

**MARNI**

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want to fill the absence. Perhaps a potted palm.

• *The China cabinet.* “Everything in the China hutch is from her family and is nothing I would pick. What do I do with it?”

*Suggestion:* Thin it out. Display items that do reflect you, but leave some empty space. You mention that someday you might have a new companion. If you do, when she comes into your home, she will be asking herself, consciously or unconsciously: Is there room for me in this person’s life?

• *Her closet.* “Our bedroom has a large, walk-in closet, which she used. I’m thinking all her clothes need to go to a thrift shop. When her closet is empty, I will move my clothes in, so they’re more acces-



**Suddenly Single — Widower Bob Glockler, who is a healthy, active 83, is struggling to define what his home should look like now that his wife is gone.** Photo by Von Diefenderfer

sible. That makes sense, but I’m not sure it’s right.”

*Suggestion:* Clothes are among the most difficult items to let go

of, as they trigger many memories and emotions. For now, consider using her walk-in closet as a way station for all the items you’re

transitioning out of the rest of the home: the troubadour, items from the China cabinet, her bathroom chair. Park those belongings in the closet and see how you and your house feel with the change.

When you’re ready, have a friend help you box them up to donate.

• *The dresser.* “In our bedroom, she had a 5-foot-long dresser with an array of pictures on it, including a few of me. It was a very personal collection to Mary. Do I leave them?”

*Suggestion:* You answered your question. “It was a very personal collection to Mary.” Put the photos away. Keep out the ones important to you. Then consider selling the dresser and replacing it with an item you will use.

• *The bed.* “We have a king-size, sleep-number bed, the kind you can

adjust, so it’s different on two sides. I do not want to sleep on her side, where she died, so I am only using half a bed. Do I give up the bed?”

*Suggestion:* Easy. You do not need that reminder. Get a new bed.

As we wrapped up our call, Mr. Glockler said, “You raised a good question. What is my style? My style has been shaped by our life together. Before that I was a kid, then an officer. I didn’t have a style. Who am I, separate from her?”

I don’t know, either, but I believe Mr. Glockler is about to find out.

Join me next week when a professional organizer with expertise in helping seniors, and a widow herself, shares advice for making changes at home after you’ve lost a loved one.

Marni Jameson can be contacted at [www.marnijameson.com](http://www.marnijameson.com).

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