
APPENDIX AA

TEN THINGS NOT TO DO WHEN YOU RETIRE

By David Kee

I. DON'T RUSH

Relax. Don't try to immediately fill every moment. It's good, even essential, to have varied interests and hobbies, but there is no rule, or even a guideline, that says you initially have to fill each moment of every day. Learn to meditate. Try yoga. Take long walks alone or with someone you love. If you don't love anyone, consider getting a dog.

II. DON'T FRET

Relax even more. Take a sabbatical. If you're like most of us you've never had one. Take a month (Type A) or six months or more (Type B) and do or don't do as you please (See V). You can fill in (if you must) more "productive" activities later. You may simply enjoy having more time to talk with folks without looking at the clock. You are more than what you did for a living.

III. DON'T GO BACK INTO THE WORKPLACE IF YOU ARE NOT TOTALLY PREPARED FOR THE CHANGES YOU WILL FIND

Unless you have a paid consulting or part-time position (read: if you were not afraid to let go totally) at your previous place of employment, your views are no more than that – your views. When you take your arm out of the water, there is no hole left behind. No one is indispensable, and that's as it should be.

IV. DON'T TRY TO IMPRESS PEOPLE WITH HOW IMPORTANT, COMPETENT, ETC., ETC., YOU WERE IN YOUR PAST LIFE

You will be liked or disliked, accepted or rejected, happy or unhappy, based on who you are now.

V. DON'T OVERLOOK THE HOME FRONT

Call it home dynamics, or psychology of the home front. Call it anything you wish – but if you are living with a significant other, you are about to attach new meaning to the term "significance." Neither of you is as psychologically prepared for the change as you thought you were. Discuss the changes, as much as they can be envisioned, before retirement, and after, and discuss them often. After a few adjustments on everyone's part, life can be even more beautiful.

VI. THINKING OF MOVING? DON'T BUY!! RENT, RENT, RENT!!

Studies have shown that only four percent of retirees actually make a permanent move. Putting down roots is important, but so are new experiences (See VII). Find a new place you like? Rent for at least a year before you buy. When you crunch the numbers, it makes great financial sense, especially if you are financing the new purchase from savings or other investments, or taking out a mortgage.

VII. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE GEOGRAPHICALLY RESTRICTED

You can travel. Maine offers a huge variety of places and experiences. Colleges across the country rent out rooms. Inexpensive travel abroad is possible. Sponge off friends, but don't give out your address.

VII. DON'T THINK FUTURE GENERATIONS WON'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOU, WHAT YOU THOUGHT AND FELT, FIGURED OUT AND RE-FIGURED OUT

Would you like to read interesting aspects of the life of your great grandparents? Future generations of your family will feel the same about you. You may not be considered the world's greatest autobiographer but you are a direct link to the past and future. Write about it.

IX. DON'T BE AFRAID

Change can be frightening but not changing is even more so. Try new things that might interest you and know that it's okay to fall on your face. Who's judging? Who cares? Create something new – this may be as close as we ever get to God – even if it's a pottery salad bowl that looks like a frying pan. It never existed before you created it. Time can get away from us, so structure time to create.

The use of the imagination should come first – at least for some part of every day of your life. – Brenda Ueland

X. DON'T OVERLOOK A JOURNEY INWARD

Don't be afraid of anything. It will all work out (whatever "it" may be for you). Get to know yourself and be yourself. Your value is not limited to what you did for a living.

Finally, when asked "What do you do in retirement?" you can honestly respond, "I enjoy life".

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