

Make it healthy – PLAN

February 2014 Newsletter



Planning pays off

Discover someone special
this Valentine's Day

Write a plan for your
own healthcare future

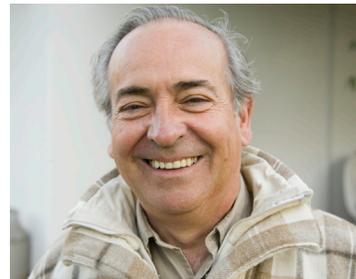
e-Thoughts —
It's a plan!



Some people wonder: Why bother to plan? After all, life is always changing. The plan you make today may need to change tomorrow. So why spend time planning? **More...**



You don't have to look far to find someone special who's always there for you, keeps your best interests at heart and has the potential to be your very best friend. Just look... **More...**



Do you have an advance directive? If you've been to the emergency room or hospital lately, you've likely been asked this question. Many doctors even ask during a routine office visit. **More...**



I've recently realized I like having a plan. It keeps me on track. It gives me structure. It keeps me motivated. **More...**

Getting help

Confidential support, information and resource referrals are available for a variety of concerns — both work and personal. Call for assistance for you, your household members or your adult children under age 26, whether they live at home or not. Call or visit us online today!

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There are many times when life can seem very overwhelming. There are so many different routes to consider and choices to make!

Why plan?

Making plans can give you a sense of purpose, focus and control as you work toward goals in your life. It can prepare you for the challenges ahead by making you think about what they could be and how you'll handle them.

Some people wonder: Why bother to plan? After all, life is always changing. The plan you make today may need to change tomorrow. So why spend time planning? Here are some of the reasons...

Plans help you identify what you want

When you use your GPS device in your car, you need to enter a destination. Even high-tech gadgets can't figure out how to get you somewhere if you don't know where you're going! Planning is a way to figure out your destinations. And, yes, we all have many destinations over the course of a lifetime. Planning is an ongoing project!

Plans help you figure out how to achieve what you want

Part of planning is to break down your destination — or goals — into practical parts. In order to make the overall trip, what are the turns you'll need to make along the way? What are the markers that will let you know you're headed in the right direction? How will you know when you've arrived?

In goal-setting, questions like these are part of setting "SMART" objectives. Those are goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. SMART goals give you signposts to measure your progress toward your destination. Read more about SMART goals in next month's bulletin.

And there's more!

Making plans can expand your horizons, make you think more creatively and build resiliency.

Naturally, plans are never foolproof. As they say, "You make plans... then life happens." But making plans keeps you focused on where you're headed and thinking about strategies for success as you go!

Discover someone special this Valentine's Day

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You don't have to look far to find someone special who's always there for you, keeps your best interests at heart and has the potential to be your very best friend. Just look in the mirror!

There are many benefits of being in a caring relationship with your spouse, partner or "special someone." But it's just as important to have a caring relationship with yourself!

There's only one of you

Looking for someone to help make your dreams come true? Why not...

Dream your dream. What have you always wanted to do? See if you can make it happen. If it's a long-term goal, what steps or plans can you make now?

Explore your interests. Take yourself to a ball game or a movie. Learn how to golf or dance or play bridge. Try a musical instrument or learn something new you've always wondered about.

Plan or take a trip. You don't have to go to another country or even out of your town. You can go online, reconnect with old friends and take a fun trip down memory lane. Or go to a nearby spa or attraction. If time and finances permit, start planning the trip of a lifetime (a lot of the fun is in the planning!)

Make some plans with others. Whether they're family, friends or other special people in your life, sharing time together can make any day more enjoyable.

Tune into you. You're with yourself all the time. So whenever you can, do the things that make you happiest. Listen to music that makes you smile and tap your toes. Bring fresh flowers into your home to savor the smells and bright colors. Rearrange your furniture. Rent one of your favorite movies. Do things just for you!

Write a plan for your own healthcare future

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Do you have an advance directive? If you've been to the emergency room or hospital lately, you've likely been asked this question. Many doctors even ask during a routine office visit.

What is an advance directive?

It's a legal document that outlines your healthcare choices. It can be "your voice" in case you're seriously hurt or sick.

It states your choices if you can't speak for yourself about medical decisions. You can also name other trusted family members or friends to make your healthcare decisions in cases where you're unable.

Why do I need an advance directive?

Today, medicine gives us many options in the face of serious illness. Some people might wish to prolong their lives no matter what. This could include the use of feeding tubes, respirators and other medical technologies.

Other people might choose to set a point at which they'd prefer their medical team to end "heroic measures."

These are important issues to consider. An advance directive lets you be the one to decide your healthcare.

It also helps your loved ones who may need to deal with your illness. Without an advance directive, your family members are left to guess what you would want. This can lead to disagreements. However, if you've made your wishes clear, it's easier for your loved ones to make difficult choices.

How do I make an advanced directive?

If you want to make an advance directive, you can get forms from your doctor, hospital or online. You may also want to consider creating the form with a lawyer. The document must be legal by your state's laws, signed by you and notarized.

Can I change my advanced directive?

As long as you're mentally competent, you can change your advance directive — or even cancel it — at any time.

When should I make my advance directive?

Sometimes people who are seriously ill decide to write an advance directive. It helps them to know their suffering will be reduced. That can give them peace of mind and a sense of control over their final days.

Even if you're in good health, think about making an advance directive. Anyone can have a sudden accident or serious illness. If you already have a signed advance directive, your wishes will be known.

e-Thoughts - It's a plan!

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Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

I've recently realized I like having a plan. It keeps me on track. It gives me structure. It keeps me motivated. It makes me question myself. It gives me something to measure my progress against so I know if I'm moving forward — or treading water.

I need to update and adjust my plans as things change in my life. That's a challenge. Plans are always dynamic and shifting, making them like "moving targets." Sometimes I laugh at things I thought I could get done — until "life" stepped in and showed me differently!

So, it's true: Not every plan is successful. But I always learn things from my plans — even when they don't work out.

How about you? Are you a planner? Do you prefer to live life more spontaneously? Or, are you somewhere in the middle? Getting to know yourself better in this way can be a great tool for growth and change!

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