you. Reducing clutter from your home reduces stress, not only by creating a more pleasant living environ-

ment, but also by helping you accomplish a goal.

So make some time in your schedule to go through that clutter you have been avoiding. It won't just take the stress off of yourself, but there are sure to be some great donations in there. Help give some-

one a very Merry Christmas!





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H O M E C A R E
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Winter is Cold Season: Myth or Fact? by Julie Beaulieu

For years now, we have heard people say that winter is considered cold and flu season, but is that true? Are there really more viruses floating around when it's cold out?

Research says that there are no more viruses in the winter than there are in any other season. So why do we tend to get colds more often in the winter? The number one reason people get sick more frequently during those winter months, is because we are inside more. Being inside more puts us in contact with more people,

and more germs and viruses.

Stress also increases the number of illnesses we have. The holiday season tends to be a very stressful time for people. Generally when people get stressed out, they are less careful about caring for themselves, lowering their immune systems. When the immune system isn't healthy, your body is wide open to catch the flu or a cold.

What can you do to prevent getting a cold?

- **Wash your hands frequently.** Vigorous washing for 20 seconds, dramatically decreases microbes on our hands. If you are unable to wash your hands at that moment, use Anti-bacterial hand gel until you can wash.
- **Eat Right.** Eating a well balanced diet with lots of vegetables and fruit will strengthen your immune system.
- **Relax.** Don't stretch yourself too thin. Take some time for yourself and relax.
- **Get plenty of sleep.** You should get at least 8 hours of sleep to keep your immune system strong.
- **Exercise.** Regular exercise helps boost your immune system.

So I think it's safe to say that winter being cold season is a **MYTH**. We can't blame the cold temperatures anymore, it's time to take care of ourselves!

