

POWERFUL POSSIBILITIES

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POWER CO-OP EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION

ADVENTURELAND

We will once again have tickets for Adventureland Amusement and Water Park.

All tickets are on sale for \$38.

Regular admission is \$45. Tickets purchased are good for the entire 2019 season

New payment option!

We now have the ability to accept credit cards, pay cards and debit cards to make your loan payment.

Contact the credit union

For details and fees involved.

Don't Have a Credit History? Start Small

- Budget, track expenses, and save.
- Open accounts at a credit union.
- Apply for a small loan or line of credit.
- Get a secured credit card.
- Use a co-signer on first credit accounts.
- Offer a large down payment to get a loan.
- Apply for a department store or gas card.
- Put utilities and rent in your name.
- Make sure creditors report to credit bureaus.

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Tidying Up Your Finances

You've probably seen or at least heard about the show "Tidying Up with Marie Kondo" which aims to help people clear the clutter from their homes.

Marie asks participants to assess each item and determine whether it "sparks joy" for them anymore. If it doesn't, it goes to a charity shop or to the trash. By clearing the clutter in one's life, Marie says it not only creates a better home environment, but it has beneficial effects on one's mood, thought processes, and abilities.

The same exercise can be applied to your finances. Is your spending out of control? Do you have little to no idea how much you spend on food, clothes, or entertainment per year? Do you hate looking at your account balance because you're afraid of what you'll see? Then you may want to tidy up your finances. Here are a few ways to help you get started:

- **Create a budget.** Start by adding up all the monthly expenses you **MUST** pay for – rent/mortgage, utilities, gas/transportation, groceries, credit card bills, out-of-pocket health expenses, insurance. Deduct that from your monthly take-home pay. What's left is what you can either save or spend on non-essentials. Nerdwallet has an online budget sheet <https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/finance/budget-worksheet/> you can use to make these calculations. There are also many free apps, like Everydollar.com and Mint.com, to help you stay on budget.

- **Get rid of credit cards with high interest rates.** Their huge interest charges make them harder to pay off. For instance, say you bought a coat for \$400 (on sale!) on a credit card with 16.99% interest. If you only pay \$25 each month, that coat will end up costing you \$456 because of the interest. The more expenses you put on that card, the higher your interest charges will go. Apply for credit cards with low interest and transfer the balances on these high-interest cards to the low-interest cards. Pay more than the minimum or the entire amount whenever possible.

- **Control impulsive shopping.** Yes, that new purchase may "spark joy" at this moment, but is it really worth the financial stress it may create? Postpone the purchase for 24 hours and see if you still must have it.

- **Save for big-ticket items.** Instead of using credit cards for expensive items, plan ahead and save for them. Getting into a savings habit will help you live within your means and avoid the stress of deepening debt.

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How to Pay Off Debt with the Stack Method

1. **Add** up all your minimum debt payments
2. **Decide** how much on top of that amount you can afford to pay each month. This amount is your stash.
3. **Identify** the loan with the smallest balance.
4. **Make** minimum payments on everything except that loan.
5. **Put** everything left in your stash toward the loan you identified.
6. **When** that loan is paid off, **add** its minimum payment toward your stash.
7. **Repeat** the process with the next loan you want to pay off.
8. **Your** monthly stash will continue to grow as you pay off more loans!

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