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A remodeling dream: No need to move

After living in a home for a while, it can become difficult to appreciate what you have — or how to make it better.

Many homeowners end up thinking they must move to get the layout that matches their lifestyle. Rob Jackson, owner of Servant Remodeling in Dallas, offers another route: a personalized makeover that provides everything the owners want in the space they already have.

"I really thrive on going into an existing home and taking what is there and making it better than the original design," Jackson says. "We don't tend to cherish things like houses. We tend to live in a house three to five years and move on. I believe in making it really nice so you can enjoy it for a longer time."

With a firm grasp of a family's living situation, Jackson surveys the home and creates a plan that reworks the space and makes rooms more usable — perhaps as an office, a second living area or a game room. He also makes rooms more accessible for homeowners as they get older.

"A lot of people say they don't have enough storage and think, 'Oh, we need to add on or move into a larger house,'" Jackson says. "It's kind of hard for them to see outside the box a lot of the time."

"I have been in thousands of homes. You can rework a house [to make it feel] much bigger than it really is."

To bring this plan to fruition, people need to be happy in their neighborhood and like the location and the general layout of their house, Jackson says.

Jackson started his home remodeling business when he was 21. Twenty-two years later, the award-

winning contractor and his staff specialize in kitchens, baths and general remodeling projects, configuring the spaces to "make them work a lot better and meet the customer's needs without adding on."

Jackson is a NARI (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) certified remodeler and a NARI-certified kitchen and bath remodeler. He serves as president of NARI's Greater Dallas Chapter.

Jackson maintains a green point of view that starts with the amount of square footage in a home. The smaller the space a family inhabits, the fewer the resources they require. By reworking their existing layout, homeowners can add such green elements as better insulation, windows and doors and save on utilities because they'll have a more efficient design, he says. They'll also save money on maintenance and taxes.

Having downsized from a 4,300-square-foot home to a design with 2,100 square feet of space, Jackson practices what he preaches.

"You can do a lot better finish-out [in a smaller home] because you don't have to cover as much space," he says. "You can make it nicer and longer lasting."

Generally speaking, the calls Jackson receives fall into the following categories: people who live in an older home where the kitchen and bath are non-functional; people who need more space or have rooms that don't get used; and people who don't have an open floor plan but want one.

"That's when I really love to problem-solve," Jackson says. "And, basically, what I do is come up with new ideas."

For more information about remodeling, visit www.servantremodeling.com.

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Photo by Steve Reed

Rob Jackson and his wife, Yudy, look over a floor plan for an upcoming remodeling project.