

— GUIDING THE WAY —



Senior Living Transitions



with David Haack

We've known David Haack for years, not only as a trusted expert in the world of senior living, but as a kind and thoughtful friend. Through his company Next Step Transitions, David and his team help families navigate one of life's biggest transitions with compassion, organization, and decades of experience.

We sat down with David to learn more about how his team supports aging adults and their loved ones across the Pacific Northwest (and sometimes beyond!).



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What services does your business Next Step Transitions offer? How does it all work?

David: Next Step has two experiences that a customer can depend on:

The first is as Family Advisors—we are able to help people who are in the decision-making process of where to move or where to place a loved one when they are seeking a modern aging or senior living location. We have a team of four Family Advisors who are skilled professionals in the senior living space, and they are available to people free of charge to help them identify needs, address concerns, and find the perfect space at the best pricing for what they are looking for across King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.

The second is Move Management, where we are able to get our clients organized, rightsized, ready to move, packed, space-planned, unpacked, and have their new home fully set up on the first day of the

move—from their current home to their new next step. Of course, out-of-state services are available as well, but they do require more timing, and setup and unpacking would not happen the same day.

This experience allows people to detangle from the stress and mania that can ensue—especially when, for instance, an individual is moving from a 2,000-square-foot home into a 300-square-foot apartment or condo. This is a paid service, but a free estimate is provided for consideration prior to any contracting. Typically, this process should begin 3-4 months before the move date.

What inspired you to start this business?

David: Over the past 40 years of my career, I’ve helped thousands of people make decisions across the care continuum. It has always been my life’s work to help others find the kinds of resources and spaces I would want for the people I love most.

There’s a lot of hype and confusion surrounding senior living options and what to expect. I want people to know

that my team is here to be a calming presence—someone you can trust, laugh with, and feel connected to during life's next steps.

How do you stay up to date on the different senior living options in your area?

David: I've known most of the operators in any given location for decades and have been an ardent speaker across Washington State on topics of Modern Aging, care practices, and the importance of culturally competent care solutions for LGBTQ seniors and their loved ones. I dare say, I've been around a long time—and I've been fortunate to preserve both my integrity and my commitment to quality in care provisions and services, especially when working alongside the allied companies and options we guide people toward.

What's the most common misconception people have about moving into senior living?

David: Many people feel like they're giving up their independence—when in reality, taking control and making a plan means you're the one guiding the conversation, rather than waiting for the conversation to guide you. I can say with complete confidence: none of us gets out of this world alive. In the third act of life, it's wise to know what your options are.

What's the hardest part of the process for families or seniors?

David: Everyone wants to stay in their home, and some people are, in fact, able

to. But as healthcare challenges arise, it may no longer be possible. Rightsizing and being prepared to make decisions is truly the most powerful tool we have against sudden changes in our health or the integrity of our homes.

For those determined to stay at home, it's important to understand the financial reality: 24/7 home care with a caregiver can easily exceed \$35,000 a month, and with a nurse, well over \$50,000 a month. This is where people need to be realistic about what will preserve their assets and extend their legacy—if that's their goal. Stay in control, I always say.

It's also extremely important that one clear decision-maker leads the process. Too often, well-intentioned family members can unintentionally make things more complicated. That's where a Family Advisor and Move Manager come in—they help corral differing opinions and create a pathway everyone can follow. Sometimes we're simply too close



to our own families to be the best help—and that’s okay.

What do you wish more people understood about elder care?

David: Making a move can actually be a freeing and wonderful experience. Most people dread it because they imagine having to rely entirely on family and loved ones for help—but with resources like Next Step, so much of the process can feel like magic, and even effortless.

Modern Aging communities can be vibrant, fun, and the perfect fit for each individual. What matters most is working with someone who can guide you through it. If you’re trying to do this on your own and feeling frustrated or overwhelmed—we’ve got solutions for you.

What do you think the future of senior living looks like?

David: Everyone is jumping into the Grey Wave—even major brands like Disney are entering the space with communities like Storybook Living, a 55+ senior living concept. I believe more and more people will be seeking out places that truly celebrate living, not ones that make them feel like they’re being warehoused in a box.

We each have the power to shape what our aging or care journey will look like—but we have to be informed and aware of our options, whether we’re 29 or 89.

What’s the most rewarding part of your work?

David: When I help a family or individual who starts out feeling overwhelmed—wondering “How will I ever make this move?”—and we arrive at “I love my new



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home, and I love how organized and fresh everything feels,” or when I’ve become part of their surrogate family, that’s when I know I’ve done my job well.

Knowing I’ve set my clients up for success and lifted the weight of stress that would have otherwise fallen on their loved ones—it truly makes me smile and feel proud of the work I do.



What are some common mistakes families make during this process—and how can they avoid them?

David: When a family is involved, they need to elect a champion—someone who will take the lead and make the final decisions. The time to start planning is not three weeks before a move. It should begin now. And if the family is struggling to get on the same page, that's exactly when it makes sense to bring in outside help.

Families often say they'll help get a home ready to sell or assist with clearing it out—but depending on the density of the home, that may not be realistic. Another common surprise for families is the cost of services. Many people haven't moved in 10, 20, even 40+ years, and the cost of goods and services—especially in our beautiful part of the country—has skyrocketed in recent years.



Having realistic expectations about today's pricing is key to being prepared for the estimates and expenses involved in modern aging and senior living transitions.

When is the best time to start planning for senior living?

David: Now. Don't wait until something happens—because something always does. In fact, 80% of seniors and their families don't have a plan in place or assume they'll simply stay in their homes. But life rarely works out that way. You can either wait for the dialogue to control you, or you can maintain your independence by taking control yourself.

We all need to remember: aging is a privilege, not a right. Fewer people make it to 80 years or older than you might think. And just because you're younger doesn't mean you won't someday find yourself needing care. Be informed. Know your options. 📍

-David



We're Ready to Help With Your Next Chapter

We've worked hand-in-hand with David many times to help our clients who are ready to downsize and move onto their next chapter. David has a very similar approach as we do when it comes to supporting our clients; we all offer a high level of service and are very hands on. David takes the confusion and stress out of making that next transition!

If you or a loved one needs help downsizing their home, we're always happy to help you make a plan. Reach out!

