

## 14 Aging Parents and Options in Care

other family members, and our own health. Many employers have resources to assist their employees with various family issues. Inquire through Human Resources or Employee Assistance Programs about possible solutions.

Be aware that, as situations develop and you address concerns, if you are not already hearing the following comments, you probably will. Here are some examples:

“I don’t need anyone’s help. I’m completely capable of doing things *on my own!*”

“I don’t need to go to the doctor. There’s *nothing wrong* with me.”

“My driving is fine! You *are not* going to take my car keys from me.”

What do you do? Here are a few tips:

□ Try to understand that your loved ones are fearful of losing their independence. They want to do whatever they can to keep whatever remains. Reassure them. Don’t resist them. When safety has become a main concern, enlist the help of a professional. A physician, clergy member, or close friend can help convince them to accept assistance. To a certain degree, be flexible when resistance is occurring. Here are some examples of things you might say:

“Mom, if we have someone help out with errands, prepare meals, and do some housekeeping, you and I can spend more quality time together. *Let’s just try it* a few times and see how it goes. Do this for me, okay?”

This approach eases your loved one into having help.

“Dad, living in (a retirement community, assisted living ...) you have *the option of participating* in social activities only if you want to.” In this scenario, show your loved ones there are options to engaging in activities.

Chances are, over time, if they see all the socialization taking place, they will begin to engage in activities and enjoy themselves as well.

□ How you phrase your comments and concerns is important. You will have better success when you state your needs instead of stressing their needs and what they should or should not do. Here’s an example: