## **Excerpt from Chapter One**

**Addressing Excitement and Anxiety About Retirement**

When you contemplate retirement one day there is often a combination of excitement and anxiety. And the closer you are to retirement these thoughts and feelings may be more intense. The excitement often comes from looking forward to the possibility of a relaxed and fulfilling next chapter with time to explore and pursue all your interests. After four or five decades and you deserve it. No more morning alarm clocks, wake-up routines, and commutes. No more clocking in, late-night work, countless meetings, deadlines, or office politics. No more dealing with difficult coworkers, supervisors, and managers. In the next chapter you picture yourself having more time for the things you want to do, more time to pursue your other interests, more time for your hobbies, more time to travel and more time for self-care and relaxation. That’s exciting. You may also be looking forward to spending more time with the grandkids, your family, and friends. So many possibilities, it’s going to be great.

You may also have some anxiety about retirement. You wonder about the best time to retire, will you have enough money, your access to health care and how you will spend your time. You may be unsure about issues related to your identity, purpose, and your social connections post-retirement. You ask yourself, who will I be during this phase of life and what will I do? It is important to address your concerns and challenges. Then grasp the possibilities and opportunities of the next chapter of the life span. We have listed below some shared challenges and concerns about retirement. Do these challenge and concerns resonate with you?

**A List of Challenges and Related Concerns**

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| **Challenges** | **Concerns** |
| Maintaining Financial Security | * Running out of money * Losing significant retirement assets on the stock market, retirement accounts, 401K etc. * Rising inflation and or a recession * Depending on the financial strength of Social Security |
| Developing An Identity Not Tied to Work or Career | * Losing work identity * Searching for new identity is difficult * Work community and purpose disappeared * Struggling with transition from work to retirement |
| Maintaining a Sense of Purpose | * Community and sense of purpose in transition * Difficulty finding a renewed sense of purpose * Limited or no engagement in meaningful work or activity * How to fill up my time after leaving the full-time workforce |
| Maintaining and Managing my Health and Wellness | * Contending with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease and cognitive decline * Coping with a health crisis and illness * Escalating cost of health care * Efficacy of Medicare and health insurance coverage * Long term care resources and access * Staying abreast of health, medication, and medical records * Accessing quality healthcare |
| Changing Relationships with Family and Friends | * Adjusting to spending so much more time with spouse or partner * Losing a spouse, loved ones and close friends * Being a burden on family * Maintaining connections with work friends * Being single may complicate things |
| Remaining Engage and Preventing Loneliness and Social Isolation | * Losing contact with family, friends, social supports, and community connections * Feeling family relationship are strained * Feeling depressed and anxious * Feeling disconnected and isolated from family and community * Wanting not to interact or socialize with others outside one’s home |
| Maintaining One’s Independence | * Losing ability to live independently * Coping with any physical decline * Needing caregiving, and long-term care services * Accurate identification documents |

To fully experience the joy and overall wellbeing in retirement it is important to acknowledge and address these challenges and concerns. Throughout this book we will encourage you to address your anxiety, get excited about the retirement possibilities and create a vision and plan to help you thrive in retirement in the future.