LET'S TALK MONEY®

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Putting money aside might be a lot easier if you had only one thing to save for during your lifetime. But the reality is that you'll have different goals at different times in your life. So it's important to think not only about *what* you'll need money for but also *when* you'll need it.

A Lifetime of Goals

Set priorities

Each goal that you identify will have a different investing time frame. You'll probably have short-term goals, such as saving for a new car or the down payment on a house, that you'll need money for in the next five years. You might also have mid-term goals that are five to 15 years in the future, such as saving for a child's college education. But no matter what your other goals are, investing for your retirement should be a priority.

Don't just wing it

Start by determining the amount you need to save every month if you want to avoid a shortfall. Be specific about your savings goal and time horizon. Then calculate how much to invest using different rates of return. And don't forget to factor in inflation. Even low inflation can reduce your spending power. Your financial professional can help you refine your approach.

Think long term

Retirement may seem like a long way off when you're young. However, investors who begin saving during their 20s have many years to potentially benefit from compounding — the continuing reinvestment of any investment earnings. Contributing early to an employer's retirement plan or an individual retirement account can put time on your side. With a long time horizon before you'll need your money, even a small investment has the potential to grow into a much greater sum.

Pump it up

Setting up an automatic investment program is a simple way to increase the amount you're investing. You're already using this method if you contribute to an employer's retirement plan through payroll deduction. Adding a portion of any raise or bonus you receive to an investment account may help you reach your investing goals more quickly.

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Damon S. Winter
LUTCF®, CFS®, FSCP®
Financial Planner

OnMark Asset Management, LLC
5200 Meadows Road
Suite 150
Lake Oswego, OR 97035

Tel: 503-726-5963
Fax: 503-210-0209
Email:
damon@onmarkam.com
Website:
www.onmarkam.com

OnMark is a boutique asset management firm with roots dating back to 1968. Utilizing our distinctive process, we offer high touch advice with a sophisticated suite of financial planning services.

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Spending Less on Your Getaway

Want to go on a relaxing, enjoyable vacation this summer without breaking the bank? Here are some ways you and your family may be able to save money while getting away from it all.

Visit national parks

Traveling to a national park can be a good way to experience some of the country's most beautiful natural areas. An annual National Park pass is relatively inexpensive and provides access to over 2,000 federal recreation sites all over the country for a full year. You can find more information on the National Park Service's website (*nps.gov*).

Explore your region

You may find that there are many interesting places to visit near where you live or within a few hours of your home. Using your own car to explore local sites can save you the cost of flights and vehicle rentals. Contact your local tourism office to see if it offers a tourism pass, which may allow you to visit attractions in your area for free or at a reduced price.

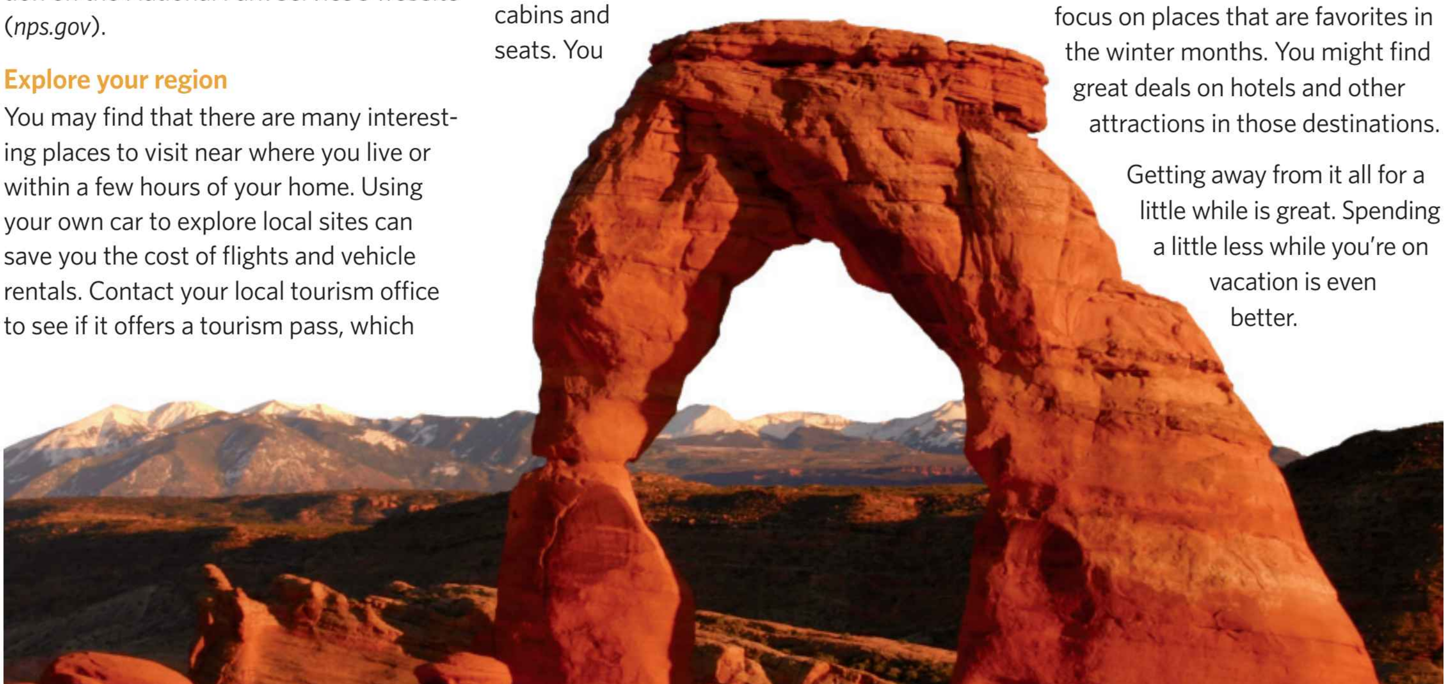
Look for last-minute deals

If you are flexible about your travel dates, last-minute deals can be a great way to spend a lot less. Cruises and tours often lower their prices significantly right before the departure date in order to fill unsold cabins and seats. You also may be able to save by booking a flight at the last minute.

Get off the beaten track

Popular destinations and high-season travel are typically the most expensive options when planning a vacation. Consider visiting unusual places or traveling off-season. In the summer, for example, focus on places that are favorites in the winter months. You might find great deals on hotels and other attractions in those destinations.

Getting away from it all for a little while is great. Spending a little less while you're on vacation is even better.



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Dorm Room Dos and Don'ts

If you're sending a child off to school soon, here are some tips on what students should and should not bring.

Do pack

- *Electronics.* Students do need their laptops and cell phones. Check to see if your homeowners insurance policy will cover these items or if you will need additional coverage.
- *Storage bins.* Many dorm rooms don't provide a lot of closet or drawer space. Bins that can fit under the bed may be very useful.
- *Laundry supplies.* Your student will need a laundry basket or bag and detergent (and quarters, if the washing machines and dryers are coin operated).
- *Tools.* A hammer, flashlight, scissors and can opener may come in handy. Sewing and first-aid kits also are good items to bring to school.

Don't pack

- *Appliances.* Your student probably won't need his or her own toaster, coffee maker or microwave. Also, check to see if the school rents mini-fridges.
- *Their entire wardrobe.* Students don't need all of their clothes, especially out-of-season clothing. If needed, they can pick up cold-weather gear when they come home for Thanksgiving break.
- *School supplies.* Buy them at an office supply store near campus instead of having them take up room in your car or transporting them on the flight.
- *Valuables.* Your child really shouldn't bring anything you wouldn't want lost or stolen. If your child insists, check to see if these personal possessions will be covered under your homeowners insurance policy.

Your Next Car — Buy or Lease?

If you're in the market for a new car, you may want to consider the pros and cons of buying and leasing before driving off in your new wheels.

Buying. If you put a lot of miles on a car each year or plan on keeping it for many years, buying may be the right choice for you. There are no mileage restrictions when you buy. Once the car is purchased or the loan is paid, you'll own your vehicle free and clear and can sell or trade it whenever you want. However, you don't know what the market value of the car will be when you decide to sell. And buying generally means putting more down than leasing does.

Leasing. You may get more car for a lower monthly payment when you lease. And you can get a new car every few years. But you will pay for excess mileage and wear and tear. And when the lease ends, you'll have no equity in the car to use as a down payment on your next car.

Here's to Your Health!

You may not have thought about it much, but there's a connection between physical and financial wellness. Taking control of your finances could help improve your overall well-being.

Financial problems can be a significant source of stress. And when you're feeling stressed, you might not get enough sleep or eat right. This can lead to other unhealthy behaviors. Stress also contributes to high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and digestive disorders. And if you're worried about money, you may be more likely to neglect your own health care so you don't have to spend money on doctor visits and preventive services.

Developing healthy money habits may help you reduce financial stress. Start by tracking your spending and following a budget. Try to keep your debt under control by paying off your credit cards each month. Work toward setting aside three to six months' worth of expenses in an emergency fund to use only for unanticipated major expenses. And start saving for future goals, such as a down payment on a house, college tuition for your kids and your retirement.

Once you feel better about your financial situation, your overall wellness may improve. Here's to a healthier you!

LET'S TALK INVESTING

Q. My stay-at-home spouse doesn't have access to a retirement plan. Is there a way for my spouse to contribute to a retirement account without having earned income?

A. If you have a stay-at-home spouse, a spousal individual retirement account (IRA) might be a good option to consider. For 2017, a married couple can contribute up to $5,500 of earnings to an IRA for each spouse, even if one spouse has little or no earned income. The maximum contribution rises to $6,500 if your spouse is age 50 or older.

If neither you nor your spouse is covered by a retirement plan at work, contributions to a *traditional* spousal IRA are potentially tax deductible even if you don't itemize your deductions. However, income limits will apply if you (or your spouse) actively participate in an employer's retirement plan.

If you participate in a retirement plan at work and your spouse does not, 2017 contributions to your spouse's traditional IRA are:

- Fully deductible if your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) for the year is $186,000 or less
- Partially deductible with modified AGI between $186,001 and $196,000
- No longer deductible once modified AGI reaches $196,000

To be eligible to make spousal IRA contributions, one spouse must have earned income at least equal to the amount of the contribution(s). For contributions to a traditional IRA, your spouse must be under age 70½ in the year for which the contribution is made. Withdrawals from traditional IRAs are taxable except to the extent of any nondeductible contributions.

If you're unable to make deductible contributions to a traditional IRA, you may want to contribute to a Roth spousal IRA. Although Roth contributions are not tax deductible, withdrawals from the Roth IRA will be tax free if certain requirements are met. Income limits also apply to Roth contributions.

Not all taxpayers will benefit from tax deferral and/or Roth IRAs. Be sure to talk to a professional before taking action.

We Value Your Input...

Your feedback is very important to us.
If you have any questions about any of the subjects covered here, or suggestions for future issues, please don't hesitate to call. You'll find our number on the front of this newsletter. It's always a pleasure to hear from you.

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