



Saying goodbye to it all except my mother's wing back chair



As a downsizing specialist, you would think that with my knowledge and experience of helping people clear out their homes that I would have the perfectly decluttered home. Well, that's a funny story.

With the last of my three daughters finally leaving home and moving into a home of her own I thought that she would want to take some of our furniture. However, she has her own style, and she kindly declined any of the furniture I had saved all these years for just such a moment.

Yes, as a child of the post-war generation I had learnt to hold onto things, keep them in case they were needed. Imagine, my Nanna even showed me how to iron gift wrapping paper so that it could be re-used again.

My own house has been the recipient of many generations of furniture; my mother's wing back chair from England (more about that later); my Nanna's Victorian day-bed; the furniture my parents sent me 35 years ago from England and 15 years ago from Florida, and...you get the picture.

I finally looked at all our old furniture, and thought I should follow my own advise: It was finally time to let go of my own things.

This spring, we said goodbye to a sofa-bed and two reclining chairs from Florida, a large 25-year old 3-seater, another sofa from England, two comfy chairs, a double bed, old china with chips and cracks, odd glassware, sheets and towels, my daughters' books from university, their test cards from school, their sticker albums and stamp books. And yes, I did check with them first about the sticker albums and test cards from school. I feel empowered and unburdened now that I have let go, which is funny as it's just what I've said to my clients all these years.

In my line of work, I come across baby-boomers holding onto things for their children in case they need it or for the emotional attachment they have with them. I have learnt that it is okay to say no, I don't want this in my life anymore, and it's okay to keep some things that matter.

Sometimes, we need a catalyst to get us going (my daughter moving out) or deciding that it's time to move to a new, smaller place. Whatever it is, it does feel good to get rid of some of those things I have been holding on to for years. I realize with them gone, I can move forward without the burden of being the caretaker for things that once belonged to my grandparents, parents and children.

By the way, I didn't get rid of everything. I tell my clients to always hang on to something that is most important to them, like a special chair, painting or collectible. For me, it's my mother's wing back chair (I just recovered it).

Some things you just can't part with!