



CLOSE TO HOME:

Essential Conversations When Moving Near Family

Considering a move closer to family? Close proximity can often shift the dynamics of family relationships. Navigating these changes is difficult under any circumstances, but research shows that there are three primary situations that make relocating as an older adult more stressful:

1. Losing established social networks
2. Navigating expectations with family
3. Feeling dependent and stressed by increased caretaking

If you are experiencing any of these situations, discussing boundaries with family members can help make the move more fulfilling.

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are limits you set in relationships and often include rules around how you share your time, energy, and other resources. Boundaries do not mean you want to keep others out; rather, they allow you to decide how to let others into your life and home comfortably.

Topics to address to respect family boundaries:

Here are topics you may want to think through by yourself or address with your family members when moving closer together:

1. Do you want your family to help you make new social connections?
2. Do you need someone to help with an infirm spouse to give you breaks?
3. How often would you like to see each other?
4. What kind of support do you want or need?
5. How do you feel about family members staying the night?
6. Are you open to family members dropping by unannounced?
7. Do you plan on sharing keys or garage codes?
8. How long is the ideal visit?
9. Do you want to help with household tasks, including cooking, cleaning, or babysitting?
10. Are you okay with young children visiting your home, or are you worried about noise or breakables?
11. Do you have any house rules you need to communicate to family members? (no shoes, no smoking, no pets etc).
12. What are your concerns about moving closer?

Setting and discussing boundaries will help you build and maintain strong family relationships when moving closer to family. Establish clear guidelines and foster mutual understanding and cooperation as you address different expectations. This will likely lead to a smoother transition for you and your family when you move closer together.

Keep in mind that ultimately, you are the one who gets to decide how you use your time and resources, and your family members get to decide what they will give back.

Source:

psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pain-explained/201912/how-set-boundaries-family

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