

## **“Relocation Stress Syndrome” (RSS).**

Moving out of a home of 30-50 years or more can cause a senior adult to struggle with Relocation Stress Syndrome or RSS. Medical professionals utilize this term to identify anxiety and grief associated with unique sets of struggles that older adults encounter when they relocate in their later years.

Their house represents vivid memories. Thoughts about the children, the first piece of art, and the reminiscing go deep. If poor cognition enters this moving mix, the anxiety can be powerful. The very act of moving becomes physically and emotionally painful.

A company with the National Assoc. of Senior and Specialty Move Manager, NASMM, accreditation can help. These companies of excellence have met requirements through taken courses and testing positively, show proof of 5 years in business, and have completed 250 invoiced jobs. Not only have they been trained but have hours of onsite experience.

Here are some easy tips to lessen RSS before, during and after the transition:

- Senior Move Managers take pictures to replicate item locations in the new home to bring familiarity to the senior. Things arranged on their desk or cupboards help the seniors function more automatically, and they spend less time finding their items. Where replication can't be done, like in the kitchen, sticky notes can help them find their possessions quicker.
- Another way to overcome this syndrome is to photograph their favorite collections. Create and hang a photo of the collection in their new home. Then have the person choose three of their favorite items from that collection and place them in a shadow box to display.
- Be creative in capturing the joy of unique items and memories.

Not losing the memories, letting the senior talk about the memories, and then seeing that the memories are represented in their new home helps to lessen the anxiety.

**Phyllis Peabody, CSA**

**Soft Landings, Solutions for Seniors, LLC.**