

# How do you know if you're ready for retirement?

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As you start to plan your retirement, you'll work through a lot of questions: How much do you need to save? What is your retirement income likely to be? How much will it cost to fund your retirement lifestyle?

Hopefully you have worked with your advisor and put together a solid financial plan to address your retirement goals. Then the time comes for you to take action and retire – once you are financially ready. But one big piece of the puzzle remains that only you can answer: Are you ready emotionally and psychologically to retire?

Deciding if you are emotionally ready is a personal and subjective assessment. Retirement is a significant life transition, and it's important to gauge your emotional preparedness.

Here are some things to think about to help you assess your emotional readiness for retirement:

## **1. How do I feel about continuing to work?**

Reflect on what you are doing professionally. Are there career goals you would still like to achieve? Perhaps you still look forward to going into the office and interacting with your colleagues on a regular basis? Maybe your career is still very important to you as a part of who you are, and you're not quite ready to stop working yet.

However, you may feel like you've satisfied your professional milestones and are ready to step out of the workforce. Or you may still find work is satisfying and meaningful, but are getting burned out. Or you may just feel it's time for something else.

In any of these scenarios, you might be emotionally ready to retire and explore other meaningful activities.

## **2. What will I miss about working? Make a list.**

It's easy to identify the things you won't miss about working like stress, long hours and maybe certain colleagues for example.

But what about the things you will miss? We all get non-financial benefits from working that we don't usually think about. Here are some of those to consider.

- Social interactions.
- The structure work brings to your days and weeks will be gone. How can you recreate this structure, so you don't feel aimless day-to-day and week-to-week?
- Accomplishment. Your work may give you a feeling of satisfaction that you're making a positive impact on others. This feeling may mean more to you than you realize.

One key to enjoying retirement is to find ways to replace the things you enjoyed in your working years. To accomplish this, try to analyze and understand how working contributed to your happiness.

### 3. What is my vision for my next chapter?

The traditional vision for life in retirement is a lot like a fairy tale movie – strolling down the beach and living happily ever after. That movie usually plays scenes of a perpetual vacation for the next 30 years. The problem with this isn't the aspiration, but with the reality of what it truly looks like to live happily ever after.

You need to have a vision for retirement that is clear, realistic and balanced. It definitely should include exciting new experiences like travel. But you also need to have a view of what your everyday life will look like.

### 4. Do I have a plan for how I am going to fill up my days?

While working, you probably spend eight or more hours at your job and commuting daily. So, when you retire, you'll have a lot of hours to fill up.

Most people's "plan" is their bucket list – travel, books and the projects and hobbies they haven't had time to do. That's great for the first several months or maybe even a few years. But what will your life look like when you've checked most of those items off your list?

This is why your vision for your life in retirement should also include how you are going to stay socially engaged, mentally stimulated and feeling like your days are meaningful. If you can achieve and plan to be fulfilled in these ways, you're headed in a positive and exciting direction.

### 5. Get perspective from others.

We all want to thrive in this new chapter. Having a role model can inspire you about how to make your retirement personally successful.

Remember, when your finances are in place, retirement is a personal decision, and there is no one-size-fits-all answer. It's essential to listen to your instincts and consult with trusted friends, family or advisors. Their different perspectives can help you make an informed decision about your emotional readiness for retirement.

## Interested in other resources?

Check out Sun Life Global Investment's [Retirement Hub](#) to learn more.

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