



9 Ways To Make Your New Residence Feel Like Home

Whether you're from a tight-knit suburban neighborhood or acres of land, the move to a senior living community can be exciting *and* intimidating. Between the new campus and neighbors, amenities and services, and a general change of environment, take your time to transition making this senior living community your new home. Some things you can look forward to include:

- Variety of activities to be involved in
- New, large campus to explore
- Lots of new people to me
- An excess of free time

If you're getting ready to move to a senior living community and relate to a something in the above list, we're excited to share this guide with you. Here are nine ways you can make your new place in a senior living community feel more like home.

Make It *Look* Like Home

The beauty of moving (and rightsizing) in retirement is the ability to keep the décor and sentimental pieces that mean the most to you, while getting rid of clutter to make room for new memories.

By bringing the things you most love to your new space, you can surround yourself with familiarity in family photos, memorable souvenirs, and favorite furniture pieces. Make sure to leave room for a few new items too!

If the senior living community you're moving to has a design center (Like Willow Valley Communities' [Design Center](#)), you can take this idea a step further. Meet with the interior designer to make sure some of your favorite accents from your old house are present in your new home, from wall colors, to cabinets, to flooring, and more.



Invite Neighbors, Family, and Friends Over

There's a song that sings, "Home is wherever I'm with you," and that's a great sentiment to remember when moving. After you've settled into your new home at a senior living community, invite those you care about most to share in and celebrate your new home. Throw a housewarming party in your new apartment, villa, or townhome, or invite them to an event. You don't have to face this new chapter of your life alone. Bring those who mean most to you along and discover new experiences together.



Attend New Resident Events

Willow Valley Communities holds support meetings and mixers for residents in their first 18 months of living on campus. While the resident mixers are casual evenings to mingle over food and drinks at [Local Table](#), the new resident meetings focus on more in-depth conversations. Our Resident Life and Wellness Team works closely with residents and social workers, to talk through problems in a safe and inclusive setting. Residents who are in the process of adjusting, missing their family, or going through other transitions in addition to their move discuss in a small group and act as a support system for each other.

Immerse Yourself in Hobbies You Enjoy

If you've picked a community like Willow Valley Communities with some of the best senior living amenities around, it can be exciting to decide what to do first. Our advice is to make a list of all the things you know you want to try and do them, one by one!

Between amenities, services, clubs, and groups, there's something for everyone. Do you enjoy working with your hands? Try woodworking or spend some time in an art studio or craft room. Would you rather be active? Check out the fitness centers, pools, and athletic clubs. Maybe you're interested in quieter passions. Check out the library, settle at a café to write, complete a puzzle, or engage in philosophic conversations and learning with educational clubs and classes.

If you still don't know where to start, ask your sales counselor what some of their other residents enjoy doing most. Maybe it's playing golf at a nearby course, or exploring the downtown not far from your new community. You picked this senior living community for a reason – you fell in love with it – so take some time to find out all the wonderful things you'll be able to do now that you live there.

Explore For Yourself

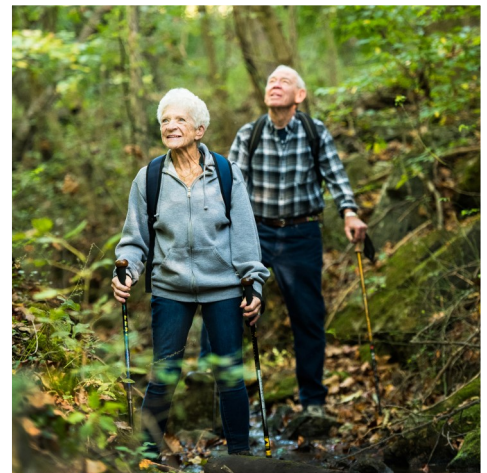
Willow Valley Communities spans 210 acres in Lancaster, PA, and a comment we usually hear from prospective residents is, "There's so much here!" However after talking to new residents, they affirm with a smile that it only takes a few days to know where you're going.

While you've most likely been on a tour or two during your decision making, now you live here. Take a map and grab a friend to explore all the grounds yourself. Not only is it great exercise, but you'll be able to orient yourself to the community the way you want to know it. Find out how long it takes to walk or drive to your favorite dining venues, the fitness center, or friends' residences.

Make New Friends

There's nothing like a new friendship to make you feel more included. Even in retirement, friends can be found easily – from the dinner table to fitness classes to travel groups. You can meet someone new even by walking your dog.

Willow Valley Communities' dining venues offer a great way to meet new people. When sitting down for a meal, you can choose to start a new table, or join an existing one. Residents who enjoy dining alone or in a small group, and who are interested in meeting new people, are welcome to make new friends this way for every meal at the community dining rooms at Willow Valley Communities.



Go to Community Events

Stemming off of community living, integrate yourself into your new community by attending events. Whether it is seasonal events, dances, lectures, or physical activities, your community probably sponsors larger activities for residents to enjoy. Some of these events might allow you to bring your family or friends. By attending community events, you can learn more about your new home and take pride in the place you now live.

Willow Valley Communities programs a variety of activities to give residents a full social schedule, should they want one. We offer hundreds of activities every quarter, as outlined in our [Renaissance](#) magazine. In addition to all these events and activities, our senior leadership also hosts Resident Quarterly Meetings. If your senior living community offers this, we highly recommend going. This is a great way for you to have a say in what happens at an organizational level, discover valuable information, and get the opportunity to talk to senior leadership face-to-face.



Keep Your Old Routine, But Pepper in New Experiences

Maybe our first seven ideas just didn't work for you, but this one might. Humans can be creatures of habit, so don't try to force yourself to change if you know you enjoy your routines. Keep it the same, down to the coffee you brew in the morning and before long, the new space you're in will feel like home. Along with the décor you bring from your previous house, keeping your routine nearly the same will definitely help you feel like this senior living community is now your home.

Adjust at Your Own Pace

Not everyone is a social butterfly. Not everyone likes change.

Take your time to ease into your new surroundings. The move to a senior living community can be both exciting and inspiring. Reach out if you feel you'd like some support. Don't rush yourself to feel "normal" again. With time, you'll learn to enjoy your new normal more than you ever thought possible.



Interested in making the move to senior living?

Our sales counselors welcome you to reach out to talk about what we have to offer at Willow Valley Communities.

Feel free to fill out a [contact form](#) or [request a personalized tour](#) on our website.

WillowValleyCommunities.org | 450 Willow Valley Lakes Drive, Willow Street, PA 17584