

## **Seniors Moves Mean Planning Ahead**

Your senior years should focus on carefree living. For many older adults this means downsizing to an apartment or assisted living accommodations. A larger home may no longer suit your needs; requiring more maintenance and house cleaning than a smaller home. Staying in your current home may also pose health and safety risks if you live by yourself. This is especially true if you have mobility or health issues or if your neighborhood has changed so that you no longer feel safe.

It can be difficult for an older adult to leave their home particularly if it holds many family memories. Recognizing the benefits of downsizing and making the choice to move is preferable to being forced to move in a hurry later due to illness or injury. Today's retirement and assisted living options offer safety, security, companionship, and activities. Take control of the situation by making the best choice now and deciding what to do with your accumulated treasures, memorabilia and possessions.

It is never too early to get family and friends involved and think about what you would like them to have and what they would actually like. Often we are misguided in what each family member really would like to receive. We forget that our family members have also accumulated many things over the years and that they are also looking for ways to simplify their lives and their spaces. They may not be able to take the family treasures and heirlooms you had envisioned them having. It is better to know this earlier to avoid the emotional strain and have time to deal with the logistics that go with such decision making.

Moving for anyone is a marathon and for seniors it has added stresses. This is not something that should be done quickly. Much is done today to ensure the quality of life for seniors in their homes. But let's not forget that we want to equally ensure that same quality of care in preparing a senior to relocate. Asking seniors to make rush decisions and perform physically demanding tasks are not in their best interest. Starting several years ahead is the best way to make this transition comfortable for seniors and family members.

Visit apartments and retirement living options to see what kind of arrangement would suit you best. Begin by thinking about what you will really need in your new home. Distribute possessions amongst family members, donate to charity, or sell them to finance your move.

Be realistic about how much space you will have in your new home and what items will you actually use. Do you need china for a setting of 10? Minimize and keep only the things you love and need. You may not need a service for 10 but definitely use the good china and many of your precious well loved items that you often saved for special occasions. Decide to use them all now.

Will your sofa fit in your new place? Do you use all of those kitchen gadgets? Moving items that will not fit in with your new life is a waste of time by repacking and disposing and money by paying movers to move the extra boxes.

It will take some time to adjust to your new life and you need to give yourself time to adjust to your surroundings. It is equally important to remember that it also takes considerable time to plan ahead for creating that new life. Take the time required to make your move manageable and don't cut the planning short at the risk of your emotional and physical well being.

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