

How do I want to be cared for?

I think it is important if each of us can pen down how we wish to be cared for in our golden years. Such reflections would help us think hard and prioritise the things that are really important to us, to plan ahead and communicate our wishes to our loved ones or to whom we think may arrange our care for us in future.

Planning ahead for our own caregiving is not a new concept. It has been actively discussed in the society and promoted by the government in the recent years with schemes such as the Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) and Advance Care Planning (ACP). However, despite the benefits of planning ahead, it is not on the priority lists of most people. The general thinking seems to be that the need to be cared for by others is unlikely to be imminent, and there will be time to plan for it later. I think there could also be perceptions that expressing how we wish to be cared for when we are dependent on others is an act of greediness or ungratefulness, or such wishes are likely going to be just...wishful thinking.

Whatever our reasons may be to delay planning, it is a fact that we do have expectations of our care and not having them met adequately will bring us distress. Planning ahead and having meaningful conversations with those that we trust about our future care needs increases the chance for us to age gracefully and with dignity, even if we do not have them formally documented. I also believe that doing so is an act of responsibility to ourselves and others – we cannot expect others to read our minds, and passing on this responsibility would be creating unnecessary burden on them.



With that said, here's my wish list,

1. I am supported with the means to express my thoughts and feelings.
2. I am supported to stay connected with my spiritual needs.
3. I am provided with my private space and time.
4. My life will not be prolonged when I no longer have independent means to sustain my own life.



These are wishes close to my heart. They may not be fully realised (if at all), but planning and working towards them would mean I have given making them happen my best shot. I hope this article would also lead to some reflection and actions from you, and may your wishes come true.

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