

# 10 TIPS FOR A Happy Retirement



- 1. Focus on the journey.** Retirement is a dynamic process through what may be the best years of your life. [The High Five messages for career development](#) (i.e., 1. Change is constant, 2. Follow your heart, 3. Focus on the journey, 4. Stay learning, and 5. Be an ally) apply just as much to the retirement stage as to earlier career stages. To focus on the journey is to fully live each moment, rather than constantly preparing for some future event.
- 2. Be prepared.** Although the future is unpredictable, there are many [steps you can take before retirement](#) to be as prepared as possible.
- 3. Set achievable goals.** [SMART](#) goals (i.e., goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-limited) help you prepare for the future, giving you something to look forward to and keep working towards. Break larger goals into manageable action steps to keep momentum (and to balance your focus between the future and today).
- 4. Put supports in place.** Throughout retirement, your need for others' support will change. Build and maintain effective family, social, community, and financial supports. Don't wait until you desperately need help to put supports in place.
- 5. Remain flexible.** Constantly re-evaluate goals and priorities. Consider what's working and what's not. Avoid rigid plans, making adjustments as they're needed.
- 6. Stay positive.** [Optimism](#) has been linked to career success and job satisfaction, and [work satisfaction](#) has been identified as the single best predictor of retirement satisfaction. Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? Count your blessings for a happier retirement.
- 7. Keep learning and growing.** Staying [actively engaged](#) requires an ongoing balance of challenge and capacity. Too little challenge leaves you feeling under-utilized – too much is overwhelming. Avoid boredom through continuous learning, whether through courses or on your own.
- 8. Stay connected.** It takes conscious effort to maintain relationships with family, friends, and former colleagues. Avoid isolation in your "semi-leisured" lifestyle by scheduling in times to meet with the people you care about.
- 9. Give back.** Former UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, wrote, "You have not done enough, you have never done enough, so long as it is possible that you have something to contribute. Enrich your retirement years by giving back in creative and meaningful ways – to your profession, your community, your family, your friends, or a cause that's important to you."
- 10. Make time for what's important.** As Stephen Covey illustrated, life is like a [jar of rocks](#). Identify your top priorities and make space for them first. With those taken care of, you'll be able to give other tasks the amount of your life that they are worth. Avoid wearing "busyness" as a badge of honour. Choose wisely how to invest time and energy to maximize your retirement happiness.



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