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## On Retirement

Expert planning, ideas and advice.



# Important Non-Financial Retirement Considerations

Saving for retirement isn't enough. You also need a plan for how you will spend your time.

By [Dave Bernard](#)

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If you look forward to living a fulfilling retirement, [saving money](#) should not be your sole concern. We all know building a sufficient nest egg to provide for your second act typically requires a lifetime of struggle and sacrifice. But having enough cash in the bank is no guarantee of an [idyllic retirement](#). With so much focus on saving the correct amount and withdrawing an appropriate sum each month, other important considerations can be overlooked.

Many people have focused long and hard on saving and [investing to pay for their retirement days](#). One common shortfall when making retirement preparations is deciding what to do with your time. While a huge amount of attention and effort goes into preparing for your financial future, many people have done little to identify meaningful activities to fill the next 20 or 30 years they hope to live. Many retirees suddenly find themselves in a new world without the requirements of a job. The freedom of an empty calendar is sweet and offers the possibility of filling it with the things you have always wanted to do. What will occupy the days ahead? How will you stay engaged and excited about the future? The bank account may be taken care of, but retirees soon realize there is more to an [enjoyable retirement](#) than just money.

It is not an uncommon situation for people to be [only a few months from retirement](#) without a plan for how to spend their days. If you hope to make the most of your second act, you need to look ahead to the life you hope to live. Even if you have pieced together the financial and medical portion of your retirement plan, there is still more to do. It takes most people decades to save enough for retirement. Is a couple of months sufficient to plan a timeline for the next 20 to 30 years? There is a whole lot to cover in such a short period of time. Don't give your two week vacation more preparation time than your two decade (or more) retirement.

If you do not invest sufficient time to plan for the non-financial aspects of retirement, you risk putting an unnecessary burden on yourself in the future. Imagine the challenges you might face if one day you are working full time and then the next you find yourself job-free and you have done little to prepare your way. Sure you may keep busy in the beginning doing various projects, catching up on hobbies and taking it easy away from the stress of the working world. But after that initial honeymoon period runs its course, what do you plan to do?

Don't let your retirement just happen and hope for the best. Take control while you have time to make adjustments and fine tune your second act. Spend the time now, before you retire, to consider the possibilities, opportunities and challenges. Be honest with yourself and get ready.

Imagine yourself two years into retirement. What will your day look like? How about five or ten years down the line? No one wants to become bored during a time that offers so much potential and freedom. But if you just happen into retirement without thinking it through, you may find yourself exactly in that situation.

Here are a few questions to consider as you look ahead to your retirement years:

- What meaningful activities and new interests might you add to your routine?
- What were you passionate about when you were younger?
- What interests were you forced to put aside while working due to a lack of time?
- What things around you pique your curiosity?
- What will your lifestyle be at age 70? At age 80?
- What interests are shared between you and your partner?
- Are you a closet writer, composer, singer, dancer or artist?
- What would you choose to do if you had no other commitments on your time?

It is up to each of us to do our part to prepare for retirement beyond the financial if we hope to make the most of our second act.

TAGS: second careers, retirement, money, aging

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**Dave Bernard** is the author of "[I Want To Retire! Essential Considerations for the Retiree to Be](#)". Recently retired, he focuses on identifying and understanding the essential components of a fulfilling and meaningful retirement. He shares his discoveries and insights on his blog [Retirement-Only The Beginning](#).

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