



ELDERCARE **CHECKLIST**



With so many caregivers now living further away from their aging loved ones, visits home are often alarming because they notice physical and cognitive changes in their parent, relative or friend.

These visits offer an excellent opportunity to touch base and examine the quality of life of the special older adult in your life. We have provided an Eldercare Checklist to determine how well this individual is doing living at home. Utilize the areas that are applicable to your situation and keep it as reference in the future. Ideally this is done in the home of the older adult, but much of the information can be obtained if they are visiting your home or over the phone. It's important to take the time to understand thoroughly the older adult's state of health and general well being. Then, you have to determine what type of support you can offer.

Concentrate on changes you observe. How have things changed and how rapidly? Some of the changes may be alarming and indicate more assistance is needed. However, remember these changes probably were gradual- not dramatic. Continue to enjoy your visit without confrontation and observe your parent, relative or friend functioning throughout the rest of your stay.

The issues that need to be addressed are very sensitive and should be approached carefully. In some instances, they may be reluctant to share their experiences out of embarrassment, pride or fear. Utilize all your senses, most serious problems can be identified by careful observation.

Communication Tips:

- Much of the information you need to know will develop in the general course of conversation. Make sure you are familiar with the issues identified in the checklist and be prepared to listen and ask clarifying questions if a pertinent subject is discussed.
- Don't interrogate the person. If you ask sensitive questions and show genuine concern, chances are they will open up to you.
- Be supportive and empathetic, not judgmental. The last thing you want is to appear threatening and put them on the defense.
- Ask open-ended questions, giving them the opportunity to share the circumstances in their life with you.
- Don't overwhelm them with questions. It may take several discussions over a period of days to cover all the areas you feel are important.

If you are in need of the checklist please call, write, or stop by our office and we will be glad to provide you with one.

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