

In a time when people are "right-sizing" their homes and making tough choices about priorities, it is tempting to look at these situations in a negative light. Wendy Joseph, owner of HomeScapes Colorado, doesn't look at it that way, however. In fact, she offers a light at the end of the tunnel (or at the end of the hall on a small table with a beautiful table runner).

If you want a home that reflects who you are and warms your soul, Wendy says she can help you transform it. She can do this in a way that is not about judging your decorating sense or forcing you to adopt a style. Instead, it is as if she "turns on the light" and shows you how to make the most of what you have, she explains. HomeScapes offers tips on what can turn four walls into a sanctuary, or bring peace and calm to a bustling household. It is all about making your home look its very best.

HomeScapes is a one-woman business with a history. It actually started in Middle Tennessee in 2002. After receiving training through Sheffield School of Interior Design, Wendy started her own business. Her first clients were friends who needed some guidance on how to transform spaces into rooms that felt like "home." From there, the business grew to offer services like home staging for resale, the "four-hour room makeover," home design consultation, and even shopping for clients.

Wendy won first place for home staging by readers of the Nashville House & Home magazine in 2009. Wendy's experience working with those who range from not having any budget limits to those on very fixed incomes serves her well in Colorado Springs, she says. She is passionate about helping people achieve beauty in their homes without spending unnecessarily. A tip that she offers clients is to look around your house because you may already have a unique piece that can become a room's focal point. Perhaps that antique lamp hidden in a corner could be placed more centrally to brighten a dark room.

HomeScapes was a successful business for Wendy in Tennessee, but relocation for her husband's job led her to Colorado Springs in 2009. Wendy decided that HomeScapes would now be HomeScapes Colorado, and that it would continue to offer the well-received services that she provided in Tennessee.

The move was a real test of Wendy's skills for her own home since she had to take belongings from a much larger house and arrange them in a house half the size. So another tip she offers her clients is to embrace the de-cluttering process as a source of freedom. Getting rid of excess stuff is not about losing things, but about choosing what to draw attention to and how to showcase it. Especially if your goal is staging your house for resale, clutter is definitely a "no-no," she says.

So whether you are living in a spacious home and have lots of rooms to decorate, or you reside in a home with less square footage, Wendy says she can transform it into the home

you want it to be. Her favorite and most sought-after service is the "four-hour room makeover." This is a unique opportunity to get results quickly and have a lot of fun in half-a-day, she says.

If you decide to try it, Wendy will come to your home, assess the space, and then transform it using your current furniture and accessories. She will also make suggestions about items you might want to purchase. She can go shopping with you—or for you—to locate these items within your specified budget. In fact, a client from Tennessee who had a room makeover states: "You made the house look like me, only better."

Now for some of you, it might be hard to believe that such a transformation can happen using your existing furniture and accessories. Sometimes it is the simple things that make a difference, Wendy explains. Angling a chair a certain way or adding throw pillows to a couch can really make a room more inviting. Wendy offers another tip to those wanting to brighten their homes. "Don't be afraid to use color." Many people think that

neutral colors are more appealing. Wendy says that neutral colors are fine, but you need to add color to accessories or window treatments to bring out their beauty and make them more vibrant. Client P. J. Watkins comments, "I am still hugging my little home every morning day in and day out. Thank you so much for your hard work, and most of all for making my home me."

If your house is supposed to be a reflection of the true you, why is it so difficult for you to arrange and decorate it to feel like home? Well, without interior decorating experience or a born talent to do this, people make misjudgments, Wendy comments.

Here are some of Wendy's tips to make a home more welcoming and warm: First of all, people tend to push furniture back against the wall. Wendy says they think this makes the room look bigger. In essence, it makes the room less inviting and difficult for conversation. Also, it is common to hang pictures that are too small on walls. Wendy suggests that you group small pictures together to create a larger point of focus, or maybe you should select a larger picture. Finally, Wendy urges you to be more creative with your bookcases. "People do not take advantage of the opportunity they have to use bookcases well," she says. Instead of lining up pictures that are the same height, Wendy says the bookcase can become a very exciting focal point for a room.

If you are ready for a bit of transformation in your life, Wendy Joseph says she is ready to meet with you. Whether you need to get your home ready for resale, add some personality, freshen the look, or decorate a home from scratch, she has plenty of advice. To see some "before" and "after" photos of room makeovers that she has completed, you can take a look at her Web site, www.HomeScapesColorado.com. If you are not sure what you want to do, Wendy is available for a private consultation for \$55 an hour. You don't need to spend a lot to get amazing results, she says. To contact Wendy, call 719-325-8777 and set up a consultation.

HOMESCAPES COLORADO

By Vanessa Newman, M.S.



Wendy Joseph