

10 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL DOWNSIZING

- ❑ **Start Early, Start Small:** The best time to start downsizing is today. We all have areas in our homes that need to be downsized. The key is to take the plunge and start small. If you start with a drawer or closet, you will feel the excitement of accomplishment and you will be motivated to continue.
- ❑ **Identify Your Favorite Things:** Prepare a list of items that are top-priority keepers. Focus on items that are important to you, have sentimental value and can serve a purpose in your life going forward.
- ❑ **Evaluate Carefully:** As you determine what to keep, ask yourself three key questions: Do I love it? Does it still fit into my lifestyle? Have I used it in the past 12 months? If you answer “no” to any of these questions, designate the item to the donate or discard box.
- ❑ **Sort Like Items with Like Items:** Be sure you look at your whole collection. For example, collect magazines from throughout your home. Once you see how many of one thing you have, it helps to choose the best and get rid of the rest.
- ❑ **Tell the Stories:** Telling someone the story of a particular item is one thing that helps to let go. Take the time to recognize the importance of an item and share the story with someone else. This will help you give it a new life with someone else.
- ❑ **Plan for Donations:** Say YES to donations. Research local donation centers that will help you to feel good about donating. Contact charities about pick up and drop off times and work this into your downsizing schedule.
- ❑ **Digitize Documents:** Old tax returns, financial statements, bills, and photographs take up a lot of space and weight. Consider converting them into scanned files and digital albums to free up valuable space.
- ❑ **Recycle and Toss:** The average house clear out generates an actual ton of trash. Contact your local waste center to find out drop-off hours and what items they do and don't accept. This also applies to recycle facilities.
- ❑ **Sort into Categories:** Use different colored painters' tape to tag items too big for a box. Most items fall into these categories: Keep, Sell, Donate, Trash. This visual will motivate you to continue making decisions about all the items in your home.
- ❑ **Honor Your Commitments:** Schedule downsizing appointments on your calendar and honor those appointments. Downsizing takes a commitment but the reward once you are done is a sense of freedom and the joy of moving forward with less.