



Carol and Charles
(with Catherine Hilker)
now find their bedroom
much more inviting.

the old bedroom furniture was not cohesive and unified. Each had brought pieces from his or her life before their marriage. Carol had a triple dresser and a vanity of different styles and colors. Charles had two "antique" dressers that didn't match. Also, Charles had a nightstand next to the bed and Carol a bookcase. The room felt disjointed. The new furniture pulled the room together and created cohesion. The purchase also gave equal weight to each partner's side of the bed.

The second important reason for purchasing the furniture is that it required Carol and Charles to do a major purge and to organize. It also committed them to downsizing and simplifying. Reducing the amount of furniture was a component of making the room feel more spacious and tranquil (less is more), but the purging and organizing was also a large factor.

An organized space radiates calm even if you don't see the organization. Every drawer, shelf, and surface, including the closet, was reviewed. Any item that did not contribute to the functionality of the room was relocated. For example, the extensions for the dining room table that were stored in the closet were moved to a more appropriate area of the home. Laundry baskets, sewing projects, and

excess books were also moved. In fact, Carol noted that 25% of the items stored in the bedroom belonged somewhere else in the house. It is important to store items in relation to their function. This way you'll not spend a lot of time trying to find something or deciding where to store it.

A side benefit of the purge was that Carol rediscovered some old, cherished letters written to her by her husband. She spent some time reading all of them and recapturing magical moments they had shared together. What a great way to "initiate" the new space and what a delightful way to spend an afternoon.

Having less furniture meant my clients needed to devise creative ways to store their belongings. For example, they found that by rolling their clothes, they were able to store more clothes in their dresser drawers. Using drawer organizers for jewelry and makeup cleared clutter from the dresser surfaces. Organizers in the closet helped make room for Carol's clothing, which was previously stored in another room. Integrating Carol's clothes into the master bedroom closet was important to both parties: it added a further element of cohesion and team spirit.

The final step was to create a sensual and romantic aura for the room. Carol and Charles now awaken to a painting of Catalina Island, where they were married in a very private and personal ceremony. The wall color and the colors and textures of the duvet cover were selected to be sensual as well as inviting and warm. Art and objects depicting couples were placed in the bedroom, with Carol adding a pair of candles to the dresser and incorporating a pair of birds into the design on the duvet cover. She also put heart-shaped potpourri containers in many of the dresser drawers.

Once all the steps were done, the transformation was remarkable. Carol and Charles did indeed create a tranquil retreat that was warm and elegant, a space that provided a refuge from their busy lives. They created a sanctuary for themselves by being willing to embrace change and deepen their connection to each other.

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