



## Ask An Expert Managing Your Parent's Move from Far Away

*Q: My dad passed away last year, and over Christmas I noticed that my mother, who is 80, just doesn't seem to be keeping up as well with things around the family home. We've talked on the phone about her moving to a smaller place, closer to friends, and I think she is ready to consider it. The problem is, I live 3000 km away, and don't know how to help her from over here. Is there anything I can do?*

As adult children of aging parents, we often find that the roles start to switch. The adult children take on the caregiver role, and the parents become more dependent on their sons and daughters to be the "voice of authority". When you live far from your parents, you may want to take on some of that role, but not know how to proceed. There are some real ways you can help, however.

### **Get Help With Making Decisions**

First, recognize your mother's needs and capabilities regarding her impending move, and help her to strike a balance between the two. She may say "I can manage the move myself," but find herself overwhelmed with the complex task of moving home. Often age slows people down both physically and mentally, and even small decisions will take on larger proportions. You may want to contact some downsizing specialists to come in and help to sort belongings, manage logistics, pack and unpack.

When it comes to selecting people to work with your mother, here are some points to consider:

### **Find a Dedicated Downsizing Professional**

Is downsizing and organizing their primary business? While some general moving companies and even realtors offer "downsizing services", it actually involves more than just coordinating the logistics. You want to find someone who cares about the emotional aspects of moving home as well, and who will give this task their full attention.

### **Use a Certified Seniors Advisor**

Are your prospective downsizing professionals Certified Seniors Advisors? This specialized training provides specific knowledge about "the key health, social and financial factors that are important to seniors—and how these factors work together." (from CSA website) This knowledge can make a real difference in the quality of service your mother receives.

### **Check References and Better Business Bureau**

Finally, see that the business you choose is approved by the Better Business Bureau. This will weed out providers who have promised more than they deliver, or who are less than ethical in their business practices. You want the peace of mind that comes with hiring companies who have proven their integrity.

At Changing Places, we are proud of specializing in supporting seniors through changes in their living environment, whether that change is a small one, such as adapting their current home, or a large one, like downsizing, selling, and moving to a new residence. We are Certified Seniors Advisors and have met the standards of the Better Business Bureau. More important, we love what we do.

Give Changing Places a call at 250-721-4490 for a free consultation. We're always happy to hear from you!