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INVESTING IN AMERICA



Clearing the Clutter

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It's time for "Investing in America". Today, "Clearing the Clutter". If you believe "time is money," then you'll agree being disorganized might be costing you a lot.

Have you ever had to pay a bill late because you forgot it was due, or couldn't find the statement? Jessica Bissonnette says it happens to her all of the time.

Jessica Bissonnette, Disorganized

"I have a dozen bills, say, a month, and I'm usually late on one."

How often do you lose something important?

Statistics show Americans spend an average of 150 hours a year simply trying to find things in their homes! Wasting time is one thing, but having to replace those lost items adds up, too.

Sarah Buckwalter, Professional Organizer

"I had a client who lost her palm pilot and went out and bought another palm pilot, and it was in her desk when I went to organize her. That's several hundred dollars you're spending just because you can't find it."

Sarah Buckwalter is very organized, and runs a company helping other people get it together. Her first tip-set up a system.

Sarah Buckwalter, Professional Organizer

"Keeping a place where all your mail goes, all your bills to pay go, having a work station, where everything's in one place, so that when you need to pay a bill you can go to it right away."

And make sure you have everything you need in that one location.

Sarah Buckwalter

"Some people, you know, they might have their desk upstairs and their filing systems downstairs and their stamps in the kitchen, you know, they're running all around the house trying to do a simple task."

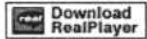
If your issue is clutter, a few simple things will help. Pay your bills immediately, file important documents right away and trash the things you know you won't need later. And, Sarah says, take it one step at a time.

Sarah Buckwalter

"Instead of saying, 'Oh, my goodness, my whole house needs organizing', just start a little bit at a time. It requires discipline."

Sarah says it's a simple system, and once you get the steps down, you can use it everywhere from your desk to your closet, in your kitchen and garage.

Once you have your system in place, what paperwork should you keep and what should you trash? Do you need your cancelled checks, old bills, and receipts?



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WHDH-TV
7 Bulfinch Place
Boston MA 02114