

More information is available through our website:

**[www.quakeragingresources.org](http://www.quakeragingresources.org)**

**ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED RESOURCES:**

David F. Tolin, Randy O. Frost, Gail Steketee, [Buried in Treasures](#)

<http://www.downsizingsimplified.com/index.html>

<http://charityguide.org/volunteer/fifteen/furniture-donation.htm>

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1365/is\\_12\\_35/ai\\_n15674169/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1365/is_12_35/ai_n15674169/)

<http://moving.about.com/od/packingtipsandtricks/a/recyclable.htm>

[http://moving.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=moving&cdn=homegarden&tm=27&gps=424\\_348\\_1020\\_570&f=10&su=p284\\_9.336.ip\\_&tt=2&bt=1&bts=1&zu=http%3A//www.earth911.org](http://moving.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=moving&cdn=homegarden&tm=27&gps=424_348_1020_570&f=10&su=p284_9.336.ip_&tt=2&bt=1&bts=1&zu=http%3A//www.earth911.org)

<http://www.charitynavigator.org/>

# Downsizing



*“My mind through the power of Truth was in a good degree weaned from the desire of outward greatness, and I was learning to be content with real conveniences that were not so costly; so that a way of life free from much entanglements appeared best for me, though the income was small... There was a care on my mind so to pass my time as to things outward that nothing might hinder me from the most steady attention to the voice of the True Shepherd.”* John Woolman, 1743, PYM Faith and Practice, 2002



Aging Resources Consultation Help

**[www.quakeragingresources.org](http://www.quakeragingresources.org)**

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***“Frugality is good, if liberality be join’d with it. The first is leaving off superfluous expenses; the last bestowing them to the benefit of others that need. The first without the last begins covetousness; the last without the first begins prodigality: Both together make an excellent temper. Happy the place wherever it is found.”***

William Penn, 1698, PYM Faith and Practice, 2002

## ***Downsizing...or, Rightsizing***

Your home is a work of art created by you, an expression of who you are and what is important to you. If there comes a time that you need to move to a smaller place, the emotional ties to home can be difficult and painful to unloose. It is also a time of spiritual opportunity, an invitation to live out Friends’ beliefs and testimonies, a time of grace and gratitude.

Moving from reluctance or refusal to gratitude is not a journey of chance, but one that should be planned, with directions, rest stops, and viewpoints.

First, it’s helpful if we have been downsizing all along. One couple begins every January going through every closet, drawer, and bookshelf, deciding what is no longer needed, what could be passed on to someone who needs it more. Spending no more than an hour once a week keeps the job from becoming a chore; having boxes or bags at the ready marked ‘Meeting garage sale’ or ‘library book sale’ simplifies the decision making and the clean up.

Now, the spiritual part: letting go of what is, in the end, just stuff is a spiritual opportunity to live out the Testimonies of Simplicity and of Stewardship. It can be an outward act of inward removal of that which is not of God. It is an occasion of expressing gratitude for the plenty that we have been given, and for receiving the grace inherent in giving to those in need. It demonstrates to those around us how to live a life, how to deal with life’s diminishment in a gracious spirit.

Take the time to notice your feelings, don’t do it all in one mad dash to move, spend time in daily worship offering both your things and your attachment to them to the Creator. Be blessed.

## ***Tips for Letting Go:***

- If possible, move first, bringing just what fits your new home, then deal with what’s left behind.
- Make a floor plan with cut outs of pieces you want to take with you so you’ll know what fits where. It is much harder emotionally to move something and then find that it doesn’t fit.
- Remember to take what you need, and a few things that say who you are.
- Some Friends find that the most difficult decisions involve family pieces that the younger generation does not want. Extend your search for a suitable home for such treasures to more distant family members, ask a museum if it is valuable enough to be included in their collection, or decide what good cause to donate the money to from its sale.
- Sometimes it is a Friend’s children who insist that something be kept. If so, gently offer to ship those items to that child.
- Taking pictures or a video of your house or particular items may ease the pain of moving.
- Have a last party or family gathering in the house to allow time to express the feelings involved and the special memories. One Friend used this opportunity to give away special items she wasn’t moving and everyone chose one as they entered the door.
- One week a grandmother put out fancy dishes, another week tea cups, and invited each visiting grandchild to choose one, allowing the grandmother to see where things were going and how much pleasure her grandchildren took in receiving them.
- A mother handed each adult child a pad and pencil during their visit and asked them to write down what they hoped to inherit; another wrote the child’s name on the item.
- One couple remained cheery about their downsizing knowing that all the proceeds from the estate sale were going to their Meeting.

