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## **4 Factors to Consider When Considering a Move to Assisted Living**

A recent [study](#) found that 43 percent of the seniors surveyed reported being lonely. But that wasn't the most interesting or startling finding. The study, which surveyed seniors every two years from 2002 to 2008, found that the seniors who did report being lonely were less healthy and 45 percent more likely to die than those who felt more connected to the people around them.

If you're a senior who feels lonely, assisted living may be a great way to fight off loneliness while still being able to maintain independence. Of course, uprooting your life and moving to a facility can be overwhelming and difficult. Here are a few tips on what to consider as you think about a move to assisted living.

**Know what amenities you need most.** When you're deciding which facility is right for you, there are many factors to consider. This article on [choosing an elder care facility](#) narrows those factors down to five main concerns—type of care (e.g. How much help do you need completing daily tasks, such as getting dressed?), safety (e.g. Are their railings in hallways and grab bars in bathrooms?), staff, cost, and amenities. Go through each category to assess the facilities you visit and think carefully about which factors matter most to you.

**Think about your budget.** Many seniors are on a fixed income. And with the average monthly cost of an assisted living facility at [\\$3,500](#), it can be difficult for many elderly people to come up with the funds needed. If you think assisted living is right for you, think about what assets you have that can help you pay for your stay at the facility. The Assisted Living Federation of America (ALFA) provides advice on how to [budget](#) for living at the facility. When visiting prospective homes it recommends asking for the “community resident agreement” which will provide a rundown of “services, prices, extra charges, move-in and move-out criteria, staffing, and house rules.” When you have this complete overview of a facility’s cost, you’ll be able to decide if it will fit your set budget.

**Decide what to do with your home.** In its article on budgeting ALFA notes that some subsidies are available through Medicare, Medicaid, and veteran benefits. But, it explains, the amounts are often small. It advises homeowners that their best help for covering the cost of their assisted living stay will come from their home. Do you want to rent it out or sell it? This will be an important discussion to have with your loved ones, especially if you were expecting to leave the home to them or if they’ll be in charge of managing the rental process. If you do decide to sell, be sure to take the steps necessary to get the most out of it as possible. This article with [home selling tips](#) suggests that you take a look at what other homes in your area are selling for so that you can be sure to put it on the market at a competitive price.

**Decorate your room to feel like home.** Once you’ve made it through all of these tough decisions, it will be time for move-in day. Even when you know assisted living is the right decision for you, leaving your long-time home and settling into strange surroundings can be difficult. AgingCare.com provides advice on how you can make your new room [feel like home](#). It suggests picking favorite items, such as a beloved chair, framed photos, books, etc., to use to decorate your new space so that you’re surrounded by familiar items. Once those items are set up in your new room, settling in will be a little easier.

There are definitely a lot of factors to consider before choosing an assisted living facility. But if loneliness is negatively affecting your mental and physical health, then it’s well worth the trouble to find a living space that will bring happiness to your life.

**Marie Villeza** was inspired to start [ElderImpact.org](#) after she watched her son teach her father how to play Angry Birds™ on his smartphone. In that moment, she realized the importance of bringing the generations together so they can usher each other into the future, breaking down walls of fear and time. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, hiking, and taking part in her monthly book club.