



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Some choices easier than others

There are so many decisions to make in a lifetime, especially for seniors.

You know, like whether to order the entrée called chicken roulade stuffed with spinach and feta or just a salad. Or maybe a hamburger?

It's fun to sit in a restaurant again, for sure! But, of course, that means decisions -- including which restaurant on what day and at what time.

In psychology, decision-making is the cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several possible alternative options; it could be either rational or irrational. (Wikipedia)

I like to think that most of my decisions are rational. As seniors, decisions can become more difficult as our years multiply.

I guess I have decisions on my mind because I made the momentous decision this week to turn in my car keys.

I've concluded that giving up one's car keys has little to do with age. I think in one's mind people generally know when it's time.

And no, I'm not criticizing my friends near or older than my age for still driving on their own.

One of my closer friends once said her world would end if she could not drive. Suddenly, she was put in such a situation and has survived surprisingly well.

We have many transportation options as seniors in our area. To begin with, there

are reliable taxi companies a phone call away.

Perhaps this is a good time to remind ourselves that Sunset Empire Transportation District has an amazing array of options available to seniors.

Many are surprised at all the convenient routes set up especially for seniors who no longer drive on their own or who just want to eliminate some of their driving.

Call Sunset Empire Transportation District at 503-861-7433 for schedules, routes and fares or just call for more information. On the computer, go to ridethebus.org for most of the needed information.

You can glean a lot of information about Ride Assist Paratransit, Ride Assist Dial-A-Ride, Ride Pal, safety and security and on and on.

My goodness, they even have rider information videos.

It's fun to be a senior with organizations such as Sunset Empire Transportation District.

I'm not sure where to fit this in to our subject today, but I read some advice on how to stay young.

"Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctors worry about them. After all, that is why you pay them."

Proverbs 3:6 tells us "In all your ways, submit to him and he will direct your paths!"

So, with that, I'll close with "See you on the bus!"



Financial Focus

with Adam Miller

Discussing financial goals with your family

June is Effective Communications Month.

It's a good reminder to recognize the importance of good communications, because it plays a role in almost every aspect of living -- including your finances.

You'll want to clearly communicate your financial goals to your loved ones -- and you'll want to hear theirs, too.

Let's look at some of the communications you might have with family members:

- *Your spouse* -- You and your spouse may have different thoughts about a range of financial topics -- how much to save, how much to spend, the level of debt with which you're comfortable and so on. Try to reach some type of consensus on these issues.

However, in regard to investing, you don't necessarily have to act in unison all the time.

You each may have different investment styles -- one of you may be more aggressive, willing to take on more risk in exchange for potentially higher returns, while the other would rather invest with an eye toward mitigating risk, even it means accepting a lower return.

Of course, there's nothing stopping each of you from pursuing your individual investment strategies in your own accounts -- IRA, 401(k) and so on.

Still, if you are going to work toward common goals -- especially toward a shared vision of your retirement lifestyle -- you each may want to compromise in your invest-

ment choices. And this accommodation is even more necessary in your joint accounts.

- *Your parents* -- If you may someday be involved with your parents' financial plans -- which is highly likely -- you should know in advance what to expect. This may not be the easiest conversation to have, but it's an important one.

So, for example, ask your parents if they have a durable power of attorney, which allows them to designate someone to manage their financial affairs if they become physically or mentally incapacitated.

You might also inquire whether they're protected against the potentially enormous costs of long-term care, such as an extended nursing home stay. If not, you might suggest they contact a financial adviser, who can offer solutions.

Once you begin communicating, you may well want to go further into your parents' estate plans to determine what other arrangements, if any, they have made.

If it seems their plans aren't fully developed, you may want to encourage them to contact an attorney specializ-

ing in estate planning.

- *Your grown children* -- Just as you talk to your parents about their estate plans, you'll want to discuss the same topic with your own grown children.

Let them know who you've named as a durable power of attorney, what's in your last will and testament and whether you've established a living trust.

If you're already working with a financial adviser and an estate planning professional, make sure your children know how to contact these individuals.

Of course, you don't have to confine your communications to estate plans -- if you want to help your children financially, such as loaning them money for a down payment on a home, let them know.

By talking with your loved ones about key financial matters, everyone benefits. So, keep those lines of communication open.

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