



## Avoiding the Retirement Parking Lot



Tuesday's Boston Globe has an article titled "[For some, the path of retirement takes a detour to a ferry parking lot.](#)" The article interviews many people in their 60s, 70s and 80s who have taken summer employment in the Hy-Line Ferry parking lot. The interviews include, an ex-DEA agent and a former nuclear physicist, a onetime Formula 1-race-car-driver-turned-Mercedes-dealer and someone who was a clinical pharmacist at Partners HealthCare for nearly four decades.

Although they all have different reasons for working at the Hy-Line, the comment by Jim Pender, the 82 year old former head of the Westwood Highschool, seems typical.

*"You can only play so much golf. . . I was looking to keep myself out of trouble and out of my wife's hair."*

Is playing golf or working at the Hy-Line the answer of a long happy life after retirement?

For the first time in human history, many of us can plan on living significantly longer than we are expected to work, we must personally manage our own transition from work to something else. Whether that is transforming our life by adding more energy and engagement to what we do, or aligning what we do with our values, we all have to undergo the emotional and behavioral transformation needed to ensure a successful shift to our new circumstances.

## Transition Process



Source: Source; William Bridges (2009) "Managing Transitions: Making the most of Change." Philadelphia, PA, DeCapo Press

If playing golf and working at the Hy-Line aren't the best answers for how to have a long happy life after retirement, then what is?

Most of what is written about retirement is focused on financial planning. A recent Economist special report called "[Getting to Grips With Longevity](#)" discusses the economics of an aging world population. However, while finances are a key, they are not the most important factor in a long happy life. Relationships are the most important factor.

A report of the [Harvard Study of Adult Development](#) identified relationships as the key.

*"Close relationships, more than money or fame, are what keep people happy throughout their lives. Those ties protect people from life's discontents, help to delay mental and physical decline, and are better predictors of long and happy lives than social class, IQ, or even genes."*



In reality both finances and relationships are important. Running out of money isn't a great way to live in retirement. However, in addition to finances and relationships, one must, assess your physical health and



lifestyle and develop an understanding of how work and play will keep you mentally healthy and motivated. As part of our work, we support you in letting go of what's ended or ending, we guide you through a journey in which you identify new directions with energy and engagement, and we help you create a plan to get there.

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