

# She Dwells in Possibility

A Fearless Guide for Women

## 30 Days of Downsizing Challenge

Day 1: Open your bedroom closet. Find at least three items of clothing you haven't worn in the last six months. Donate, recycle, or throw them away.

Day 2: Deal with your sock drawer. Throw away or repurpose socks without partners; be honest about whether you're going to mend those with holes in the toes and heels. (Are you going to do it right now? If not, when? If you can't commit to a time—or if you do commit, but don't follow through--get rid of those socks.)

Day 3: Pare down your shoe collection. Reconsider any pairs of shoes that haven't been worn in the last six months; be honest about any pair of "around the house" or "around the yard" shoes you've held onto.

Day 4: Open the purse, backpack, or tote bag you carry with you most days. Remove anything that won't serve a specific purpose today. (Keep in mind that you can always return items when they're actually needed.)

Day 5: Clean out your wallet. Get rid of old receipts, pare down to \$1.00 in change (unless you know you'll need more today), and remove any credit cards that you don't use on a daily basis.

Day 6: Go through your coat closet. Donate any coats that have been outgrown by their owner; pare down to no more than two sets of hats and gloves per person. If you live in a warmer part of the country, like I do, and don't have a coat closet in your home, go through your own selection of outerwear and donate anything you didn't wear this past winter.

Day 7: Pare down your makeup case. Get rid of any products that are more than a year old (or that you haven't worn in the last year); eliminate makeup tools you haven't used

in the last six months. If you don't wear makeup, do the same for hair accessories, skin products, or whatever accumulates on your bathroom counter.

Day 8: Go through your medicine cabinet. Dispose of anything that's expired; get rid of items your family has outgrown or that you won't use in the next six months.

Day 9: Sort through your linen closet: no more than two sets of bedding for each bed in the house, no more than one set for guest beds that aren't used regularly. Repurpose sheets and pillowcases that are no longer part of a set.

Day 10: Open the "junk drawer" in your kitchen. Throw away anything you don't value; repurpose and rehome anything you can (pens, paperclips, note pads, etc.)

Day 11: Time to deal with the utensil drawer(s) in your kitchen. Donate anything you haven't used in the last year; evaluate the necessity of duplicate items.

Day 12: Look through your cookware. Donate anything you haven't used in the last year unless you know for certain when you'll be using it again—not when you *might*, but when you *will*.

Day 13: Re-evaluate your drinkware. If you've been holding on to plastic cups from your teenage children's younger years, now is the time to let them go.

Day 14: Pare down your mug collection. Leave only as many mugs as you can fit in a single layer on a single shelf.

Day 15: Reconsider any holiday dishes stored in your kitchen cabinets. Do you go to the trouble of pulling them out on the relevant holiday? If not, consider donating them. If so, consider storing them elsewhere and opening up space for things you use regularly.

Day 16: Clear your kitchen counters (with the exception of things that get daily use—canisters, your coffee maker, etc.) If you don't have storage space for countertop items, make space by letting go of items already in storage. Chances are, you're rarely using them anyway.

Day 17: Consolidate or use up cleaning products. Dispose of products you bought for a specific purpose and won't use in the next six months.

Day 18: Sort through your book and magazine collection (including the "stacks" that tend to accumulate in various places.) Get rid of anything that doesn't have sentimental value or a definite purpose. Donate or resell books; recycle magazines.

Day 19: If you're holding on to physical photo albums, determine how you might consolidate them. Donate any empty albums. (The consolidation process will take longer than one day; for now, just determine how many albums you'll need to hold all the photos you need to store.) Consider switching from albums to boxes, which are easier to store.

Day 20: Address any "hot spots" in your house—places where junk mail and bills tend to accumulate. Put important things where they belong; recycle any paper you don't need to keep.

Day 21: Take a look at the side table closest to your favorite chair (or next to your bed.) Rehome anything you aren't going to need in the next 24 hours. If you don't know where it goes, consider whether you really need to keep it.

Day 22: Go through the photos on your phone. Move to cloud storage anything you want to keep; delete photos that don't hold sentimental value. (Be sure to check your Downloads folder, not just your photo gallery.) If you're feeling ambitious, sort through your cloud storage as well; delete photos that are no longer important to you.

Day 23: Go through your email Inbox. For each item, make one of three choices: delete, file, or respond. Use a free service like [Unroll Me](#) to help you manage email subscriptions. (It's so easy to use, and it changed my life!)

Day 24: Free up some memory on your phone: delete apps you haven't used in the last three months. (Remember, you can always reinstall them if you end up missing them.) For paid apps, consider whether you're keeping them just because you paid for them, even if they haven't proven useful. Holding on to them won't change that.

Day 25: Go through your contacts. Eliminate people and services to which you no longer need quick access.

Day 26: If you hoard craft supplies, today is the day when you get rid of dried up paint, glue sticks, and other items that are no longer usable. Or figure out who would be able to use the yarn or fabric you bought for a project you're obviously not going to start. Or get rid of projects you started, but know you won't finish—their presence likely just makes you feel bad.

Day 27: If you're a collector, be honest about whether those items are still of use or value to you, or if you're just keeping them because you always have. Prepare to sell, gift, or donate anything you're ready to let go of.

Day 28: Look around your house for items that are on display only due to sentimental value. Are they still valuable to you? Removing an item from your house doesn't mean you no longer value the memories it represents; rather, it means you've internalized those memories and no longer need a physical reminder.

Day 29: Look at your family or personal calendar. Identify any events you've scheduled out of a sense of obligation, rather than necessity or pleasure. Be honest about whether you'll feel bad about not fulfilling those obligations, or whether attending the event will actually make you feel worse, not better.

Day 30: Reflect on the last 29 days. Do you feel lighter? More in control? Which day was the hardest, and which one made you feel most accomplished? What concrete actions can you take to maintain that sense of accomplishment?