

Top Ten Reasons to Retire (or Not!)

Your Retirement, in Your Time...
Are YOU Ready?

My Introduction

Hello! I'm Wendy, and this is my retirement decision and preparedness e-book. It's not about financial planning – it's more about retirement lifestyle planning!

I retired after 30+ years of service in 2010. I am happy, I am fulfilled, I am content beyond what I ever hoped my retirement days would be! I am also busy running my retirement website and I love every moment. I hope my two cents puts retirement into a new perspective for you... and you choose to UN-retire as I have done! What do YOU want to be when you grow up?

Just think about Baby Boomer retirements (born 1946-1964), we aren't living our parents or grandparents retirements. We are younger (in mind, spirit, and physically too) and there is much more living to do... no rocking chairs for the Boomer Retirees!

I just finished reading the book “[Too Young To Retire](#)” and it's not about age... it's about what you will do for many years in retirement. Some people don't believe in retirement and they may never retire. Others retire early and find a new lifestyle. It all depends on you and what you see in your own retired years. There is a happy middle ground...

Retire from a job that makes you unhappy or stressed... but retire to something that replaces all those hours every day.

It's time to give back, time to have fun (whatever “fun” means to you)! Fun can be quite different to all of us. Even married couples may have two completely different ideas of retirement, never discussed, and suddenly a huge problem in retirement. Yikes!

Just think.... *Wendy*

SHOULD YOU RETIRE?

Only one person can answer that question – YOU!

If you had the chance to retire early, say age 50-55, would you jump at it? For many, a 30-year career is quite enough. For many others, they can't envision retirement (at least, not until their concept of retirement changes).

At age 50, if you are lucky, you've got about another 30+ years to live. Did you ever consider that? Your retirement years could be longer than your entire working career. Even if you retire at age 62, you've likely got another 25 years (mid-80s).

Besides travel, golf, fishing, and art classes, what else is on your agenda? How much will it cost? Good question!

Retirement planning is far more than this ***Top Ten Reasons To Retire*** e-book. It requires a real look at your lifestyle, your resources, and everything we take for granted while we're working.

This book is just to get you thinking about the reasons you might retire (or not)... it's a different choice for all of us!

Reason #1: YOU CAN KEEP BUSY

If work hinders you, if work is annoying because you have so much more living to do, consider retirement. The key here is having something to do each day after retirement.

In my opinion, this is the most important consideration for retirement, though few even think twice about it. Years ago, a speaker for my Pre-Retirement Planning classes would challenge attendees, saying: “Don’t retire from work, Retire TO Something”. Her talk, 20 years ago, motivated me to begin thinking about the quality of my life... I was a workaholic. The problem is, when work is gone or maybe less important in your life, what’s your life all about? What’s left to be excited about?

It might be a hobby, part-time work, a new less stressful career, your own business - it totally depends on you. Keep in mind that when you do what you really enjoy doing, instead of what you need to do, life is so good!

Think about the additional eight hours each day that you’ll have, every day, and what will you DO with your time? The irony is that time becomes priceless only when you get to spend it. To do that, you have to welcome new ideas in your mind and heart, when you consider your retirement years.

Here are some quick suggestions on how to keep busy in your retirement years (and links to my site for more information):

- [Hobbies](#)- A retirement hobby is defined as a pleasurable pastime, with the stress on the “pleasure”. It might be something you loved doing in your pre-retirement years or something you always wanted to do but never had the time. Your retirement opens up the opportunity for you to finally do it. Hobbies also often provide a social network too.
- [Working](#) - consider a fun job to get out of the house for a few hours, feel productive, chat with co-workers, get yourself into the community... and earn some income too!
- [Start a Home Business](#) – consider your hobbies and where that might take you. [Retire to the Internet](#), like I did. There are oodles of possibilities if you simply think out of the box!
- [Volunteering](#) – Volunteer work is a great option for those who want to use their skills for a sense of fulfilment in return. Look at what you might do in your community (animal shelter, art festival, library, parks and rec departments, Habitat for Humanity, etc). Volunteer your services by giving back to your community while you are still actively able to. It’s rewarding to them to have your services, but also to your own mind and body.

Getting used to a less structured retirement life is part of your retirement transition. In your retirement years, take time to find a reason to wake up vibrant, each and every day. Find activities that will keep you busy all day long, but loving every second of it.

Reason #2: YOU MIGHT CONSIDER WORKING

What? You want me to work after I retire? Yes, this is just one option to consider. Remember that you might be retired 20-30 years. Can you really live a leisurely life for that long? Some folks can, I cannot. Many retirees feel “lost” after they retire, they lose their work identity and just don’t know what to do all day...

This doesn’t mean you remain employed in a stressful environment – possibly making yourself physically ill. It does mean you can consider your options. Supplement your income with a part time job, take a class and start a new career or new business. New opportunities appear when you open yourself to them. New challenges may really excite you... and motivate you.

Boomers may retire, but unlike other generations, we are different. We are uniquely compelled to make a difference in this world. We seek challenges, grab opportunities, and live life like it is an adventure. Yes, with all the risks and the uncertainties included.

Your second career may not even mean w-o-r-k at all. You retired from a job that was probably no longer fulfilling. Now you can choose “work” that you would actually enjoy. And if this happens, you won’t have to ever “work” ever again.

Work is simply finding something meaningful to do with your retirement years, something that you love to. While some retirees may not need supplemental income – the newly generated income can be a bonus.

Work might also mean a work from home job like I do. I am highly motivated to work on my websites as I truly enjoy every moment. I welcome the extra retirement income and it feels so good to accomplish something worthwhile after retirement. You might do woodwork from your garage, cut lawns, write articles for others via the computer, or decorate cakes from home... so many options available today.

You might have always wondered about [Starting a Home Business](#) . Well, maybe now is the time to learn more. Start slow, start small – see what happens. Your creativity will help with ideas on what you can provide to others. Find that gap for a service or product that folks need, and fill it.

Work also provides a social network. Often your co-workers are just co-workers, and friendships may end when you no longer work together. In retirement, whether you work out in the community or from the comfort of your home... work means human connections. You'll find new friends, perhaps join new groups (local business clubs), simply meet new folks who become part of life.

One more last thought: Retirement Income. Even if you believe that you have enough for saved for retirement, why not earn more? Financial stability gives you a worry-free retired life.

If income and savings are tight, work just adds to your life. A small part-time job and Social Security makes a nice income. We all need to live within our means, and a second income, however you earn it, just has to help with the niceties of life!

Reason #3: YOU HATE YOUR JOB (stress!)

In today's economy where workloads increase - yet pay is flat or reduced, downsizing is the norm. Workplace stress is inevitable when the remaining employees try to do more, with less.

When this happens, you are lucky if you have the choice to remain working and simply need to figure out when enough is enough. Many others get laid off, a few years from retirement, but they are not ready – financially or mentally.

If you hate your job, consider retirement before you are ill and forced to quit work. Stress really does take a major toll on all body functions.. and hurts you long-term. Feeling anxious as you drive to work each day is an obvious sign of stress. Please don't let anxiety and stress ruin your retirement years. Retirement could be a huge blessing if you find true happiness and contentment.

Now, if you still love your job, you can maximize your working years. As you work, your savings increase (because you aren't taking withdrawals yet, and because you can still add to it). Your Social Security increases too. You can enjoy your work life, your co-workers, and life is good. The important thing is to stay happy and healthy.

Bottom Line: If your work gives you great anxiety, consider the next chapter of your life. Think about it this way, retirement is not an end - but a beginning of something new.

Reason #4: DISABILITY RETIREMENT

If you are physically unable to work, you might be forced to consider a disability retirement.

Many of the disabled employees I've worked with are in denial. They can't come to terms with their health vs. retirement. I get it - this is not a comfortable position to be in. So many people continue working for many reasons: income, more savings, employer paid health care, just one more year of employment. However, day by day, they struggle to work, using all their life energies, just for one more day. To me, this life energy should go towards making them well or allowing them to live longer or finding a new life in retirement... nothing is easy.

One friend, Doreen, said "I don't know if there is enough to retire financially, but I can't remedy that as I am." So true! She got it. She has accepted the fact that enough will never be enough. At some point, you just have to choose to LIVE instead.

Just like a normal retirement, depending on your disability, it could mean no work at all, or you could try finding another job that suits you better. It could also mean working less or part time hours, and even finding work online that you can do from home. There are still options after a disability retirement, depending on your motivation, your attitude, and, of course, your physical restrictions.

Reason #5: DOWNSIZING, LESS IS MORE

In today's society, people are losing their homes and downsizing, it's simply a sign of the times we live in. Sometimes, this could be your answer for retirement.

First, If you don't have the retirement income or savings that you need to continue to live life as is – you might consider downsizing as an option to allow you to retire. My father, in his late 70s, moved into a low income senior apartment.

He had never lived in an apartment before, but he was happy there. In that low-income apartment, he paid only rent, telephone, and cable tv. There were no other bills – no water, no electricity, no heating/cooling. Food, car, and medical were his only other expenses. We were surprised! Dad had more spendable income than he previously had, despite large prescription drug expenses, and he had anything he wanted.

Bottom Line: If you need to retire, think creatively. Consider a different living situation like an apartment, or remain at home but find a roomie to live with you to share expenses, downsize to a smaller home.

You can also think about where you can cut your monthly expenses... eat out less, drop a specialty channel on cable tv, simply think about what you are spending. Another idea - call your home or car insurances, tell them you are retired and can't afford the monthly bill, and are going with another company – many times they will make you a better offer. Every dollar counts towards making your retirement something you can do.

Second, if you do have a pension, Social Security, savings accounts, and still think you are unable to retire – read on. You might have more spendable income, in retirement, than you realize.

When you are retired, your pension alone, or pension plus Social Security, might be darn close your net pay while working. For example, look at your payroll deductions on your check - Federal income tax, State income tax, FICA, health care, union dues, retirement contributions, etc. When you retire, you'll likely have only a few deductions like Federal and State income tax.

Try it - compare your net working income (your take home pay) to your net retirement income – instead of comparing gross to gross as many do. Think about it – this is what you really live on, your net income is your spendable income.

This calculation, in the least, will give you the gap between your income today and your income in retirement. Then you can plan how you might close that gap – with lower living expenses or with supplemental income after you retire.

Find comfort in your retirement income... be creative. That's how it should be.

Reason #6: YOU ARE CREATIVELY READY

Do you feel your own creativity ready to burst out into the world? I did and now I use my creativity daily and absolutely love it!

What did you always want to do? What did you dream of being? You can revive a childhood hobby, or pursue a brand new hobby, start a new business, or creatively turn a hobby into a small business. You might take classes to learn something new, or finally use talents, long hidden, to change your life. Volunteer in your community as there are so many opportunities like Habitat for Humanity. Mentor the youth in your community. Teach adult education classes, senior groups, simply help others to grow too. Serve on local committees or boards and make a difference in your community, sharing your many years of experience in life. All of these things, and many more, bring purpose to your life – we all need purpose.

Use your brain to explore the endless possibilities open to you. It is never too late. Spend your retirement years in creative ways to help your community and humanity – but also to give yourself the most challenging, stimulating, creative time of your life!

Reason #7: READY TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Do you know that the human brain has the ability to learn new skills even at age 60 and beyond? If you've always had a passion to learn something, do it! Challenge yourself; set a goal and engage yourself to achieve it.

Adult education is one option to learn more about whatever interests you. You could learn to crochet, take a life story writing class, try yoga, a new language, or a computer class to enhance what you already know.

Online classes are another idea. You can take classes online, via tele-classes or webinars.. It's just as if you were sitting in the classroom – only you are at home. So many opportunities only restricted by your own interests!

Elderhostels (now called Road Scholars) are lifelong learning adventures. Travel the U.S. or worldwide and learn more about the world about you. They have oodles of adventurous opportunities.

You might also attend a local community college or university and get a degree. Some colleges actually offer free classes to seniors.

You won't know what classes are available and what the costs are, unless you do your homework. It can't hurt to do a few internet searches. Open that community adult education catalog next time it hits your mailbox... you might be pleasantly surprised!

Reason #8: “You’ll know when it’s right...”

Retirement is your chance to do everything you love and to be the person you always wanted to be. Oh! That should be my mantra!

Personally, I considered retirement for a full five years before I got gutsy enough to walk out that door. It’s not an easy decision for many of us. My job was my security and my life.

For years, retirees would tell me “You’ll know when it’s right”. Many retirees told me this. I told other co-workers “What does *that* mean?” Is some little retirement angel going to come and sit on my shoulder, whispering into my ear “You are now ready for retirement.. Go Wendy!” I totally didn’t get it.

Guess what? I do now! I was driving down the road towards work, considering a retirement date. First, I decided that I would retire in one month, that would give management plenty of time to replace me, as I was employed 36 years with one employer. As I drove along, I thought *WHY* a one-month notice? What would four weeks give them compared to two weeks? Nothing. So I resigned, giving my two-week notice and my retirement is history. Done!

So if you are feeling, in your gut, that the timing is simply RIGHT, it probably is! Follow your heart. At some point, time might be more valuable than money... and health becomes your most valued wealth.

Reason #9: LIVE LIFE

This is the only life you've got. Live it to the fullest. Nobody has forever. Retirement may mean you stop working, at your current job, but it does not mean you stop living. At some point, it's time to live life *your* way.

I retired at age 55, and my mother is doing fine at 84. I may have 30 retirement years ahead of me or even more! *But* – life has no guarantees. Your bonus years, this borrowed retirement life, may be taken away from you anytime. I don't say that to scare you, only to put life into perspective... time to enjoy!

It is time to live each day like it's your last. This is not meant to be depressing, but illness, injury, and death happens. Do what you have to. Do what you love to do. Do it now, while you still can.

Meet friends, old or new. Join clubs such as the Red Hat or The Romeo. Enjoy a slow lazy day out to lunch with friends, go power walking, or relive poker nights. Go on day trips or travel the world. Celebrate life and friendships every single day.

One retiree recently left this comment on my website: "I feel like I am 30, but I am actually 67, and I don't want to waste it." Age is just a number. It depends on you on how you want to live it.

So, are you ready to live life in your own way? Embrace your retirement.

... AND the Final Reason You Might Retire?

Reason #10: BECAUSE YOU CAN...

"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years." - Abraham Lincoln

Retirement is feared by many... it's a scary time of life when you step into the new unknown "retirement". You will transition from being "someone" (whether the CEO or a clerk) who is relied upon to keep business running. Suddenly you are facing the "Who Am I?" dilemma. Then there is the "What the heck do I DO all day?" problem. There are options and great opportunity ahead... if only you are open to it.

Whether you have saved enough or not, retirement depends on how you want to live it. It does not necessarily rely on the retirement savings that you have. It mostly depends on how you value what you've got.

It's all about choice. There are many ways to live and love your retirement years. For you to experience retirement the way you want it to be, just take it step by step and to create your new path.

Just think - not everybody is given the chance to retire. Life's uncertainties took away family and friends dear to us too early in life.

Bottom Line: Retirement should be enjoyed to the fullest, *because you can.*
