

Downsizing:

Are You a Prisoner of Your Possessions?*



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Downsizing

Are You a Prisoner of Your Possessions?

Place a check mark beside each statement that describes your situation:

- There are things in my home that I want to get rid of.
- I have a hard time throwing things away.
- I don't see anything wrong with having a lot of "things."
- I will keep "that" in case I need it someday.
- My things are useful to me.
- My things are worth money.
- My things give me pleasure.
- My things represent who I am.
- I need more space in my house.
- I keep things in order to give them as gifts.
- My things are "to-be-inherited."
- I always loose important things.
- I have clothes that are too big for me in my closet.
- I have clothes that are too small for me in my closet.
- I have outdated clothes in my closet in case they come back in style.
- I have piles of dirty clothes on my floor.
- I have piles of mail and magazines on tables or countertops.
- I purchase items because they are on sale, not because I really need them.



Steps to Downsizing & De-Cluttering

Step 1: Analyze Yourself



A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

Step 2: Create a Plan for Change

Set up a system of boxes



A. _____

B. _____

Step 3: Sort Your Possessions



A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Steps to Downsizing & De-Cluttering, con'd.

Step 4: React Promptly If Clutter Returns



A. _____

Step 5: Don't Be A Hoarder!

Three criteria that determines whether someone is a hoarder.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Tips for Letting Go

Directions: Fill in the blanks

1. Take one item at a time

During sorting _____ about whether you want to keep the item or not. Remember the goal is to get rid of stuff. The longer you take to decide, the more likely you will end up with stuff you don't really need.



2. Ask yourself

If you don't know what to do with an item, _____ for clarity, such as "*Do you love this item?*", "*Have you used this item in the past year?*" and "*Do you really need this item?*" The more questions you ask yourself, the easier your decision will be.



3. Move on

Possessions can become a reflection of our personal history, so it's easy to form an emotional _____ to them. If you're having a tough time getting rid of stuff, remind yourself that your goal is to move on from the past and clear the way for a more functional living space.



4. Take out the trash

A large portion of the clutter in your home is actually trash. Remove all the obvious trash from each room on a daily basis. Be sure to throw away or recycle the following:



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Tips for Letting Go (con'd.)

5. Give it up

Remember the best way to unclutter and downsize your home is to donate to charity or friends. This is a much better than having something sit in the closet unused for years and years. Be sure to donate, give away or sell the following:



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

1. Make quick decision
2. Ask your questions
3. Attachment
4. Expired items
- a. Old magazines
- b. Clothes that don't fit anymore
- c. Packaging no longer useful
- d. Broken Televisions and electronic equipment

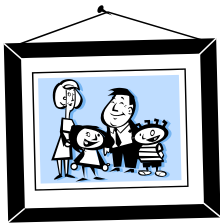
Answers:

10 of the “Stickiest” Possessions

Please Release Me!*

Things that people have the most difficulty in letting go of:

1. Family Photos
2. Books
3. Collections
4. Antiques and favored furniture
5. Symbols of other life stages
6. Magazines
7. Family heirlooms
8. Souvenirs and mementos
9. Clothing
10. Things you buy on sale and save for later for gifts
11. Things you want to pass down to a relative



* Used with permission from Dr. David J. Ekerdt, University of Kansas Gerontologist



Is it a keepsake or a throw away?



- Keep the memento if it gives you joy and delight. Get rid of it if it does not and you don't have a real reason to keep it
 - Ask yourself: Maybe this item brought joy to me once, but does it still bring joy as I dust it or look for places to move it around. Do I really want to be a caretaker for this item?
- If your household includes children, give each one a memory box to hold souvenirs and to keep in their rooms. If it starts to overflow they will learn the important lessons of putting boundaries on "stuff" and eliminating something.
- If your kids are all grown up and moved out, gather all of the things you are saving from childhood. Make a box for each family member and put appropriate items in each box. Items include bronze shoes, clay hand molds, handmade valentines, letters, toys, locks of hair, baby books, photos, and anything else you are saving. Invite them over and make a big deal of giving the precious items to them for safekeeping.
- Gather up other sentimental items you've saved yet have no use for. Let the kids select and divide what they want. Then sell, donate, or discard everything else they don't want.
- Your Dad's record collection or your mom's saltshaker collection meant a lot to them, but if you get rid of them that doesn't mean you don't love them. They would appreciate it more if the items they loved so much would be in the possession of someone who truly would enjoy them as much as they did.
- Find ways to display items that you want to keep because they are special. Shadow box frames can display many items at once. Make "Theme" Displays for trip souvenirs, special occasions etc.

22 Time Wasters to Avoid



1. Starting without a plan; lacking a direction
2. Indecision, not setting priorities
3. Inability to say NO!
4. Trying to bite off more than you can chew; too much at once
5. Trying to do everything yourself; Not delegating duties
6. Poor scheduling -Scheduling too little or too much time
7. Procrastination - Putting off something that should be done today
8. Lack of focus - Mulling over how busy you are
9. Personal Disorganization - Inability to locate items due to clutter
10. Activity hopping - Jumping from 1 to the other without accomplishing anything
11. Lacking follow through - Not finishing tasks you start out to do
12. Detail Distraction - Letting the details consume your time
13. Lack of Information - Starting projects without the proper information
14. Lacking Skills - Stalling with a computer program because you don't know how to use it
15. Being kept waiting
16. Telephone interruptions
17. Socializing during time scheduled for projects
18. Visitor Interruptions - Allowing them to alter your plans and schedules
19. Long Winded - Not getting to the point in conversations
20. Meeting without an agenda
21. Failing to utilize your travel time wisely
22. Turning on the television instead of completing your scheduled tasks

