

Make the most of retirement

THE Cambridge Dictionary defines retirement as the “act of leaving your job and stopping working – usually because you are old”.

Whether it’s by choice or for health reasons, retirement brings about a significant change in a person’s life.

A “forced” retirement can be especially difficult, particularly for people who don’t feel “old”.

It’s important not to discount the emotional process that can happen when you stop working and recognise that it’s completely normal to experience these feelings.

No matter how much you might look forward to the benefits of retiring, the changes to your financial position, routines, connections and relationships can cause stress for some people.

Try to keep some form of structure to your days and follow a routine which gives you things to look forward to each day.

Retirement doesn’t need to mean never working again. Think about taking a part-time or casual job to keep you



physically and mentally active. It might be within an area you’ve never considered before, or even in a voluntary capacity.

Volunteering is a great way to contribute to society, help to keep connections and create new ones.

Check out the opportunities available through Volunteering SA.

Retirement is also a great time to pick up a new skill or take a

course in something you’ve always been interested in – you’re never too old to learn! WEA and community centres in your local area offer a range of different programs for all ages and stages.

View this phase as a new chapter filled with potential – as the saying goes, “retire from work, not from life”.

Mel Ottaway is Uniting Communities’ executive manager, services for older people

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