

Signs of Change

A Compassionate Guide for You & Your Loved One

As the seniors important to you get older, it's important to observe gently, reflect honestly, and begin supportive conversations grounded in compassion and respect. Here's what to look for and how to talk about it.



What to Watch For

Use this simple checklist to note what you've observed in the last 3-6 months. A single checkmark isn't cause for alarm. Patterns or multiple categories may signal it's time for a deeper conversation.

Mobility & Physical Safety

- ☐ Trouble with balance or unsteadiness
- ☐ Difficulty standing up, sitting, or using stairs
- ☐ Recent falls or "almost" falls
- ☐ Slower or shuffling walk

Home & Daily Tasks

- ☐ Clutter or disorganization that's unusual
- ☐ Dishes, laundry, or trash piling up
- ☐ Spoiled or expired food in the fridge
- ☐ Missed appointments or tasks

Memory, Thinking & Focus

- ☐ Repeating questions or stories
- ☐ Getting lost in familiar places
- ☐ Trouble following conversations
- ☐ Confusion about time, dates, or bills

Hygiene & Personal Appearance

- ☐ Wearing the same clothes multiple days
- ☐ Less frequent bathing or grooming
- ☐ Unwashed hair or noticeable body odor

Medication & Health Management

- ☐ Missed or doubled medication doses
- ☐ Difficulty organizing pillboxes
- ☐ Missed scheduled medical visits

Driving & Transportation

- ☐ New dents or scratches on the car
- ☐ Getting lost on familiar routes
- ☐ Hesitancy or fear while driving

Mood, Behavior & Social Life

- ☐ Withdrawing from activities or friends
- ☐ Increased irritability, anxiety, or apathy
- ☐ Sleeping much more or less than usual

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How to Start the Conversation with Respect

Talking about changes can feel sensitive. These prompts help you stay open, warm, and collaborative when it's time to talk. *Remember: listen first, then explore solutions. The goal is partnership... not pressure.*

I've noticed a few things lately, and I wanted to check in with you. How have you been feeling day to day?

Your independence matters to me. Can we talk about what's been easier or harder lately?

What would feel most supportive to you right now?

Let's figure this out together. What's important to you in the months ahead?



Next Steps to Consider

These gentle steps can help bring clarity and ease. Remember even small supports can help your parent stay comfortable, confident, and safe.

If You Notice Mild Changes

- Increase check-ins (in person or by phone)
- Do a quick home safety walkthrough together
- Review medications and medical appointments
- Ask siblings or trusted friends for perspective

If You Notice Concerning Changes

- Schedule a medical evaluation
- Help organize medications or simplify routines
- Explore in-home support or respite stays
- Visit a senior living community to learn about independent living, assisted living, or memory care options



We're here to help! Call [\(402\) 603-0358](tel:(402)603-0358) to get started.