

Five Tips for Selling a “Senior-Owned” Home

By Nan Hayes for Caring Transitions®

Last year, our client Lynn learned her mother was being moved from hospital to rehabilitation facility following a bad fall. Realizing mom would be unable to take care of the house for a several weeks; Lynn wanted to do something special to help her at home.

Lynn asked her dad if there was anything in particular that would be meaningful to mom. She and her siblings already planned to lend a hand with housework, shopping and meals, but Lynn wanted to do more. Her father suggested they clean out the basement. For years her mom had asked him to help her sort and downsize the accumulated clutter in and around the laundry room. Now that she had taken a bad spill, he was concerned about her ability to navigate her way through the basement.

Lynn thought that was an excellent idea. She told her dad she'd come to the house the following week and they could get started.

When Lynn showed up at the house that first Saturday, her dad had the old record player going, pumping out mom's favorite tunes from worn vinyl platters. "I thought we'd have some fun!" her dad said.

And on that first day, it was fun. Lynn and her father browsed through photo albums and exchanged stories about family, friends and neighbors. By the second day, Lynn realized they had opened a lot of boxes, but made little real progress. Both she and her dad were dusty, tired and completely overwhelmed by the volume of items in the basement. They really had no idea where to begin and what to do with everything. "No wonder we've put this off for so long!" her father exclaimed.

To move things along, Lynn tried to enlist the help of siblings and input from her mother. In a matter of days, her mom was upset, the siblings were bickering and her dad had given up completely.

It was then that one of the staff at the rehab center told Lynn about Caring Transitions and suggested she request a free home visit from the local office. She felt sure they could help Lynn develop a plan.

Upon meeting with Caring Transitions, Lynn realized her personal time with her parents was best spent visiting and talking with them; not stressing over what they should keep, sell or donate. She decided she would gladly turn the basement project over to the professionals who clearly had processes in place to help people make emotional and financial decisions about their "stuff." Lynn still gave her mom the perfect gift, but instead of donating her personal time and energy, she purchased several hours of decluttering services for the home.

With the help of Caring Transitions, Lynn's parents were able to organize the basement. As an added bonus, many unwanted items were donated to charity or sold at auction, helping her mom and dad feel even better about the process.

Lynn was so happy with the outcome; she decided she would start giving gifts of service to her parents for every upcoming holiday and event.

Here are just some ideas for gifts of service your parents, friends or family may appreciate for the upcoming holiday season!

[Caring Transitions](#) downsizing and decluttering services

A gift card for shop-at-home grocery companies such as [Peapod](#) or [Schwan's](#)

A home visit from a support team, such as [Geek Squad](#), to help with computer, internet and other technical issues

Prepaid home security or [personal medical alert](#) system

A paid [home appraisal](#) for parents who may be considering a move in the next year

A paid [home inspection](#) to help folks get a head start on repairs prior to a sale

Packing, Unpacking and Move Management services for [relocating](#) relatives

Annual maintenance checkup for home heating and/or cooling systems

Painting services via [Fresh Coat Painters](#)

Gutter cleaning

Window cleaning

Screen repair

Air duct/vent cleaning

Pre-paid cab fare or transportation to and from a special event

Pet grooming

Bush and tree trimming

Snow removal

Landscape or planting services

Power washing services for deck, siding or sidewalks

Driveway repair

And many more! Encourage your siblings to help you compile a list of services and share in the cost. You may even ask your parents what they'd like without letting them know what you are up to. One way to do this is to tell them about your own home service wish list and then ask what theirs would be.

Your local Caring Transitions office can also help with referrals for many of the above services! Visit the [Services](#) page today to find out more about finding the Total Solution.



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