

Transition Times

A Senior Transition Publication

JANUARY 2006



About Senior Transition



FOUNDED:
May 2000

OWNER:
Patricia Cusson, R.N.



MISSION:

To provide positive lifestyle change assistance to an aging population and their families by helping them secure proper housing to meet individual needs, while managing the process of moving to their new homes.

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Welcome!

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of Transition Times, the newsletter of Senior Transition LLC. Located in Rhode Island, Senior Transition provides relocation services to the elder population by helping to facilitate a comfortable lifestyle change from their current homes to their new homes.

The needs of senior adults and their families are more crucial today than ever. At the same time, their options are greater. They include condominiums and apartments designed for the elderly, as well as independent living centers, assisted living communities and nursing homes. Each option

offers lifestyle solutions to meet particular needs and requirements.

The purpose of Transition Times is to provide helpful information to senior adults and their families as it relates to relocating the seniors to new homes. This will include information on how to prepare for a lifestyle change, searching for the next home, coordinating the move to the new home and making the transition an enjoyable experience.

We look forward to continually providing you with helpful hints, ideas and information in Transition Times. Our next issue will be published in April 2006.

Helping Seniors Transition to Their Next Home

“As a nurse who discharged elderly people after their hospitalization, I saw a great need to provide lifestyle change assistance in terms of relocation,” says Patricia Cusson, founder of Senior Transition. “Many of the seniors leaving the hospital went back to homes that were too large for their current needs and requirements. Many also returned to a home they once shared with a spouse and children and now occupied alone. Not only did this affect the discharged patients, but it had a tremendous impact on the family. They frequently asked, ‘What do we do now?’”

Pat Cusson created a company to address that question. Upon her retirement from Kent Hospital in Warwick, Rhode Island, Cusson started Senior Transition LLC, a company that helps her clients relocate to homes that meet their needs.

Founded in 2000, Senior Transition, which is located in Rhode Island, has helped to successfully relocate senior adults to homes where they feel comfortable, while getting the care they need.

Pat’s compassion and expertise enable her to help families move their loved ones into an environment that is supportive and safe and that will allow them to live a fuller life. The seniors see Pat as impartial, eliminating many of the emotions that come up when families face difficult life cycle decisions.

SENIOR TRANSITION assists older people with every phase of a move. The company begins with a needs assessment to determine what’s best for the individual. Is it a smaller home, an apartment or a condominium

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Relocation: Making It Comfortable

Most of us move several times during our lifetimes. It happens at various ages and for various reasons.

The longer we live in any one place, the greater the memories, the more possessions accumulated, the more difficult it is to relocate.

Relocating is especially difficult for seniors who have to move from homes they have enjoyed, in some cases, for decades. Their homes are filled with lasting memories, including life cycle events, such as their children's first steps. Sometimes the memories are harder to part with than the prom dress, the toys or the garden tools.

"Moving," says Patricia Cusson, R.N., owner of Senior Transition, "is one of the most anxious moments in someone's life, especially when it might be the first move one makes alone. Without anyone to share the emotion, it can be very anxiety producing and at times overwhelming. It should not be taken lightly."

ACCORDING TO Lynda K. Fowler, of the Ohio State University Extension, and Christine A. Price, Ph.D., Extension State Gerontology Specialist with Ohio State University, there are three reasons why relocating is necessary for seniors.

The first type of move occurs in the early senior years, the 60s, among people who are healthy and have good retirement incomes. Typically, these are people who may choose to move to a warmer climate, or to some place where there are more amenities and fewer maintenance require-

ments. They may move to be near family members or friends who have already moved. These people will usually move to condominiums or apartment communities.

Marilyn Broussard (forefront) & Kathy Hynes pack boxes for a client.

The second type of move occurs, according to Fowler and Price, when seniors find they have a chronic disability that makes it difficult to perform household tasks. They, or family members, recognize that there is a need for support but they are healthy enough to live independently. Seniors in this category usually move into assisted living facilities where support, medical and otherwise, is available but where they can have their own apartments and still drive, enabling them to live independently.

The third type of move occurs when a senior has an illness or disability that requires more care than can be provided in the home by family members, homemaker services or nursing care services. Seniors in this group will often move to skilled nursing facilities.

Each type of move requires the establishment of new routines and an effort to become familiar with a new environment.

At first, this may appear to be overwhelming but, over time, it may become a rewarding experience that will include opportunities such as the establishment of new friendships. However, negative reactions may also occur, leading to disorientation, anger, depression, confusion, illness or grief. Fowler and Price contend that the degree of adjustment often depends upon the senior's involvement in planning the move and being prepared for the move.

"OUR MISSION at Senior Transition," says Cusson, "is to minimize negative reactions by negotiating the move with the senior and his or her family members. This includes visiting potential residences with the seniors. We try to relocate our clients to residences where they will have peers, people with similar experiences and hobbies. We also help the seniors to sort through possessions, pack and unpack belongings, and monitor their situation once they are settled in the new environment."

According to Cusson, it takes people three to six months to get back into their routines after moving.

The article by Fowler and Price was published as part of "Senior Series," a partnership between Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Aging Network professionals. To reach Senior Transition, call (401) 828-5020 or (800) 899-5828, or e-mail sentrans@ids.net Or, visit us on the web at seniortransitionllc.com.



Helping Seniors Transition Continued from the cover...

community that has a substantial senior population? Or, is it assisted living or a nursing home? The assessment includes a review of the person's physical needs, emotional and environmental condition, lifestyle preferences and budget requirements.

Based on the assessment, the company identifies sites where the person will have peers and people with similar experiences and hobbies, as well as an environment that is comfortable. Pat, or another Senior Transition staff member, accompanies the seniors on tours of prospective residences

and offers evaluations. Senior Transition provides a written report on the pluses and minuses of each residence, any hidden costs, physical features, safety issues and resident contracts.

Pat and her team also help the seniors sort through belongings, deciding what to take with them in the move to the new home and what to let go. Cherished possessions can be given to friends or loved ones. If appropriate, Senior Transition will help locate an antique dealer, a vintage clothing dealer or a consignment shop to help sell some of the belongings.

Senior Transition offers a complete menu of services to assure a smooth transition.

When necessary, the company will suggest a Realtor to assist in the selling of the vacated property. Senior Transition can also make arrangements for a moving company and the Senior Transition team is there on moving day. They help with the packing and unpacking. When the new home is an assisted living facility, the company works closely with the staff to assure that the person's physical and emotional health needs are met.

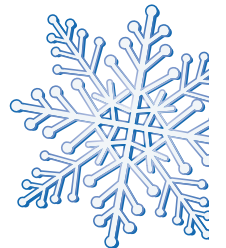
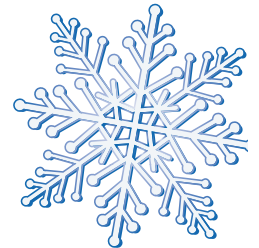
Beating The Winter Blues

The days are short. It's cold outside. You've been stuck in your home for the past week because it has been snowing. Your only forms of communication with your family are telephone or email because they cannot get out either. Waking up in the morning is a chore. You can't wait until the Red Sox start spring training!

Welcome to winter in New England or what is now officially called The Winter Blues.

There are no scientific explanations as to why many of us catch The Winter Blues. But, the short of it is that there is an easy cure, and it does not require a move to Florida.

- Open the curtains and enjoy the sunlight. It will perk you up.
- After letting the sunshine into your home, curl up and read a good book (hopefully not a book that will put you to sleep).
- Write letters to friends and family.
- Enjoy a nice warm hearty meal, such as a stew or piping hot soup.
- When possible, go outside and enjoy the fresh air and bright sunlight. Take in the beautiful winter landscape. Take notice of the evergreen trees, as well as the artful designs created by the snow. This will help to reset your biological clock. (Be sure you are dressed warmly when you go outside.)
- Exercise. This does not mean you should walk or run several miles a day or do 150 sit ups and two dozen pull ups. Exercise enough to stimulate your body.
- Do stuff with people who have a positive outlook on life.
- If you are retired, consider doing volunteer work to pass the day. This will make you feel good and appreciated, while giving you a sense of purpose.
- Enjoy household plants, preferably of the tropical variety.
- Sit by the fireplace if you have one, take in the beauty and aroma and let your mind relax. If you do not have access to a soothing fireplace, light a candle and relax.
- Rearrange your rooms in your spare time. Do something different and exciting. (Of course, this is a good time to remove any clutter that may be bothering you or taking up too much room.)



Transition Tips

Recognizing the Secrets of Downsizing

RECOGNIZE

that downsizing is an opportunity to get rid of clutter and pass on treasures to family members.

RECOGNIZE

that simplifying your life just means changing patterns of thinking.

RECOGNIZE

that, after you organize your stuff, you will save time and experience less stress.

RECOGNIZE

that if you want to be able to find the things you use, you have to get rid of the things you don't.

RECOGNIZE

that, if you make the wrong decision in throwing something out, you will survive.

RECOGNIZE

that, if you let go of things little by little, it will get easier each time you let something go.

RECOGNIZE

that it is important to clean out clutter regularly.

RECOGNIZE

that, if you do not use it or love it, you can give it away, or throw it away.

