

Senior Advice: For some men it's hard to unwind

by *Doug_Mayberry*

Q: Since retiring, my husband stresses out easily. Before going to bed, he makes a daily detailed "to-do" list. During his career, he managed a large staff. Now, when he is unable to accomplish his list, he nearly freaks out. He is always in a rush and has little time for me. He even makes it difficult to fit in time to visit our children. Should I suggest he go back to work?

A: During our working years, for men especially, we focus on our job responsibilities. Your husband's frustration could arise from an inability to change his routine. But now that he is his own boss, he needs a new job description. Now that he has the ability to control "his time," the challenge is prioritizing that time.

Suggest to your husband that life is not an emergency. Tell him that your life has also changed, too, and you have been looking forward to sharing more time with him. Grab him and give him a great big hug and kiss. Say, "I love!" It is a winning approach.

Each night, after he has made his list, lean over your husband's shoulder and share with him your opinion of it. It is the best time to evaluate his timing. Your priorities should include playtime with each other, private time and visits with your children. You might consider making travel plans, taking a college course, learning some new dance routines. Helping process your lives with a partnership perspective is your goal!

Q: As a widow, I wander through the home my husband and I bought when we first married. Sometimes I laugh or cry when I remember the times we had raising our children. However, my neighborhood is in transition and I am occasionally fearful. The children want me to move, but I say, "No way." I love my neighbors and they love me. How can I best protect myself?

A. Tell the kids you are not moving, period. Ask them to help meet your safety concerns. Consider getting a small, yippy dog. When vacationing, have a neighbor pick up your papers. Have shrubs, and trees trimmed to permit full view of your home. Install sensor lights over all outside entrances. Keep your garage door locked. Install a front security door and lock it. Do you have a peephole in the door? Buy a fake security alarm box with warning signs.

Thieves think twice before entering a noisy or well-lit home. Turn on a talk show radio program near the front entrance every time you leave home.

Hide your valuables in the kitchen, clothes closet or garage. Leave some costume jewelry and a loose stack of dollars on your dresser to make burglars believe that's all there is. Put your valuable papers and other items in a safe deposit box. Plug in automatic turn-on nightlights throughout the house and bathrooms. If it is not

done, install a mail slot to hide your incoming mail. Some packages might not fit, so ask the neighbors to check. Do not leave notes on your front door.

Neighbors should be knowledgeable about your routine, know your phone numbers and have an emergency access key. Buy a memory phone for your bedside and program it emergency numbers. Photograph or videotape each room for insurance purposes.

By completing these safety steps you will reinforce in your children the notion that you intend to stay!

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