



The Emotional Side of Retirement

A new chapter can bring excitement, uncertainty and everything in between.

Retirement can bring greater freedom and new opportunities, but it can also stir unexpected emotions. Excitement and relief may exist alongside uncertainty, sadness or a sense of loss as you adjust to changes in routines, relationships and identity. Even a retirement you've looked forward to can take time to adjust to.

Give yourself permission to feel both

There is no "right" way to feel about retirement. You may experience:

- **Excitement** about having more freedom and time
- **Relief** from work demands and responsibilities
- **Pride** in what you've accomplished
- **Uncertainty** about what comes next
- **Sadness** about leaving coworkers or a familiar way of life
- **Stress** as you adjust to new routines and relationships
- **A sense of loss** if work has been an important part of your identity

Having mixed feelings doesn't mean you've made a wrong decision. Even positive, planned changes can take time to adjust to.

Make room for the transition

Retirement isn't just a date on the calendar. Think of it as an adjustment that may unfold over time.

- **Talk about your expectations.** Share what excites or concerns you with those you trust.
- **Think about what you'll miss.** Consider how you can fill those needs in new ways.
- **Focus on what's ahead.** Explore interests, relationships and experiences you want to enjoy.
- **Give yourself time.** Let your new routines and priorities take shape.

Check in with yourself

Before and after retirement, ask:

- **How am I feeling about this change?**
- **What am I most excited about?**
- **What am I worried about or unsure of?**
- **What parts of working might I miss?**
- **Who can I talk to when I need support?**

EAP is here for life's transitions.

Whether retirement is approaching or still years away, your EAP offers free support to help you prepare for change, manage stress, strengthen your wellbeing and get ready for what's next.