

This is Erin Dunn of the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce with a Community Comment.

I've been staring at box of old family silver plated pieces--only the sentiment is valuable—trying to figure out what to do with the items. I feel guilty for not having them out and for wanting to get rid of them. The problem is, I have several more boxes of items just like that in my garage.

Miraculously, last Tuesday in the Times-Standard Boomers and Beyond section, I read an article by Maggie Kraft of the Humboldt Senior Resource Center and Area One Agency on Aging about that very topic.

Her sister died in 2013 and she came to terms with giving up her sister's items in order to declutter and downsize her own life. And I thought, if Maggie can do it, I can do it.

First I offered the pieces to my sisters, both in their 60s and no kids. They have their own family items so I didn't have any takers.

Then I reread Maggie's article and looked up on the internet how to get rid of sentimental family items. Did you know there is a Wiki-How site? Like Wikipedia, but for "How To."

My problem is, I THINK I will use things. For instance, there is a baggie full of silver-like individual salt and pepper shakers. I have always loved the idea of personal salt and pepper shakers on the dinner table. Have I ever used them? No. Will I take time and rub the tarnish off so I can use them? No. I need to let go of the IDEA of them.

One suggestion was take a photograph of items before giving them away. You can look back on it when you want to and remember it. Then, write a short history to go with the photo. Brilliant idea!

Wiki How says once you've made the decision, get rid of it immediately. I haven't quite done that, but I will this week.

There is the suggestion of selling the items, but that's more effort than I want to make.

It's the HOW to pass it on that I'm struggling with. I tried passing it on to family, they have their own clutter to deal with. The items are not valuable enough to sell. I feel like a thrift shop won't appreciate the items. That's the hurdle I need to get over.

I let go of something else for the New Year. My hair. I decided to be natural and let my gray hair grow in. There are different ways to do it—let it grow out in stages, use highlights, but I determined the best way for me was to get a buzz cut. I let the gray grow out about an inch, and then—viola, crew cut. It would be trendy if I was in my 20s, but alas, trendy is not the word I would use to describe it. Freeing, yes. Trendy, not so much.

Thank you Maggie for your help with this Comment. If you feel like it's time to declutter and you need some help, Gold Star Management--run by Area One Agency on Aging--can help with both the physical and emotional aspects of downsizing.

This has been Erin Dunn with a Community Comment.