

## *Coping with Loss*

As we might expect, the older we get the more losses we suffer in our life. The most substantial losses might be that of a spouse, close friends, or peers.

But experiencing loss extends beyond the loss of a physical being. For many people, their professional work was a big part of their identity. When they retire, though that sounds like utopia to some, it can result in the loss of a big part of their self-esteem and sense of purpose. It may be loss of physical capabilities such as hearing, vision or mobility, which then impacts their ability to drive or tend to the garden that added such enjoyment to their life. It can be incredibly difficult to process. Each new “loss” can lead us further down the path of low self-esteem or sadness.

I’ve often discussed with clients that I see life as a series of adjustments. Some of those adjustments are losses, but it doesn’t have to be a one-way street. There are times when a seniors’ long time home is no longer working for them, when the things on the “can’t do anymore” list begin to grow. That’s when considering a senior community begins to make more sense.

There are many senior communities who offer independent living apartments as well as assistance when you need it. You no longer drive? That doesn’t have to stop you. Join fellow residents on a shopping trip or outing to a theatre performance or maybe even a Brewers baseball game. Can’t engage in your passion of gardening anymore? Look for a senior community that has raised garden plots which allows you to enjoy having your hands in the earth as you plant without having to kneel down. Can’t mow the lawn anymore but you love the look and smell of a fresh cut lawn, allow the maintenance staff to mow the lawn of your new community and sit in the courtyard or patio after they’ve finished.

Yes, there are losses as we age, and we definitely have to be prepared to make adjustments with each passing year. But we do have the option of looking to the gift of our next choice, and the possibility of new beginnings. It’s Spring...a great time to start our optimism.

*This article is a reprint of a blog posted by  
Adele Lund, Laureate Group’s Director of  
Community and Business Relations*