

Beware: What you own, could own you

By Marlo Archer

Bills, bills, bills! There are the mortgage and the cable bills, the water bill and the electric bill. Bills for homeowners' insurance and medical insurance and car insurance and dental insurance and disability insurance and long-term care insurance. Department stores and magazine subscriptions, property taxes and gym memberships, piano lessons and gymnastics and soccer, when will it end?

Well, *TIME* magazine will stop sending you a bill when you stop subscribing. Cox cable will reduce your bill when you cancel HBO, Showtime and Cinemax. You would not need to make a monthly car payment if you did not own a car and Robinsons-May would not have extended you credit if you had not left their store with \$200 worth of merchandise. We're doing it to ourselves, burying ourselves in bills.



Practical Advice

Do you need a Hummer H3 to ride around town to pick up your groceries? Do you have to whiten your teeth, lift and separate body parts affected by age, and put three colors in your hair that no one is ever given at birth? Is it completely necessary for your truck to require a stepladder for you to get into the driver's seat? Are 14 vintage revolvers truly necessary to protect your home? And do you actually need a GPS to navigate Ahwatukee Foothills?

Of course we do not need these things. But, we want them. And we love them. And for me to even suggest, for a moment, that we think about ridding ourselves of our beloved belongings might even be making you angry.

This is America. Land of the free, home of the brave, the place where all your wildest dreams can come true. Each of us can have our very own swimming pool. No one really has to ride public transportation if they don't want to. We can order food, eat half of it, and throw the other half away. It's our birthright. Keep your laws off my body and out of my home and out of my back yard. I'm an American, and I'm free!

OK, OK, no one's going to come take away your TiVo or strip you of your shoe collection. But do remember that although it is your right to have those things. There's no rule saying you have to. If you are getting overwhelmed with bills, let

something go. Perhaps let a lot of "some-things" go. There is a very good chance that you don't really need much of what is oppressing you and you will feel a great freedom to let it go.

Everything that you own, owns you. If you merely have what you need, that is the most comfortable. When you own more than what you need, more than what you can manage, that's when you feel really oppressed. We get tricked into thinking that if we just had more we'd be all right, but it's actually the other way around. We do much better with less. See what you can let go of today and start the relief.

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