



Tips For Clearing Out the House



Fifty years of stuff. From yellowed report cards to long-dead plants, your parents may have collected an astonishing amount of items over the years. What happens when it's time to sell the house and get rid of all that stuff? After all, you probably knew that **caring for aging parents** included reminding Mother to take a medication or ferrying Dad to the doctor, but did you realize that "house cleaner" would be part of the job description that came with your **elder care solution** plan?



Even if you didn't sign up for this kind of work, it's an important job for adult children caring for elderly parents. Clearing the house while **caring for aging parents** allows you and family members to identify valuables and keepsakes, clear the way for contractors to repair or remodel, or de-clutter the house for sale.



Check out these tips for simplifying a house clean out that's part an **elder care solution**:



Tip #1 – Talk to Mom or Dad.



If you're cleaning out the family home because your elderly parent is moving in with a family member or to a care facility, it's important to be open and honest about the process. Many seniors are resistant to cleaning house—consider that the yellowed newspaper you see as trash could be a special reminder of the day your folks were married. Be sympathetic and patient during this facet of your family's **elder care solution**.



Tip #2 – Name a coordinator.



Ask an organized family member to oversee the entire cleaning operation, from coordinating clean-up schedules to placing classified ads for the yard sale. This is an especially important position when siblings live in far-flung places and cannot always be onsite to help with an **elder care solution** plan.



If the house is being sold, consider naming a family member to coordinate the selling process. This person's responsibilities might include hiring a real estate agent, working with contractors doing repairs, and acting as the family's representative at closing.



Tip #3 – Start small.



Half a century of accumulation can be daunting for even the most organized neat-freaks among us. Protect your sanity by breaking the house down into manageable portions. If you're working on your own, clean one room at a time over a period of days or weeks. Got a crew to help? Make one or two people responsible for each room. If you're **caring for an aging parent**, try to involve as many family members in the clean-up as possible.





Tip #4 – Sort the stuff.



Organization experts recommend placing items into one of three piles:



Things to keep – Make a list of the things your mom wants to keep. Keep in mind that **daring for aging parents** means you may need to gently remind her to be realistic—her china cabinet, for example, will not fit into your 2-bedroom townhouse.



Things to donate or sell – Consider donating items to non-profit groups. The family can also sell items through garage sales or through online classifieds. Senior care experts also say that if a family **caring for an aging parent** needs to empty the house quickly, an estate sale is an ideal way to do it.



Things to trash – The job may be too big to handle on your own, so think about hiring a trash hauler to get rid of the stuff. Remember, if you're **caring for aging parents**, be sensitive if they are onsite during the cleaning. Even though you might relish the thought of tossing your 3rd grade art project into the trash bin, it could hurt your mom's already sensitive feelings and sabotage this part of your **elder care solution**.



Tip #5 – Don't lose focus.



Don't get so focused on cleaning out the house that you neglect your parent's move into a new home. Experts recommend incorporating a few familiar items into the new setting. For example, you might set up bedroom furniture in the same configuration or add mom's favorite corner cupboard to the new kitchen.



If you're **caring for aging parents** who are moving into your home, one **elder care solution** tip recommended by experts is to have everything prepared before their first night's stay to create a consistent and comforting environment. Put clothes into drawers, place toiletries on the bathroom counter, and serve a favorite family meal. It will go a long way toward making Mom or Dad feel at home.



When **caring for an aging parent**, cleaning out a loved one's house is a headache—and heartache—for many families. Cut down on the stress and strain of emptying a lifetime of memories from a home with these simple **elder care solution** tips.

