

No one ever tells you some of the hardest truths about retirement

If you love your job, retirement can be more difficult than you might expect.

Sure, hanging out on the golf course, traveling and sleeping in all sound great, but for many people the transition from corporate culture to a life of leisure isn't easy.

Here's a look at the five hardest things about retirement that you might not be ready for.

1. You and your spouse don't enjoy 24/7 intensive time together.

"Everyone gets excited about retirement — they think they're going to walk out the door and never look back and spend their days relaxing and traveling with their spouse, but then they get home and they find they can't actually stand the person they've been married to for the last 30 years," says Deana Arnett, senior planning consultant at Rosenthal Wealth Management Group. "I've seen it happen more times than I care to tell you."

Many couples suffer from what's known as "Retired Husband Syndrome," Arnett says. According to a study by Bowling Green State University, divorce rates for couples over 50 have doubled since 1990.

"There is a body of work that shows women get stressed out and depressed when their husbands quit work," she says. "You've both been going in different directions for so long, and all of a sudden you're staring each other in the face. Sometimes you realize you don't really know one another, or that your personalities and interests are completely different."

2. You've got too much time on your hands and you don't know what you want to do.

"If you have a lot of spare time with no agenda, you can quickly become a very unhappy person," Arnett says. "A lot of the relationship trouble we see among retirees comes from either the husband or wife not knowing what they want. They become unhappy, and that unhappiness bleeds out into all areas of their life."

The people who are happiest in retirement are those who have really put some thought into what they want to do next, she says. Meeting with a therapist before you retire is actually a wonderful idea, even if you aren't feeling conflicted or depressed.

"I love to see clients engage a therapist in the months leading up to retirement to make sure they are taking a proper emotional inventory of all the right things," she says. "When you're filling out reams of paperwork and worrying about rolling over your 401(k) and signing up for health insurance, you don't think so much about the emotional side of retirement, but it's huge. A therapist can help you navigate those different conflicting emotions."

Saying you're going to fill your free time with hobbies and travel is one thing, but actually doing it is entirely another, says Stein Olavsrud, a certified financial planner with FBB Capital Partners. Hobbies and the occasional vacation won't sufficiently fill eight hours per day, seven days per week.

"You're never going to be as busy as you were when you were fully employed," Olavsrud says. "Psychologically you're going to miss that daily interaction that work provided, so what are you going to do to fill those gaps?"

3. You don't have quite as much money as you thought you would.

Assuming your health is good, you've probably got a lot of retirement aspirations — things you want to do, places you want to go. Unfortunately, you might not have enough money to do them.

"We are finding more and more that people don't have as much money to fulfill their 'bucket list' items as they thought they would," he says. "Travel is costly, and to be as active as you might want to be takes a lot of money. It's a struggle for many people to have sufficient funds to meet those desires."

When your retirement is "less fabulous" than you were expecting, this can be a very unpleasant wake-up call, Arnett explains.

"If you can't eat out, you can't stay at the hotels you want on vacation and you can only afford to go see your grandkids once a year, it's incredibly disappointing."

For people who work with a good financial planner to prepare for retirement, there aren't that many surprises once you step away from your desk, but in the event of a medical crisis or other financial problem, you need to have more than enough saved.

"Especially when people are laid off or forced into retirement in their late 50s or early 60s, that causes their retirement projections to fall short of expectations," Olavsrud says. "In many cases people can go into consulting or part-time work, but not always."

4. You realize that a large part of your identity was associated with your work.

"Men in particular get their identities wrapped up in what they do for a living, and once that's gone, if there's not something else there to fill the space, that's when the depression and dissatisfaction kicks in," Arnett says.

People who are willing to sit down and discuss their passions and long-term post-retirement goals are the ones who will have a more satisfied, fulfilling retirement.

"You can't just leave work and say, 'Oh, I'll figure it out,'" Arnett says.

Without the human interaction and challenges found at the office, some people suffer mentally and physically, Olavsrud says. If you're not working, you may not be engaging in conversation with people on a daily basis or getting enough physical exercise.

"You have to be cautious that you're still getting out, meeting people and being social," he says. "People who are not active tend to decline rather quickly."

To establish a routine and life goals, Olavsrud recommends connecting with a community association or other social or religious organizations of your choice.

"What is going to motivate you to get out of bed and do something?" he asks. "For everyone it's going to be different, but you have to have something that motivates you, excites you and keeps you moving forward."

5. You don't know when to claim Social Security or spend your other assets.

The majority of Americans (73%) collect early Social Security benefits, meaning before they are 66 years old, according to a 2013 report from the Social Security Administration.

"If you're collecting Social Security before you're at your full benefit, what will your ability be to sustain your lifestyle later in life?" Olavsrud asks. "A healthy 65-year-old female has a good chance of living to age 89. That's a long time."

A lot of people are unsure how to structure a retirement plan that ties in their pension, Social Security benefits, 401(k) or other investment assets.

"They want to know, 'When should I start spending this?' 'When should I draw on this account?' and that drives their social decisions — where they move, where they retire, and when they take vacations," he says.

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