

# Moving can be emotionally stressful

IN THE FLURRY OF PACKING AND MOVING, TAKE SOME TIME TO TAKE CARE OF EMOTIONAL NEEDS

for the Emerald

**D**inah Steig learned once in a wellness seminar that moving is considered one of the biggest changes in life, ranking just below death, divorce and marriage.

Steig, an operations team member at the Eugene branch of North American Van Lines, has certainly seen the stress and anxiety of moving take its toll on customers after 20 years of experience in the moving industry.

The stress comes right after she hands customers a checklist of moving items: change of address forms to send, water to shut down, electricity and gas to shut

off, personal records to forward and packing arrangements to plan.

Whether it's stress, an identity crisis or depression, there are many emotions experienced during a move. Regardless if someone is graduating and uprooting to a new part of the country or just heading home for the summer, her or she is bound to feel emotional about moving.

Steig knows all about stress and how to alleviate it: planning.

Before moving to Eugene three years ago from Fort Wayne, Ind., Steig took six months to plan her move. Even then she was still packing clothes at the last minute.

"It was lists, lists, lists every day," she said. "If you have that much time ahead, that'll keep your stress level down."

But stress isn't the only emotional factor associated with moving. There are broken ties with friends, questions of identity and the loss of structure in life.

Dr. Mark Evans, a psychologist at the

University Counseling Center, said one of the factors in moving that many people forget about is the loss of structure in life. The routines of life get lost, friends must be left behind and many people often get depressed, he said.

"When we move, we lose a piece of ourselves," he said.

That's why Evans advises movers to set aside enough time to say goodbye to close friends. Friends can help lend a hand in moving as well as ease the transition.

In a pamphlet given out by North American Van Lines, clinical psychologist Dr. Victor L. Rebman suggests visiting the new place of residence before the move to ease the adjustment. He also advises movers to keep in touch with friends with whom they can communicate their frustrations and anxieties. He reminds movers that it can take up to 18 months for some families to adjust to new surroundings before finally feeling "at home."

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