



# TOWN OF BROOKLINE

## *Massachusetts*

### **\* Benefits of Downsizing and Decluttering \***

#### **An organized home...**

1. **Is easier to clean!** Dusting, wiping down counter tops, sweeping, and vacuuming are all easier and quicker to complete when your living space is clear of clutter.
2. **Is easier to navigate!** Piles of clutter around your home pose many safety risks, including fire hazards and fall risks. Keeping your walkways and rooms clear of clutter significantly reduces safety risks and slipping hazards.
3. **Helps you focus!** When you live in a clutter environment, it can feel as though the walls are closing in around you. When you do have the motivation to start a task, it's hard to figure out where to start. Reducing clutter around your space can help focus your mind and get things done.
4. **Saves you money!** When your home is cluttered and disorganized, you can forget what you already have! When your items are organized, you won't need to go out and buy another umbrella, backpack, or phone charger because you will already know where your things are.
5. **Can lift your spirits!** Going through your items can provide an opportunity to rediscover your treasures and focus on what is truly important.
6. **Can help your community!** Passing along unwanted or unneeded items to a charity of your choice can help benefit your community. Charities such as *Big Brother*, *Big Sister*, *Dress for Success*, and *the American Red Cross* all accept clothing donations. Additionally, *More Than Words* accepts book donations to help empower struggling young adults with entrepreneurial skills.

#### **Literature:**

- ❖ **The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing**  
by Marie Kondo
- ❖ **Digging Out: Helping Your Loved One Manage Clutter, Hoarding and Compulsive Acquiring**  
by Michael A Tompkins and Tamara L. Hartl
- ❖ **Buried in Treasures: Compulsive Acquiring, Saving, and Hoarding**  
by David Tolin, Randy Frost, and Gail Skeketee

## Getting Started

1. **It doesn't matter where you start!** You may feel more motivated to start in a room that you use more often, but it is up to you. The best place to start is wherever you want to!
2. **Break projects down into manageable parts.** For example, you can sort through one drawer at a time instead of tackling the whole dresser. Clear off the kitchen table instead of starting with the whole kitchen. Finishing a small task can help motivate you to keep working!
3. **Schedule a fixed amount of time to work on your task.** Decluttering requires not just work, but decision making, which can be tiring and overwhelming. If you burn yourself out in one day, you will be less likely to stick to the process.
4. **Employ a "one-touch" rule.** Only handle an item once to decide whether you should keep it, donate it, or trash it. There is no "I'll decide later" pile. As challenging as it may be, you must make a commitment to yourself that you will not second guess your decisions. **Respect your own judgement!**
5. **Ask for help!** Depending on the size of the job, it may be too overwhelming for you to handle on your own. Asking for help is a reflection of strength and willingness to seek positive change.

### Resources:

- ❖ **Brookline Senior Center – 617-730-2752**  
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/245/Council-on-Aging>  
Brookline residents aged 60+ are eligible for a variety of services, including a visit from a social worker to discuss their current situation and make a plan, together!
- ❖ **Springwell (Area Agency on Aging) – 617-926-4100**  
<https://springwell.com/>  
Heavy Chore services are available in home. Meeting with an expert Care Advisor is required to evaluate and explain programs and services as well as the eligibility requirements for each of them, including free, subsidized, and private pay.
- ❖ **Houseworks – 617-928-1010**  
Heavy chore services: \$77/hr; lower rates for those directly referred by social services. Specializing in hoarding situations.
- ❖ **Lug Away – 617-893-9824**  
Junk removal service, specializing in judgement free home cleanouts. Price quoting is free and can be provided via phone.
- ❖ **Bio-One – 617-539-2709**  
Specialized cleaning, disinfecting, and disposal of bio-hazardous waste. They work with most home insurance carriers.