



Celebrating Your Freedom & Independence



Every Fourth of July, families and friends across the country gather for cookouts, festivals and fireworks displays to celebrate our freedom and independence as a nation, as well as individuals. As you age, maintaining your independence becomes an even greater priority. Today, older people are living more active, vibrant lives than ever before due to healthy habits, positive attitudes, modern medicine and caregiving services, such as those provided by [Home Helpers](#).

Your happiness and independence depend on your overall health and wellness, from making healthy lifestyle choices and remaining engaged with friends and family, to keeping up with the latest technology and trends. This summer, celebrate your freedom and independence by making a commitment to improve your overall wellness. It's easier than you think!

- **Physical wellness:** One of the most obvious ways to maintain your independence is through your physical fitness and ability to manage activities of daily living. While the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle is often seen as hard work and mundane, it doesn't have to be that way.

Instead, look for fun, fresh ways to challenge yourself and improve your health and quality of life. Get a group of friends together and start a walking club, or sign up for a local walk or run in your community that supports a good cause. Try a new, healthy recipe or take a cooking class. You're more likely to stick to an exercise regimen or nutrition plan if you have the support of others and are driven by a cause greater than yourself.

Take care of yourself and participate in recommended screenings and annual physical exams. Your primary care provider can often alert you to potential concerns (e.g., changes in blood pressure over time). Prevention is one of the best ways to maximize health and wellbeing. Also, drink plenty of water, eat well, get active and take your medication as prescribed. If you experience an ache, pain or some other symptom, seek medical attention.

- **Emotional wellness:** What we think and believe influences our health and quality of life. In fact, one study found that people with positive attitudes lived about 7.5 years longer than people with a cloudier outlook. Just as we tell kids the story about the little engine that could, people have an incredible ability to achieve things that are important to them. What's important to you? Also, the next time you're feeling down, smile! It's amazing how your mood can change by doing so.



- **Occupational wellness:** Even if you are retired, there are plenty of ways to get involved in your local community to give you a sense of purpose and direction. Consider volunteering at a local soup kitchen or animal shelter or embrace a new hobby, such as pottery or photography, to get your creative juices flowing and meet people.
- **Social wellness:** Social networking and communication sites, such as [Facebook](#) and [Skype](#), are quickly becoming the most popular ways to stay in touch with friends and family, near and far. If you haven't already, set up a profile on Facebook and send "Friend Requests" to your loved ones and long-lost friends. You'll be amazed who you can reconnect with.
- **Financial wellness:** As you age, it is critical to have your finances in order and understand what benefits are available to you. Consider meeting with a financial advisor or elder law attorney to discuss your options, which may include the Veteran's Aid and Attendance Benefit or a reverse mortgage.
- **Spiritual wellness:** Whether or not you are religious, consider volunteering at events held at churches, synagogues, etc., in support of your local community.
- **Intellectual wellness:** These activities could range from doing crossword puzzles and scrapbooking to trying out new recipes – anything that stimulates your brain and gets your creative juices flowing.

“An elder is a person who is still growing, still a learner, still with potential and whose life continues to have within it, promise for, and connection to the future. An elder is still in pursuit of happiness, joy and pleasure, and her or his birthright to these remains intact.”

~ Barry Barken

Despite your best intentions, there may come a time when you are no longer able to manage your daily activities as you used to. With over 40% of older adults needing assistance with one or more daily living activity associated with independent living, it's important to recognize your limitations and not try to overdo it.

“At [Home Helpers](#), we understand and respect how much you value your independence, and we can tailor a care plan to fit your needs, from a couple hours a week to 24-hour care,” said Mary Doepke, RN, Owner of Home Helpers of Hinsdale. “Aging does not have to be synonymous with nursing homes and dependence. You can maintain your independence and live life to the fullest well into your Golden Years!”

HOME HELPERS – Making Life Easier Home Helpers offers quality non-medical and personal care* and companionship services similar to the care and support often provided by family members. Our flexible care plans are tailored to fit our clients' specific needs and budgets. Compassionate Care is a bi-monthly newsletter produced by Home Helpers. We hope you found this edition to be informative and helpful.

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*Personal care provided as permitted by state law. Each office is independently owned and operated. Services may vary at each individual office location. Check with your local Home Helpers office for available services. Home Helpers does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age or sexual preference in connection with employment or acceptance, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities.