



Downsizing Where You Are. | 1
AUGUST 31, 2019

Downsizing or “right” sizing is always a popular topic when it comes to senior living. This blog is just a little twist on that topic. I want to talk a little bit about simplifying your belongings and downsizing those keepsakes, photos and other memorabilia you are saving for someone or someday.

Save your family and friends the trouble and go through your things now. Avoid leaving that for them (after you are gone). Living and working in a senior community, I have seen the sorting and disposing of packed houses left to family and friends and it can be a huge burden for them. Earn yourself some angel wings and start the process yourself. Sooner rather than later.

One article I was reading (MYMOVE.COM) gave some sage advice on starting to get rid of things. Below are a few I thought were helpful.

1. **Start Small.** One room at a time or if it is a big room, divide up the room. Just going through a closet can be fraught with memories so taking it one step at a time is helpful.
2. **Eliminate** what you have not used or needed for the past, maybe one

year or two years is a good measure for you. I did this recently with my kitchen cupboards and it is amazing what gets pushed to the back or filed away that is not being used. Food items are another good example of items that can get pushed to the back and forgotten. Food bank donations can be brought to the Gathering Place donation box and all items are given to the local food bank.

3. **Get rid of duplicates.** Things accumulate and soon you have one to many of this or that. A second roasting pan or a second lard stock pot is a good example where one is enough.
4. **Reduce collections.** Keep your favorites and get rid of the rest. If it is



helpful, take a photo to keep
then get rid of them.

and

5. **Give things away early.** Legacy gifts such as family heirlooms and gifts for your family and friends can be given now and you can enjoy them from a distance.
6. Specific to Stillwaters and Centralia: **Donate** to the Lewis County Senior Center Thiftshop "Second Time Around". All proceeds go to support the five senior centers in the county. We have a donation box here in the Gathering Place so we make it easy for small donations. Larger donations

can be delivered to the thrift shop directly.

After you are done with this process, rethink how you decide what to keep. Starting to collect all over again is defeating the purpose of all the work you just did. Stop and ask “Do I need this?” For some people space is an issue so something has to go for something to come in.

When you are done with each room or the whole house, take the time to feel good about your accomplishment. It takes time and energy to sort, dispose and give away. Pat yourself on the back each step of the way.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

I resolved to stop accumulating and begin the infinitely more serious and difficult task of wise distribution. – Andrew Carnegie