

# The Dark Side Of Retirement

Mental Health Challenges Facing Baby Boomers



With  
Buoy Coaching

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## **Depression**

Initially, many retirees may feel elated that they're "off the clock" forever. However, after the honeymoon is over a retiree may feel sad, lonely or depressed when the reality of retirement sets in and it's not at all what they expected. Fact is, we're all trained from a young age to be productive. In retirement that is suddenly taken away from us, and we're left to deal with the void. Many people, especially those who are career oriented can suddenly feel empty when they retire. That can make depression a common problem in retirement.

- The National Institutes of Health reports that, of the 35 million Americans age 65 or older, nearly 2 million suffer from full-blown depression. Another 5 million suffer from less severe forms of the illness. Women are at a greater risk for depression because of biological factors such as hormonal changes and the stress that comes with maintaining relationships or caring for loved ones or children who are ill.
- Depression is the single most significant risk factor for suicide among the elderly. Sadly, many of those who commit suicide did, in fact, reach out for help: 20% see a doctor on the day they die, 40 percent the same week and 70 percent the same month.
- Conditions such as heart attack, stroke, hip fracture or macular degeneration, as well as procedures such as bypass surgery, are known to be associated with the development of depression. Grief over a spouse's death or terminal illness diagnosis may contribute to high rates of depression and suicide among the elderly. A spouse's death can lead to a reduction in pension benefits or bring additional financial burden. Also, the surviving spouse may not be able or willing to manage the finances if they were usually handled by the deceased spouse.

## **Suicide**

Lack of preparation or capacity to deal with these factors and other mental emotional components of retirement can culminate into one of the most troubling trends: Suicide.

- Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States with an aggregate rate of 11 suicide deaths per 100,000 Americans. Suicide rates are highest among people over the age of 65, according to the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). That age group makes up 12.5 percent of the population and accounts for 15.9 percent of all suicides.
- White men older than age 65 take their own life at almost triple the overall rate, and are eight times more likely to kill themselves than women in the same age group. Perhaps surprisingly, white men age 85 and older have the highest annual suicide rate of any group-51.4 deaths per 100,000. In contrast, the rate for white women peaks between ages 45 and 64 at 7.8 deaths per 100,000.
- Recently the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed a dramatic spike in suicides among middle-aged people, with the highest increases among men in their 50s, whose rate went up by nearly 50% to 30 per 100,000; and women in their early 60s, whose rate rose by nearly 60%. In recent years, deaths by suicide has surpassed deaths by motor vehicle crashes.

As surprising as this information may seem, the threat of addiction, depression, and suicide become even more real as you examine their contributing factors. For example, baby boomers were the first generation to engage in the widespread use of recreational drugs, and the first group for which a wide variety of prescription medications were readily available and culturally accepted as treatment for nearly every ailment. Baby boomers are also at a critical stage in life where stress can mount due to natural aging, bodily dysfunction, grief and loss, and the financial strain that often stems from caring for both aging parent(s) and adult children/ grandchildren.

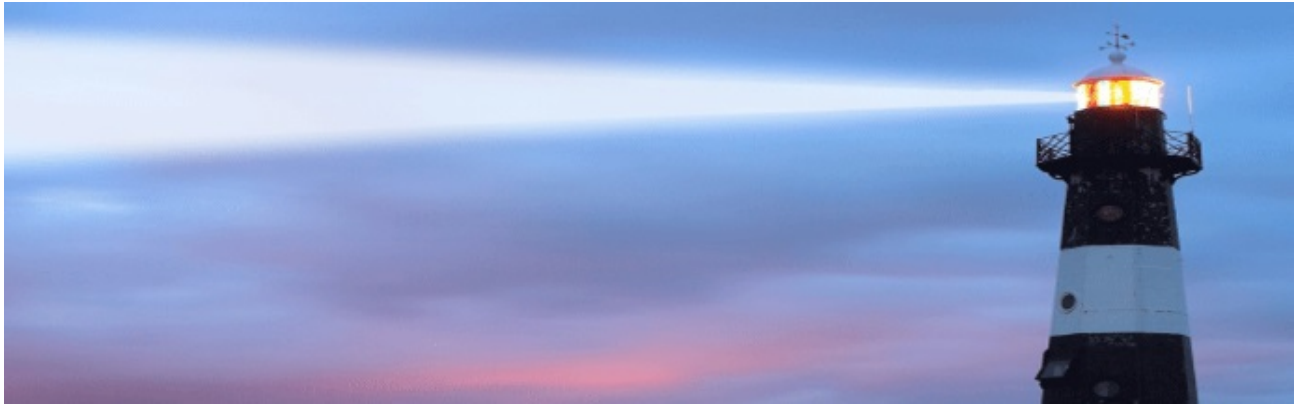
### **Other Lifestyle Trends**

Other boomer lifestyle trends suggest we are heading towards a retirement crisis that makes the fear of running out of money paltry by comparison. Factors including lofty expectations about their ability to constantly re-invent themselves as well as the ability to stay young and relevant forever are causing boomer's to reach for solutions that can come back to haunt them.

Reality is, not everyone is aging gracefully; they're not as mobile and capable as they were before, and many are finding themselves alone instead of surrounded by "peace and love." Literally bringing to fruition the song lyrics of their generation, including those by *The Who*, "I hope I die before I get old," and *Beatles*, "Will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm sixty-four?"

Combine statistics and research on divorce, physical well-being and social networks, and you have the makings for a massive paradigm shift in retirement that demands more time and energy be committed to planning for the non-financial aspects of it:

- A recent New York Times article noted that the overall, national rate of divorce in the United States is trending down. Except for one group: the 50-plusers, who have seen their rate of divorce surge 50% in the past 20 years. In fact, one in four couples divorce after age 50.
- One study found that about 40% of boomer respondents said it was difficult for them to kneel or stoop, stand for two hours, walk one-quarter mile, climb 10 steps without resting, sit for two hours, lift and carry 10 pounds, reach over the head, push or pull a large object, or grasp small objects. That translates into 40% of boomers not finding as much joy as they expected in retirement because they'll struggle on a vacation that requires some walking, standing, or holding onto a rail, find it difficult to play on the floor or in the grass with their grandchildren, and garner less pleasure than ever when it comes to simple every day outlets such as gardening, biking with a friend, or watching a movie.
- While the idea of eliminating personal interactions with some co-workers may sound great at first, humans weren't made to do life alone. Fewer interactions can lead retirees to feeling isolated, bored, and out-of-touch. Three factors that can compound negative feelings about retirement and cause people to seek drugs and alcohol to cope with the changes.



This shadowy downside of retirement appears to be exacerbated by the fact that today's seniors are from a generation that stressed self-reliance... a trait characterized by a reluctance to discuss financial and or personal/health matters. Making the dark side a relatively new problem that boomers and their families may struggle to understand, recognize, and find help for.

Fact is, the dark side of retirement is all too real, and requires new and existing retirees to make specific plans to help them avoid these dangers by setting aside some time to address issues such as:

- Replacing their work identity
- Establishing a healthy and active lifestyle
- Staying socially connected and involved
- Resolving relationship wants and needs before they turn into points of conflict

While retirement is perceived by many as an idyllic time, it can turn out cruel and stressful if couples don't take time to discuss their thoughts and expectations for everyday life in retirement. That's why my first priority is education and information. I want to empower and support couples as they make their transition from work-life to this next phase of life.

Whether you're already retired or just a few short years away, this guide is only the first step. I invite you to learn more about me and how I work with clients like you, by [clicking here](#), or you can request more information, by calling (510)-500-4566 .

I'm here, and ready to help you avoid the dark side of retirement!

## Retire Well With These Next Steps

Deciding to retire is one of the most important decisions you will make for yourself and family. You deserve to not only be prepared financial but also mentally, socially and physically. The more equipped you are to replace your work identity, stay relevant and connected, as well as keep mentally and physically sharp the more successful you will be in making the transition from work like to home life.



### **Align Yourself With A Retirement Coach**

Larry Jacobson is a hands-on and experienced coaching professional who is passionate about helping people retire well. Together, he blends his personal and professional experience to help you explore and make the most of your time, talents and energy in retirement. [Learn more.](#)



### **Let Me Go To Work For You**

Through my personalized approach, I will work with you to determine your current level of retirement readiness and well-being. Then we'll develop a plan to help you address any unmet needs or desires, monitor your progress, and take action to create the retirement you desire... [Learn more.](#)



### **Enjoy Your Retirement**

Through training and retirement coaching I have come to embrace the fact that no one wants to run out of money, let alone family, friends, or good health. My commitment to you is to help you preserve the non-financial aspects both now and well into the future. [Learn more.](#)

## About Larry Jacobson



Larry successfully transitioned from CEO to sailor and achieved his dream of sailing around the world. Then from sailor to author and speaker, he now focuses all of his energy into his coaching programs for retirement planning. His ground breaking program, Sail Into Retirement, has quickly achieved notoriety as the gold standard in the field.

A California native, circumnavigator and adventurer, Larry Jacobson is an avid sailor with over 50,000 blue water miles under his keel. He is the author of the six-time award-winning memoir of his six-year circumnavigation in the book, *The Boy Behind the Gate*. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and welcomes new friends and inquiries at: [www.buoycoaching.com](http://www.buoycoaching.com)



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