



Downsizing!

A word that scarcely existed in our vocabularies a decade ago, is now key to success as professional organizers. It is a word that strikes terror in most of us as it was coined to symbolize and rationalize large scale terminations as companies got smaller and smaller in hopes of maximizing efficiency and the bottom lines. It is now used in a variety of ways but still can cause otherwise successful men and women to tremble. Even though you may not be losing your livelihood, downsizing still implies significant change in lifestyle, living and working space and ways of organizing our world around us.

We plan to explore how this concept of “Down” and “Sizing” has percolated our culture. It impacts architecture, furniture design, use of public space, office design, in fact, just about everything that touches our day to day lives.

In just the last few months you may have noted the cover of several prominent magazines now heralding headlines such as “Is small the new big?” and the blessings of minimizing your sq. footage, your carbon footprint, your requirements for storage, equipment, clothes, etc.

As resources become scarcer and more costly, as many of us live significantly longer, as family structures change and immigration challenges many western assumptions as to the nature of families and housing, we will continue to experience life style shifts.

For professional organizers, perhaps the first wave of life style downsizing will be the baby boomers as they start the reluctant- and often painful and lonely – shift to retirement or adult communities, assisted living, and the eventual progression to facilities offering full time care and support.

None of us want to think about this very personal downsizing of our independence, flexibility and at the end of the day what amounts to our freedom. It is a tough reality to consider, much less sell. However, if you think of it as a huge service to the millions of people on the road to this inevitable future, you may find yourself in a remarkable and rewarding niche.

When it comes to starting your “Downsizing” organizing project,

The Downsizing Diva says...

1. **Sort your stuff before you buy the storage containers.** *Nature abhors a vacuum. If you have more boxes than stuff, you seldom get rid of the boxes, you just get more stuff!*
2. **Start somewhere. Rome wasn't built in a day.** *Start with one shelf or the junk drawer. Clear it out. Doesn't that feel better?*
3. **Set a timer! You don't have to spend a whole day getting organized.** *Set a timer and see what you can get done in... 30 minutes.*
4. **Think twice before you rent storage space.** *Storage lockers are great when you store items for a specific length of time. Renting a storage locker instead of making downsizing decisions can become an expensive option!*
5. **Store "like" with "like".** *Keeping similar things together makes it easier to keep track of items you buy regularly and avoid duplicate purchases. You'll save space... and money!*
6. **Be creative.** *Update tired furniture with a fresh coat of paint, or trendy upholstery and you have a whole new look. Creative storage can be an added bonus!*
7. **Team up with a friend.** *It's more fun to work on any project with a friend and someone who is objective can help with the decision-making process.*

Celebrate your accomplishments! *The journey of a million miles begins with the first step. Small rewards will help to keep you motivated!*

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