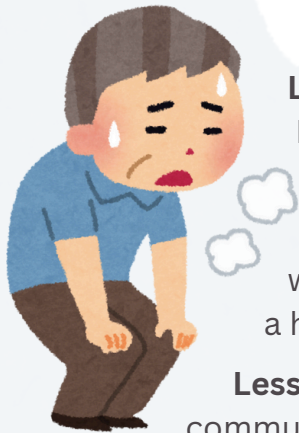


Retirement Pitfalls Related to Mental Health



You've made it, retirement has arrived. You've worked a long hard career and now you're ready to enjoy those golden years vacationing, golfing, spending time with your family, or any other hobby that's close to your heart. This is the moment we've worked our entire lives for, and it is supposed to be the best time of our lives. However, there are some situations that can result from retirement that we may not be prepared for which can result in serious mental health risks. There are many dangers to this drastic change in lifestyle that can plague us if we haven't prepared a good plan.



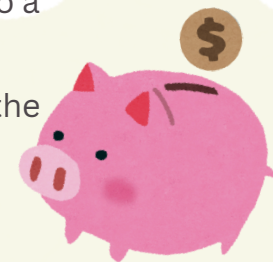
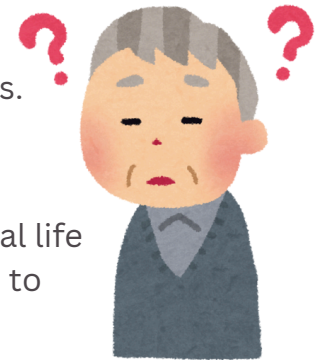
Loss of Purpose: Many people derive a sense of identity and purpose from their careers. Retirement can lead to a feeling of loss, as the daily structure and goals provided by work disappears. This can result in feelings of aimlessness and depression.

Isolation: Social connections often decrease after retirement, especially if one's social life was closely tied to their workplace. This isolation can lead to loneliness, which is linked to a higher risk of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

Less Physical Activity: Work often provides a routine that includes physical activity, whether it's commuting, moving around the jobsite, or other job-related tasks. Retirement can lead to a more sedentary lifestyle, which is associated with poorer mental health outcomes.

Increased Substance Use: Some retirees may turn to alcohol or other substances to cope with the changes and challenges of retirement. This can lead to substance abuse issues, which further exacerbate mental health problems.

Financial Stress: Transitioning from a regular paycheck to a fixed income can be stressful. Concerns about outliving savings or managing on a reduced budget can cause significant anxiety and stress.



As you can see, many of these factors may lead to depression. Untreated, these feelings can lead to thoughts of suicide. So what can we do to combat these pitfalls?

Establish a New Routine: Creating a daily schedule can provide structure and a sense of purpose. Include activities like exercise, hobbies, and social interactions to keep your days fulfilling.

Set New Goals: Setting new personal or professional goals can give you a sense of direction and accomplishment. Whether it's learning a new skill, traveling, or starting a small business, having goals keeps you motivated.

Stay Socially Connected: Maintaining social connections is crucial for mental health. Join clubs, take classes, or use technology to stay in touch with friends and family. Volunteering and community involvement are also great ways to meet new people.

Hobbies: Engaging in hobbies can provide joy and a sense of achievement. Whether it's gardening, painting, or playing a musical instrument, hobbies keep your mind active and can be a great way to meet like-minded individuals.

Volunteer: Volunteering can provide a sense of purpose and community. It allows you to give back, stay active, and connect with others. Many organizations are always in need of volunteers, and your skills and experience can be invaluable.

Seek Professional Help if Needed: If you're struggling with the transition, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Therapists and counselors can provide support and strategies to cope with the changes and challenges of retirement.

If You Are Seeking Help:

- Check out additional resources at www.pttc.edu/mental-health-and-wellness
- Visit 393's EAP Health Advocate www.healthadvocate.com/
- Join other retirees at the 393 Retiree Coffee Club ualocal393.org/retiree-news/retiree-coffee-club/

