

DO'S AND DON'TS OF DOWNSIZING

and other tips to save your sanity...

DO:

Visualize Your Destination. Why are you rightsizing your belongings now? There is a reason. Visualize where you are headed, the lifestyle that awaits you and keep that in mind. Perhaps it's a new home or just more airy, open space where you live now.

Choose What Sparks Joy. Focus on what you want to keep. Take each item in your hand and ask, "Does this spark joy? Does this speak to my heart?" If it does, keep it. If not, move on. Trust your intuition here.

Think in Terms of Category. Choose a category and collect everything from your home that falls into that category in one place. When you start to sort, keep only the items that are truly meaningful to you, that speak to the heart. If there are duplicate items, then choose the one you like best and toss or donate the extra one. Once you've sorted all of these items, move on to the next category.

Begin with Items of Lower Value. Deciding what to keep will go much smoother if you begin with categories that are easier to make decisions about. You'll hone your skills as you move to more difficult categories. Save the items with strong sentimental attachment, like photographs, for last.

DON'T:

Make It a Daily Chore. Sorting through your belongings little by little each day can seem never-ending. You won't see progress. It will be hard to stay focused. You may change your mind.

Begin Without a Goal. Without a goal, you're likely to waver and hesitate on making decisions. If your goal is a more relaxing lifestyle in a smaller space, don't lose sight of that.

Focus on Throwing Things Away. Focusing solely on getting rid of things causes irritability and tension. This negativity only leads to unhappiness.

Begin with Sentimental Items. Don't start where you may get stuck. Start with categories that are easier to make decisions, such as clothes and books, and lastly go through mementos.

Say these words to yourself and repeat as many times as needed:

I am downsizing my STUFF not my LIFE!