

Here are my 5 tips for tending to the treasures:

### **Pick a Favorite**

You may have a family member who collected multiples of the same items to dust, illuminate, and delight in. Think Hummels, collector plates, teapots, salt & pepper shakers – you name it.

Consider saving a favorite item from a collection and let the others go – to a relative or someone who you know will enjoy them.

### **Take Photos of Objects as a Remembrance**

Instead of keeping lots of items from your dearly departed, take photos of the objects they cherished the most. Those photos can be shared with other family members and can be stored online freeing up space in your home and theirs.

There are companies (or a tech-savvy relative) who can digitally archive your family photos, slides, and old videos.

### **Make It an Event**

Gather family members to go through the photos, boxes, and closets through an event to share memories, laughter, and even tears. Everyone can leave with a fresh reminder of their connection to each other, having had a time to remember those who shaped them.

Connect via FaceTime or Zoom with those too far away to attend and have a box ready for any items they may want sent their way. Others can leave with boxes in hand. You know they've had their chance to take what was meaningful to them, making it easier for you to pass along what wasn't wanted.

### **Take Time to Think About the Person**

As you remember your loved one, you may be inspired to think of creative ways to find new homes for their things. If they loved animals, then perhaps donate their things to a local thrift shop whose proceeds support PAWS or other animal rescue facilities.

### **Take Your Time, But Vow to Begin**

If you have a lot to tackle, and feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume to manage, remind yourself you don't have to do it all at once. Determine a good starting point. Something that feels less daunting.

Set aside time on your calendar and set a timer for an hour (or even less) and begin. One closet shelf, one box, one drawer. Reassess how you feel when the timer rings. Give yourself permission to stop, or, if you're feeling good, set the timer again and keep going.

Give yourself permission to let go of the stuff. It's okay to let go of things. Really. Let go of feeling guilty or judged by others as being uncaring, ungrateful, or cold-hearted if you don't hang on to things.

Let go of feeling like you have to take keepsakes because yours was the logical place for everything to go. Make room for what is actually yours.

A friend shared the story of his father-in-law shipping most of the furniture from the family home to theirs as he was down-sizing. Asked how they liked the furniture, my friend said to his father-in-law, "Well, our place looks just like yours now."

We need room for our own tastes and likes to be in our homes. Keep the true treasures that you absolutely love and will take pleasure in having.

Use the fine china, the silver, the gold rimmed drinking glasses deemed special-occasion-only status. Let other pieces take root and enhance someone else's life.

Trust your heart to hold the memories.