



Now that the kids have left, you can finally enjoy the luxury of combining tears with cheers. For we seniors who've had the experience, it's the end of one happy phase of family life, and looking forward to another.

If the big house is too much for you, consider moving to a smaller apartment or senior community. If you stay, there's still the task of cleaning, lawn, all the taxes and paying the mortgage. Moving to a senior community may provide pools, spas and access to nearby golf courses. Additionally, if your present home is in a climate where winters are cold and snowy, consider moving to a year-around sunny area.

It's time to revive those early romantic days before the kids arrived. Take a cruise to Hawaii, do some serious sinning in Sin City and visit all the historic areas of Europe and Asia you've only read about.

Revitalize old friendships and see those pals you've been neglecting during the child upbringing years. Plan for everyone in the empty nest gang to cruise, enjoy a week at a seaside resort or climb up a challenging mountainside.

Now that you'll have total freedom, consider giving some of that time to help others. Volunteer on projects at church, offer your services to a downtown homeless shelter or sign up for or other charitable work.

With many volunteer jobs you can combine travel with work. Such organizations as Habitat for Humanity helps build and repair homes in Mexico, Africa, South America and other areas where your help is needed.

When facing sunset years together in your now-empty nest, filling the void can actually be a very pleasant experience. Just get up, get out and do the things you didn't have the chance to

do when that nest was full.