



Retirement - Make It Golden

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The other day my ophthalmologist asked me if I have plans for retirement. My answer was "I'm never going to retire". He seemed surprised by this and asked me why I said that. My answer was simple: "I love what I do, don't golf and don't have a yard. I can work and still do all the things that I would be doing in retirement."

Retirement is a funny term and certainly means different things to different people:

1. Freedom - Those who are unhappy with their work might count the days until they can walk away from the employer. They talk about "pensionable hours" and how they are just hanging on until they reach the magic age or date when they can leave their employment. Retirement to them is like having a "get out of jail card". Unfortunately, they often do not have a plan for how they will live out their days once they no longer have to show up at work.
2. Dreams - If we buy into some of the television commercials, we might think that retirement will be just one long exotic vacation. I like to travel but after a few days, I enjoy getting back into my own bed! Many people retire and find that about eight months later things aren't quite what they planned, and they need to have more of a purpose for the day.
3. Change - Some individuals leave their career and then start another one. They might open a business, take on a new job or volunteer their time for an interesting cause. Once they have their pension or financial plan in place, they have more opportunities to choose what they will do with their time.

There aren't many people who are content with doing nothing even if they think that they will be. In fact, people tend to stay the same over time. Those who are unhappy about life when they are working might just be unhappy when they aren't working.

The sad part about retirement is that if you haven't planned for it, you just might find yourself older, poorer and lonelier.

My advice is that if you want to be happy in retirement, figure out to be happy before that occurs. Develop some hobbies, build good friendships and make wise financial choices now so that your "golden" years will actually be "golden".