

WAYS TO COPE WITH SELLING YOUR CHILDHOOD HOME



The paint flakes as you run your fingers over the markings on the wall that tracked your growth over the years. From where you're standing, you can faintly make out the shadow of the beer stain on the living room carpet from the day you threw your first unsupervised house party. As you make your way deeper into the home, more and more memories come flooding back to you, overwhelming you with emotion and leaving you with one pertinent question: *How am I supposed to sell this place?*

PROCESS THE DECISION

Selling your childhood home is often an incredibly emotional experience. But, there comes a point in time when a property simply no longer serves to be kept in the family – most often owing to financial reasons. Apart from reminding yourself of the very practical reasons why you're selling the home in the first place, you also need to allow yourself time to deal with your emotions.

In the words of Dr. Arthur Kovacs, founding dean of the California School of Professional Psychology: "You're dismantling something that was once precious, and you have to go through grief and mourning when this happens". Even if your parents are still alive, your childhood home acted as a repository for your memories (both good and bad) and you need to allow yourself time to grieve the loss of the thing that once kept those memories safe. The key is to remember that we take our memories with us. When selling a home, the only thing that gets left behind is the bricks and mortar that once housed those memories, not the memories themselves.

SAY YOUR GOODBYES

Allow yourself a day to go through the property and immerse yourself in the flashbacks linked to each room, fully enjoying the home for one last time. Bring old photo albums and invite the family over for a meal where you share stories and reconnect over old times. Afterwards, when you close the front door as you leave, disassociate yourself from the property and allow a property professional to take over.

USE A RELIABLE REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL

These kinds of transactions are best dealt with through a real estate professional you know you can trust and who you can allow to do as much of the leg work as possible for you. Sellers are often far too subjectively attached to these sorts of properties to do a good job of selling them. There might be things that need to be updated or remodelled in order to make the house more sellable and you need to trust your agent enough to make these calls on your behalf. As difficult as it might be, remind yourself of the business-nature of the transaction if your estate agent gives you feedback of low-ball offers and unimpressed viewers. At the end of the day, the property is just like any other home to potential buyers. It simply does not hold the same sentimental value to them as it does to you. Rather than be offended by this, try and put yourself in their shoes and understand that they are simply trying to find the best possible deal for themselves.