Preparing to care for an aging parent or family member is not always possible. When it is, we recommend that you open the lines of communication with those involved in the planning process.

**Below are some items that should be discussed, along with some questions to ask your family members.**

- Take time to learn as much as you can about your parents' needs and wishes before a crisis arises. Avoid cramming these important issues into a couple of conversations.
- Be sensitive to your parents’ thoughts and feelings when discussing elder care planning.
- Spend time talking with your partner and any siblings about future elder care planning and the role each will have.
- Discuss what remaining independent means and looks like with your parents and how their health will affect this moving into their older years.
- Talk about the different stages of aging and how it impacts each of you.
- What does location mean to your parents with regards to proximity to their friends and family?
- Discuss various housing options and preferences.
- Have a plan for when your parent(s) can no longer stay in their home.
- Who do your parents trust to make decisions for them when they can no longer make rational decisions for themselves?
- Living wills, power of attorney, and wills should be done early and with someone they trust. If they are not, seek professional assistance from an elder care attorney.
- Discuss the issues of personal and medical care giving with your parents and siblings before a crisis arises.
- As a family, discuss your understanding of your parents’ financial status, including insurance, resources, and needs prior to a crisis.
- What must be done in order to meet everyone’s needs and where do compromises need to be made?
- Do you know your parents' medical history and is it documented anywhere?
- What are your parents' future health prognoses?
- Are you familiar with your family's health history and is it documented anywhere?
- Do your parents have living wills or health directives? Do you know where they are?
- Be sure you have the names and contact information for your parents' health professionals.
- Are you aware of any medications your parents take or any allergies they have?

**Other Helpful Resources:**

- Dependent Care Resource & Referral (BrownRichards & Associates) 404-352-8137
- Families in Transitions Education & Support Group 404-728-6975
- Faculty & Staff Assistance Program [www.fsap.emory.edu](http://www.fsap.emory.edu) 404-727-4328

Please visit [www.worklife.emory.edu](http://www.worklife.emory.edu) for more information on the following topics:

- Types of Elder Care
- Support for Elder Care
- Support for Caregivers
- Elder Care Assistance
- Elder Care Benefits