

How to Downsize, Re-size or Re-Locate with Less Stress

By Pat Heydlauff

Kathy, a business person working out of a home office, has been talking about relocating and downsizing for months. She was so excited about her move. She did everything right, she uncluttered, packed and cleaned each room before moving on to the next. She arranged for utilities and the mail to be cancelled or moved. She didn't overlook anything, at least that is what she thought.

It is now Wednesday, four days after the truck moved her furnishings from her old home to her new one - and she just got her key. Her furniture made it in just fine on Saturdays, but the home had not been cleared by the building inspector for occupancy so she and her two dogs didn't. Now, she just sat on the floor amidst the chaos feeling as if everything was upside down and out of balance. For her it wasn't just a physical drain but rapidly became unnerving and an even larger emotional drain.

Research shows that approximately 42 million people – one in four, move each year and that **relocation ranks as the third most stressful life event**. Kathy, an organized logical person, thought she did everything to make a smooth rapid transition. She wanted her computers up and running over the weekend so she could be back to work by Wednesday. Yet there she was, sitting in chaos, a desk needing assembly, computers in many pieces and days away from getting back to her clients and generating income.

Moving – Plan A

Begin with the end in mind, **a smooth transition from one home to another with minimum stress and being settled into a productive routine as soon as possible**. With this end goal the following steps will help get you organized and on your way.

- Begin by creating a "first night box" or boxes for each person and pets. Place into the boxes linens and things you will need to make your bed, toiletries, medicines, toys and special blankets for children, pet dishes and their food, etc. Pack into these few boxes those necessary items that will make your first night at your new home peaceful and calm.
- Next, get a clear idea on whether everything you plan on moving will fit in your new location. Be merciless. If you don't love it, it won't fit or is in need of major repair, get rid of it. Take only things that will fit and will provide you positive energy. Do not be tempted to take old negative energy with you. Either donate the useable things or sell them at a garage sale or online and toss the rest.
- Plan ahead, pack a room at a time and unclutter as you go. The more you unclutter on the packing end the more quickly you will be settled and back to a routine in your new home.
- Label box contents clearly, so if you must search for something, instead of panicking you will know exactly where to find it. Then, assign each room in your new home a number and label each box with the appropriate room number. Post the numbers in

each room to aid in the transition of your belongings. Unless you plan to personally move every box, this step is a huge time and energy saver and reduces stress.

- Have an emergency plan for moving day. Create a small toolbox full of basic tools such as a hammer, screwdrivers and pliers along with things like extra packing tape, duct tape etc. Have extra boxes, bottles of water and anything you might need to help keep the day calm. This emergency plan should also allow for an overnight stay if something goes wrong or being able to live without your belongings for several days if it is a cross-country move and the moving company calls to tell you they will be five days late in their delivery.

Kathy did most of these things yet she still found herself overwhelmed and mired in chaos. What she did not add to her plan was the fine print in Plan B.

Moving – Plan B

Plan B; otherwise know as the fine print or the contingency plan is what was missing in Kathy's well-organized and orchestrated Plan A. On the surface, everything looked great but when things **in the control of others** started to go astray each step that wasn't working turned into a gigantic avalanche of stress that magnified her feelings of being overwhelmed and helpless. When creating your perfect plan, also remember to create the steps that will help **you stay in-control** while everything else is going out of control.

- Breathe. Yes, breathe. Before you actually lose it, remember to breathe. Draw in long slow breaths in through your nostrils and blow them out even more slowly through your mouth. Draw several long deep breaths and release them until you are back in control. This will calm you down and put you back into the driver's seat very quickly.
- Play calm peaceful music while unpacking or frantically searching for things in misplaced boxes. Plan ahead by placing a small music player of your choice loaded with calming music into your "first night box" so you can find it at a moments notice. Some great New Age or meditation music will bring you back into balance quickly so you can continue your move with less stress even amidst the chaos.
- Settle your bedroom first by removing as many boxes as possible and making your bed so you can rest well after a very stress-filled day. By having everything you need in your "first night box" you will be able to do this quickly and move onto what you might consider more important things. The second room to settle quickly is the kitchen so you can prepare nourishment to restore your physical well-being, even if it is carry-in.
- Make a list of the ten most important things you need to do next and then rank them in order of importance. Move right to the most important one, not the easiest or fastest one to complete. Even if it takes your two days to complete number one, you will dramatically reduce your stress and the remaining chaos will be of less concern. Once you've finished your first list of ten repeat the list making process until you have calmly finished settling into your new home.
- Flip your thinking. It's all about what you are thinking. Focus on how much you've already accomplished or how much you will love your new home once it is settled. The more you focus on the chaos the more stress you are attracting. However if you

focus on the big picture and your accomplishments you are attracting more positive energy to help you settle into your new home

Whether you are a family of one with pets like Kathy, are a senior leaving a home you've lived in for many years or are moving with three children two cats and one dog, the process is the same. Create an organized plan to accomplish your move but remember to do your contingency planning as well to help you through the chaos, eliminate as much stress as possible and stay in-control.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pat Heydlauff, president of Energy Design, uses Feng Shui design principles to eliminate chaos and stress at home and within oneself. More than a Feng Shui expert, Pat is a consultant and speaker who helps remove clutter and negativity while encouraging personal growth, improved relationships and prosperity. Her book, "Feng Shui: So Easy a Child Can Do It," shows how small changes can lead to a big improvement in one's personal and professional success. For information on her consulting, speaking and artwork, visit: www.Energy-by-Design.com or call: 561-799-3443.