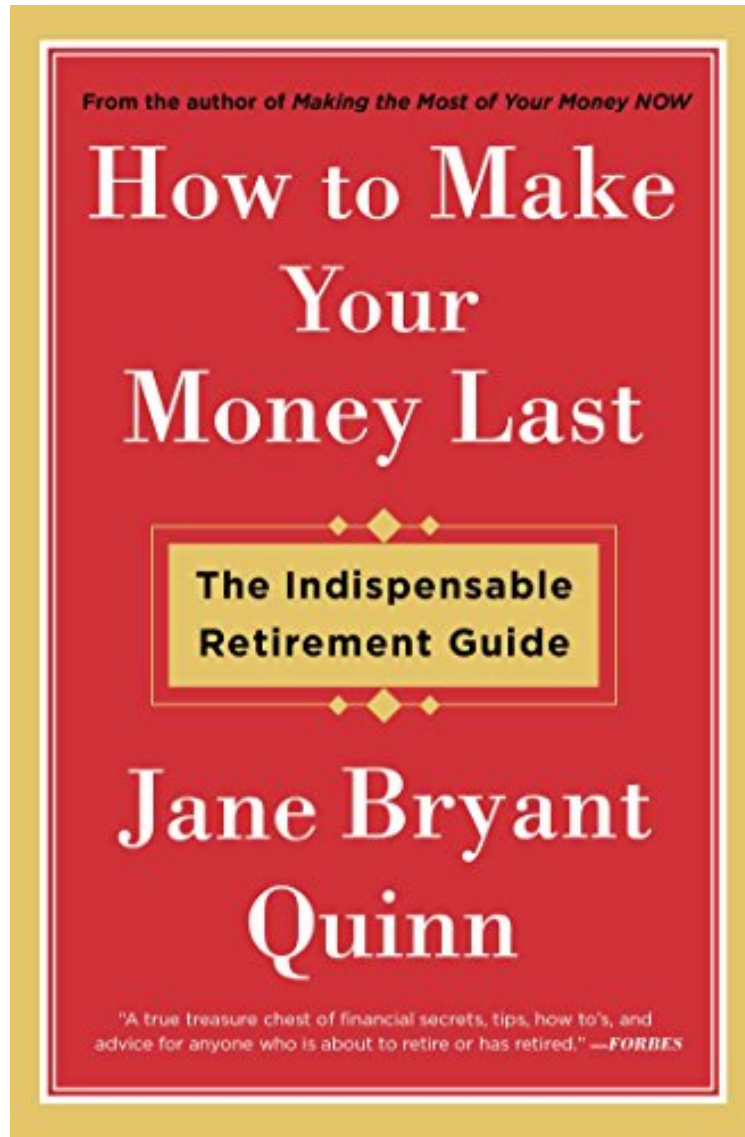


(Read free) How to Make Your Money Last: The Indispensable Retirement Guide

How to Make Your Money Last: The Indispensable Retirement Guide

Jane Bryant Quinn

ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#52001 in eBooks 2016-01-05 2016-01-05 File Name: B00P434BTE | File size: 69.Mb

Jane Bryant Quinn : How to Make Your Money Last: The Indispensable Retirement Guide before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How to Make Your Money Last: The Indispensable Retirement Guide:

111 of 117 people found the following review helpful. Helpful Guidance, such as "Money Buckets" By Bassocantor As I think about retirement, these types of books begin to look more appealing. I actually found it comforting to have an expert identify and discuss the most confusing (and fearful!) parts of retirement--especially knowing for sure one will

have enough money. Of course, some of the sections don't apply to everyone, so I just skipped to the parts that were relevant to me. The author has some helpful advice on thinking about how you are going to survive (financially) your golden years. She has a way of writing things clearly and succinctly--bringing out the most important points. Of course, Ms Quinn spends quite a bit of time on the thorny issue of how/when to claim social security benefits. It's been well documented by others, of course, but it was helpful to see an expert's perspective on how long to defer claiming benefits. To see how well you are prepared for retirement, Jane suggests you make a budget of where your money is going now, then add up all your financial assets. She suggests a conservative 4% "draw down" on your savings. And don't make the mistake, she admonishes the reader, of just investing in "income" investments. You really need a more well-rounded portfolio in stocks and indexes--and certainly NOT just a few stocks. For spending purposes, Ms Quinn recommends a concept of money "buckets." For example, you have one bucket to take care of immediate, short-term expenses, and another as an "income portfolio," and so on. You might have one bucket as a "discretionary spending" bucket. I was pleasantly surprised to find some really useful information on the Affordable Care Act--or "ACA." I had heard, for example, that premiums for seniors could be no more than 3x the rate for younger folks. The author confirmed that is indeed true. All in all, an excellent, well-written resource. Tons of useful information. I thought the author presented lots of good concepts--lots of meaty things to think about as I get closer to that magic age. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent, easy to read resource. By monkuboy I found this to be an excellent resource for preparing for retirement. The author seems to genuinely care for the reader, and this is not some book in which she tries to sell other services or boast about herself; it is full of just plain good financial advice and common sense. She emphasizes how you don't need to spend a lot of money hiring expensive planners or investing in funds that have a lot of operating expenses, but demonstrates with hard figures how most of the time, simpler is better. The chapters are organized well and the material is presented in a way that is easy to digest. This was a well worthwhile purchase. 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Best Retirement Guide for Everyday People!!! By Santa Bernard Prior to reading How To Make Your Money Last, I KNEW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT RETIREMENT FUNDS!!!! I primarily was looking for a book about Social Security. After reading How To Make Your Money Last, I now have a good understanding about Social Security, AND I understand all of the other jargon about retirement funds. When I met with my financial advisor (whom I found through the recommended websites in the book), I was able to understand him, and was able to have a sound conversation about my retirement (effective June 23, 2016), and make sound decisions. I highly recommend How To Make Your Money Last!!! It is written in layman terms. Jane Bryant Quinn "talks" to you on your level. She doesn't lose you with the complicated talk that some "professional financial experts" present at "free dinner" seminars. After you read it, you'll see why it's "The Indispensable Retirement Guide" Be like me, and NEVER lend it to anyone!!! Tell them to buy their own copy!!! IT'S INDISPENSABLE!!!

Turn your retirement savings into a steady paycheck that will last for life with Jane Bryant Quinn's "How to Make Your Money Last: A Retirement Guide" book that covers every phase of retirement finance. Bottom line, anyone on the retirement track or in retirement should own this book. (Huffington Post). Today, people worry that they're going to run out of money in their older age. That won't happen if you use a few tricks for squeezing higher payments from your assets--from your Social Security account (find the hidden values there), pension (monthly income or lump sum?), home equity (sell and invest the proceeds or take a reverse mortgage?), savings (should you buy a lifetime annuity?), and retirement accounts (how to invest--critically--how much to withdraw from your savings each year?). The right moves will not only raise the amount you have to spend, they'll stretch out your money over many more years. With this book, financial expert Jane Bryant Quinn, America's dean of personal finance (Forbes), explains how to turn your retirement funds into a paycheck that will last for life. She also shows how to look at your savings and investments in a new way. If you stick with super-safe choices the money might not last. You need safe money to help pay the bills in your early retirement years. But to ensure that you still have spending money ten and twenty years from now, you have to invest for growth, today. Quinn shows you how. At a time when people are living longer, yet retiring with a smaller pot of savings than they'd hoped for, this book will become the essential guide--a hugely valuable resource for readers, wherever they are on their personal financial timeline. (Publishers Weekly, starred review).

Jane Bryant Quinn is America's dean of personal finance. . . . If anyone knows how to get us through retirement, it's Jane. . . . The book is a true treasure chest of financial secrets, tips, how to's, and advice for anyone who is about to retire or has retired. . . . If you need a kind, but tough drill sergeant to kick you out of your retirement doldrums, set you on a safe financial path, and keep you smiling through your next stage of life, this book is the answer. (Forbes) Veteran financial writer Quinn delivers another winner with this guide. . . . Quinn's tone is as reassuring as her words . . . certain to be a hugely valuable resource for readers, wherever they are on their personal financial timeline. (Publishers Weekly, starred review) Quinn is one of the country's leading commentators on finance . . . Her clarity of prose is matched with a generosity of spirit, and all of the information is

graciously laced with a noncondescending tone that renders this book as absolutely helpful as the author intended. . . . Quinn's books are always in demand, and this one will prove no exception." (Booklist, starred review) Quinn provides savvy suggestions to people approaching, entering, or managing retirement. . . . Readers at these mature stages of planning will find valuable insight and resources here . . . With strategy and thoughtfulness, Quinn's readers will be able to 'get more from your assets than you probably think.' (Library Journal)"Leading personal finance columnist Jane Bryant Quinn writes with clarity and compassion about the often stressful subject of retirement finances. She enlightens readers about the difficulties of determining how to get the most out of Social Security. (It's not as simple as simply signing up for it.) Yet even those readers who understand every word she writes will be glad to come to the last chapter, 'Just Tell Me What To Do.' There she lists the three numbers that matter when you're making a retirement plan and offers an 18-item retirement checklist." (Boston Globe) PRAISE FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MONEY NOW: "There is no more trustworthy figure in all of American journalism." (Joseph Nocera, author of *A Piece of The Action*) "The book...remains at its heart the Joy of Cooking of personal finance. It provides the basics in just about any area you can think of—from what you should consider about money when you are in your 20s, to what to do with your investments once you have retired—and presents simple, straightforward recipes outlining the fundamentals of how to accomplish your goals." (The New York Times) "I found myself racing through this gigantic compendium because it was engagingly written and full of useful information. And she writes compellingly enough to make you want to spend more time getting things in order." (The Washington Post) "Everything you ever wanted to know was somewhere in those pages...Quinn, the renowned Newsweek columnist who has been writing on personal finance topics for more than 30 years, focuses this rewrite on many of the top issues of today, such as recovering when you've been savaged by the economy. Last week she talked with me about how Americans can deal with today's tough market." (The Los Angeles Times) "A financial management bible, updated . . . Jane Bryant Quinn has been teaching all of us how to better manage our money—for the better part of three decades." (MarketWatch) "A practical tour de force from the maven of money. This is simply the best handbook for managing personal finances that I have ever seen. It belongs on every bookshelf—or best yet, on every desk near every checkbook or computer." (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School, author of *World Class*) "The class book for practical financial advice—encyclopedic in scope and written with clarity and style." (Burton G. Malkiel, author of *A Random Walk Down Wall Street*) "No one is smarter about money—or easier to read or clearer or more conscientious—than Jane Bryant Quinn. (Andrew Tobias, author of *The Only Investment Guide You'll Ever Need*) About the Author Jane Bryant Quinn is a leading commentator on personal finance. She is author of the bestselling *Making the Most of Your Money NOW*, *Smart and Simple Financial Strategies for Busy People*, and *Everyone's Money Book*. Quinn has written for *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, *Bloomberg.com*, *Woman's Day*, and *Good Housekeeping*. An Emmy Award winner, Quinn has appeared on PBS and CBS News. Her personal finance column currently appears in the *AARP Bulletin*. She lives in New York City and blogs at JaneBryantQuinn.com. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

How to Make Your Money Last 1 The Joy and Challenge of Life After Work Now that you can do whatever you want, what do you want to do? Retirement challenges us like nothing else. We have to reinvent our lives. One day we're part of the vast American workforce—living by the clock, attacking new projects, and focusing our minds and skills. The next day we can sleep until noon if it pleases us. Then we bound out of bed, free at last, ready for coffee and lunch and . . . what? Successful retirement—whenever it occurs—turns out to be work of another kind. The future is almost as blank a slate as it was when you were 18 and wondering what was going to happen to you. Fifty years later, you're fortified with knowledge and experience but with no place to take it. You might have a partner in life, children, grandchildren, status in your community, and a dog that loves you. Still, you have seven days a week and 52 weeks a year to fill. No sane human being can watch that much television or play that much golf. Maybe you'll be able to stay at work well past normal retirement age. Even so, you might shorten your hours. The last day of work can't be held off forever. You need an action plan to transition into this new phase of your life. You also need a financial plan to make the most of the income and savings that you have available. That's what most of this book is about. "Money can't buy happiness," they say, but it sure can buy food, shelter, heat, phone service, streaming movies on TV, and gas for the car. A little extra buys plane tickets, ball games, concerts, and long-term peace of mind. It's hard to be happy if you're always worried about the bills. Learning how to stretch your available income and rightsize your life are the first steps toward retiring well. Even if retirement seems far away, steps you take now—to save and invest—can greatly improve your standard of living when your paycheck eventually stops. But before I talk money, I'd like to talk about the nonfinancial challenges of life after full-time work. They're huge and, for most people, unexpected. We fling ourselves into leisure as if a grand vacation lay ahead. But permanent vacations can get pretty boring. When we were working, we had a sense of accomplishment and a place in the world, even if—at the end—we couldn't wait to quit. Now, having shut that door, we need another place. What are we retiring to? Eventually, when you look back on your transition from work to retirement, you'll think of it as perhaps the most creative period of your life. Most of us still need an active sense of social worth. But instead of getting it from a workplace, ready-made, we

have to make it ourselves. The challenge is to discover new interests, new places, and new friends. Your weeks should fill up again with projects, meetings, entertainments, and events—activities you chose yourself, to gladden your days and give purpose to your life. You'll probably take on these projects at a leisurely pace. I'm not suggesting that you'll want to be busy all the time. But neither will you want to look at a daily calendar that's blank. It takes time to move from the worker role to the role of engaged, individual citizen. How long the transition takes will depend on your personal initiative and will. The faster you can bury the old "workplace you"; and rise to a new "liberated you," the more content you're going to be. Not everyone moves into retirement willingly. You might lose your job and spend some unhappy weeks or months rehashing that stressful time. Your health (or your spouse's health) might be dicey, which, for now, completely occupies your mind. The departure from work might have been so sudden that you had no time to prepare emotionally. Widows, widowers, and the divorced face similar problems. They've been forcibly "retired" from married life and now face their own blank slate. No matter how you get there, you (and your partner, if you have one) will have to figure out how to build another life. The questions will be the same for everyone. Who are you, anyway? For so much of our lives, we identify ourselves with our jobs. "I'm a lawyer." "I'm a teacher." "I'm an operations manager." "I work for IBM." Those who have young children might also say "I'm a mother" or "I'm a father." Our jobs and family responsibilities give us status and meaning. When we quit, or the children grow up, there's an instant loss of status that few of us are truly prepared for. We're in a new role—that of citizen-retiree. It's an empty vessel until we fill it up. What are you going to do with the rest of your life? A 3G retirement (golf, gossip, and grandchildren) isn't always enough, cute as the grandchildren are. Most retirees today are vigorous, mentally alert, and eager to jump into something active and interesting. We have skills, smarts, and dreams. At work, we were accomplishing stuff, even if we got tired of it. As parents, we had the critical job of raising responsible adults. But what are we accomplishing now? Loss of meaning and purpose throws some retirees into depression, even those who thought they couldn't wait to start a leisured life. If you spend your hours in front of a TV set, you're likely to—quite literally—bore yourself to death. You'll need all your imagination and energy to discover a new role. Where will you find friends? When you worked, you made social contact simply by doing your job every day. You had people to chat with or complain about, customers to call on, and lunches with colleagues. When your job ends, however, your workaday friends are likely to fall away. You need to get out of the house and do things, not just for fun and intellectual interest but for the social companionship, too. Women are better at this than men but it can be a challenge for both.

THE FIVE STAGES OF RETIREMENT The gerontology researcher Robert Atchley studied the transition from working life to leisure. Retirement, he says, is a process, not an event. Some people hustle through the stages. Others take months, even years, to reach serenity. The better you manage the first stage, the faster your progress is likely to be.

Stage 1: Preretirement. You gradually disengage from work. You're still doing your job but your imagination moves ahead. You talk with friends about their own plans for life after work and ask retired friends what they're up to now. You put together a budget to see if, and when, you can afford to leave your paycheck behind. If you're married, you have many talks with your spouse about how you each expect retirement to work—your hopes and fears, where you'll live, what you'll do with your time, whether you'll both retire at the same time and, if not, what the expectations will be. You think about what you might do next. If you hope for part-time work, now's the time to start making the contacts. There might be a project you can do for your current employer or others in your business. If you're being laid off, do your best to think about your next life, not your past one. You're not "unemployed" (bad place), you're "semiretired" (better place). Forward is your only choice.

Stage 2: The Honeymoon. You're free! No more deadlines or office stress. You'll do some of the things you've been meaning to get—clean the closets, paint the porch, take a trip. If you already have a lot of interests, you might step up your engagement with them. If you've led a high-pressure work life, you might simply rest with your feet up, read, go fishing, take walks, or watch ball games. Assuming that your retirement was planned, you're happy, happy, happy with your decision. Your honeymoon can last for many months, provided that you're moving quickly toward your other interests. But it might last only a week or two if you have nothing to do and nowhere to go.

Stage 3: Disenchantment. Gradually, your days come to seem a little bit empty. You feel a loss of status, if you identified strongly with your job. To the younger, working world, you're obsolete. Even if you retired gladly, your new activities might not be as fulfilling as you'd hoped. You see fewer people and feel more isolated, especially if your spouse or partner is still working. You might notice that money is going out the door faster than you planned. If you retired specifically to do something else, such as starting a business or taking up teaching, you might skip Stage 3 or pass through it pretty quickly. Ditto if you're an outgoing person who loves discovering new things. If not, disenchantment might catch you by surprise and slow down your adjustment. You're not so eager to get out of bed and can't figure out how to spend your afternoons. You join a club or half try to volunteer for a local organization but it doesn't work out. If your health is poor you might come to feel that your life is effectively over. You're just taking up space. For some, Stage 3 might last a year or more while you obsess over what you "used to be." Stage 4: Reorientation. It

dawns on you how bored (and boring) you've become. Emotionally, you're finally ready to advance. Some retirees will go back to work. For the rest, it's like retiring all over again but with a more realistic eye. You take stock of your income and expenses and rightsize your life financially. You evaluate your experiments with activities so far and start to engage more deeply with the one that interests you the most. One is all you need; others will come along. Your lingering work-life persona is finally being put to bed. You feel yourself growing into your new role.

Stage 5: Stability. You've got it together. You're finding new purpose and feeling productive again. You're happy (or at least satisfied) with your life and are living within your means. Along with new interests, you've discovered ordinary pleasures, such as browsing in a library or taking walks. Some retirees get to this stage pretty quickly—in fact, directly from the honeymoon. Others take years. You'll know you've arrived when all your thoughts are forward-looking and your days are full.

MAKE YOUR PLAN: IT'S LIBERATING! The transition from work to "freedom" is harder than most of us realize until we get there. It starts with clearing the old stuff out of your head—your work, routines, and expectations of status. They get in the way of your life ahead. Post work, you can do anything that's within your budget and physical capabilities. When your calendar is blank and you're wondering how to fill it, it seems natural to start a list. You might begin by asking yourself what makes you happy—not only today but what made you happy in the past. It might be something you haven't done for 30 years. Never mind. Write it down. You're trying to capture anything—specific activities, experiences, relationships—that once put a smile on your face. From there, branch out to everything you've ever thought of doing. No idea is trivial. Maybe you'd like to improve your tennis or golf. Read all of Charles Dickens. Research your family's roots. Get a puppy and train it. Learn woodworking. Take cooking classes. Take dance classes. Join a singing group (or start one). Join a weight-loss group or exercise class. Learn photography, including the art of editing photos digitally. Teach Sunday school. Take music lessons, maybe on an instrument you used to play before you got so busy. Join a bridge group. Join a chess club. Give parties. Learn another language. Walk a long mountain trail. Learn local history. Run for local office or join a political campaign team. Start a website to share your professional expertise. Join an investment club. Get more involved with your church or temple. Start a local newsletter. Coach sandlot baseball. Make pots. Paint (President George W. Bush started painting lessons when he left office). Volunteer for a worthy cause. Start (or join) a protest group. Tie flies for people who fish. Create gardens for yourself and your friends. Become a local tour guide or docent in a regional museum. Make beautiful holiday and birthday cards. Learn computer skills. Sign up for Skype so you can talk to your children and grandchildren long distance, free. Run a charity fund drive. Make jewelry. Become a discount coupon maven. Join a yoga class. Sort the family photos and put them online. Attend local concerts and lectures. Write your autobiography. Have regular dinners with friends. Spend quality time with your spouse or children. Join AmeriCorps, for civic opportunities. Teach English as a second language. Start a wine-tasting group. Try out for a local amateur theater production or offer to paint scenery. Find a bird-watching pal. Travel—be it cruises, visits to children, group tours, or day trips to interesting places near your home. Restore furniture or an old car. Manage garage sales for neighbors. Etcetera, etcetera, and so forth, as the king of Siam would say. You might enjoy going back to school. Some retirees work toward college or advanced degrees, others audit courses. A school near you might offer extension courses to adults (check Road Scholar's Lifetime Learning Institute for opportunities). Free or low-fee college courses are available online: Scroll through the offerings at edX.org, Coursera.org, Udemy.com, and Udacity.com as well as the online courses from Harvard, Dartmouth, Yale, Duke, the University of California, Berkeley, and others (for a long list of what is available, go to MOOC-list.com). Some courses are live; they require you to be at your computer at certain hours and to complete assignments (although not necessarily submit to tests). Others let you listen to lectures whenever you want. Finally, make a list of your skills. Are you good with your hands or with computers? Do you know finance? Can you organize groups? Create marketing campaigns? Work well with children? You have a lot to offer your community that it can use. A focus on skills can help direct you to volunteer groups that would be thrilled to have you. Business people might join a local SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), an organization that helps small businesses get started or expand. Financial people might assist a nonprofit with its books, investments, and fund drives, or study to be a financial planner with an emphasis on retirement prep. Those who drive a mean hammer might volunteer with a local Habitat for Humanity. If you're good with people, you might become a health or social service aide. A skills list helps you assess job prospects, too. You might not find your next life's work immediately—a delay that risks dumping you, grumpily, into the depressive Stage 3. But keep trying things out. One of them will click. To get yourself moving, set up an engagement calendar—one of those month-at-a-glance hanging calendars or the calendar on your computer. Put something useful or interesting into your schedule every day. It might be work around the house (clean the closets, repair the screens), ordinary errands (shopping, doctor's appointments), community activities (club meetings, volunteer days), hobbies (consult your "makes me happy" list), or personal enrichment (reading, study). You might undertake weekly mini-explorations of nearby towns—to visit a new park, a small museum, a used-book store. It takes as little as one activity, plus normal chores, to structure your day. Something you have to do (or want to do) gets you up in the morning. Regular activities also have the virtue of bringing you new friends as well as renewing relationships with

friends who weren't also business colleagues. As often as possible, your calendar should include things you do with other people rather than things you do alone. If you like playing Scrabble or backgammon find a challenging partner rather than spend hours playing anonymously online. If you like to walk, find a walking partner. Cooks might find a cooking partner. Have I mentioned exercise? One of the best things you can do for yourself is to join a gym, even if (like me) you've resisted exercise all your life. Vigorous exercise greatly improves your general health, appearance, and well-being. It holds down doctor bills, takes off pounds, and keeps your joints and muscles moving. Studies show that if you lower your blood pressure and reduce "bad" cholesterol, you're less likely to suffer dementia in older age. Exercise classes are also great opportunities for socializing. Instead of grumbling about the office you can grumble about your abs. If you're not yet online, a world awaits you. From your laptop or iPad, you can follow the news, communicate with family and friends, plan a trip, take a free online college course, research any subject that interests you, find answers to medical questions, follow your investments, shop, get book recommendations, nail the bargain plane tickets sold to people who can travel at the last moment, and find a vacation condo to rent for a month. For travel with a purpose, check the opportunities at RoadScholar.org (formerly Elderhostel). An Internet search for "senior travel" turns up organizations such as Senior Cycling and ElderTreks. These and similar groups offer adventurous trips in the United States and abroad—always with a good mattress and bathroom at the end of the day. We're past the age of going "scout"; THE WORLD OF THE SEMIRETIRED For some, volunteering and leisure time interests aren't nearly enough. You spent your life working and miss the buzz. Doing part-time work or starting a home business is a terrific transition from full-time work to, eventually, full-time leisure. It's also the answer for people who need income to tide themselves over to their Social Security checks. Some companies hire their own retirees for consulting or project work but don't limit yourself to the sort of thing you did before. People, organizational, or management skills are transferable to many types of businesses. You could be a tour director or take seasonal work at a national park. The health professions are looking for recruits, especially people interested in working with the elderly. Local vocational schools offer short-term training for a wide variety of jobs. Online hiring halls such as Craigslist.com and SeniorJobBank.org list opportunities nearby. If you're unfamiliar with the Web and social media, take a course. Employers nowadays expect to receive job applications by email. If they're interested, they'll turn to the Web to learn more about you. Older professionals and business people, in particular, should post their resumes and personal profiles on LinkedIn.com. The managers who do the hiring—almost certainly younger than you—will check LinkedIn just to see if you understand modern communications. If you're not on the Web you're invisible. You might even start your own business. I can't find good numbers on how many retirees do so but a 2009 "recareering" study done by the Urban Institute for AARP gives you a hint. Of people in midlife who retired from their previous jobs and changed careers, about 31 percent say they went from working for other people to working for themselves. Finding the right business idea takes time. Again, turn to lists. Write down lots of ideas, no matter how far-out they seem. Test them against your interests, abilities, and professional or social contacts, then winnow them down. A high percentage of retirement businesses take advantage of knowledge and connections that the retiree already has. Many good books have been written about starting and running a small business. You might find a course for entrepreneurs at your local community college or the business school at a nearby university. There you'll learn not only from the teachers but from other business owners who are taking classes, too. Legal, sales tax, bookkeeping, and similar unfamiliar issues become manageable when you talk with people who have solved them. One warning before you launch: Have a plan B. What will you do if the business doesn't work? You can probably afford to lose a small investment but don't endanger your home or wipe out your retirement savings. Always look ahead to what you'll be doing for the rest of your life. RETIREMENT FOR TWO Talk, talk, talk, talk, talk to each other. That's what every financial planner tells me that couples need to do when retirement first springs to mind. Single people need to think only about themselves when making plans. Couples, however, are making a dual decision. Are you both ready for retirement? If so, what next? If you both work and one of you isn't ready to quit, how will you handle the relationship? How will a homemaker feel when his or her partner is suddenly home all day? Spouses or partners often assume that they both see retirement the same way and that's not necessarily so. When they start talking they might be surprised—pleasantly or otherwise—by what the other thinks. For example, a husband might expect his working wife to retire when he does, when in fact she's perfectly happy with her job. A wife at home might think her husband should work a few more years so they can accumulate more savings. Each spouse might have a different dream about where and how to live. One partner might have secretly run up debt that now has to be confessed. These can be rough conversations if your differences are large. Somehow you need to get to the same page. The quality of your retirement will depend not only on finding new things to do but on developing new ways of living with each other. Retirement gets simpler when both members of a working couple quit at the same time. You can travel when you want, make daytime social plans, share household chores and projects, or move somewhere else. A vibrant retirement life means keeping each other excited about what's happening every day. If only one of you retires, however, you need to develop some ground rules. For example, the spouse or partner at home will typically take on more household chores. (When my late husband retired, our son took him into the laundry

room and said, "Dad, this is a washing machine.") In return, the spouse at work should try to find more evening and weekend time for things you can do together. Most importantly, the spouse at home shouldn't pressure the working spouse to quit. If you pout long and hard enough, you might get your way but your spouse won't be a happy partner down the road. Why should a wife give up her work to husband-sit (or vice versa)? As the retired spouse, you should make your own schedule, find your own friends, get your own life, even take your own trips. Eventually, your partner will be ready for leisure, too. A full-time homemaker is in a different position. She (it's usually a she) has reinvented her life since the day she "retired" as an all-day parent. She might have gone to work full- or part-time or deeply involved herself as a volunteer. Her days have structure—shopping, cleaning, friends, hobbies, meetings, exercise, walking the dog. The last thing she needs is a crabby husband demanding to be entertained or ordering her around the way he ordered subordinates at work. On the other hand, she can't pretend that he isn't there. Talk, talk, talk about it. You're entering this new life together. A husband's free time, shared with his homemaker wife, can help her get out of a rut as well as set new directions for himself. Not everyone can expect a bouncing, lively retirement life. Your health, or your spouse's or partner's health, might be poor. But even folks with limitations find positive ways to spend their time—connecting with friends, playing cards, learning things on the Internet, taking short day trips. Whatever your situation, happiness lies in letting go of the past. All that matters now is who you are in the moment. Retirement is an adventure, demanding all of your creativity and force. So keep experimenting. No one but you can invent your new life.