

IMPROVE EDUCATION
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT
ADDRESS INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES
ADOPT SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC STRATEGIES
MEET HUMAN NEEDS & PRESERVE LOCAL CULTURE

FOCUS OUR
MAUI ISLANDS
NUI OUR FUTURE

Own it!

Too much STUFF!



We sure love buying stuff! And despite the fact that most of us have way too much of it, we keep accumulating more of it. In fact, the amount of stuff we accumulate grows as we increase the square footage of our living spaces. Since 1970, the size of the average house has increased nearly 40%, from about 1,500 square feet to 2,300 — and that's despite an overall decline in family size. This is our downfall says Ilyce Glink, author of *'50 Simple Things You Can Do to Improve Your Personal Finances'*. When you buy a bigger home to accommodate your stuff, you pay higher taxes, higher utility bills, and a bigger mortgage. What are we thinking? Americans pay dearly, more dearly than we are willing to calculate, for things such as appearances, convenience and immediacy. This is about living beyond our means, and about not being able to distinguish between what we want, and what we need.

Here's some advice:

Avoid people who want you to want more stuff.

- ✓ Throw away catalogs without reading them.
- ✓ Don't watch television commercials or shopping networks.
- ✓ Stop email advertisements.
- ✓ Don't hang out in shopping areas for recreation.

Realize how much junk you have now, and how much trouble it is.

- ✓ Take a complete inventory of your house contents for insurance purposes.
- ✓ Do a weekly cleanout of 20 things you don't want to keep anymore.
- ✓ Visualize moving all of your stuff to a new home, or your heirs going through everything after your death.

Learn to appreciate the stuff you have.

- ✓ Keep warranties.
- ✓ Perform basic repair and maintenance.
- ✓ Loan things you don't use frequently to other people.

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"The whole meaning of life is trying to find a place for your stuff."

~George Carlin
Comedian



FOCUS MAUI NUI is a community-driven vision for the future of our islands, spearheaded by Maui Economic Development Board, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the economic well-being of Maui County. VISIT www.focusmauinui.com or CALL 808.270.6801