

0 (0s):

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1 (40s):

Great to have you,

2 (41s):

Do you hear on the Clark Howard show? You know, our mission is to serve you and empower you to make better financial decisions in your life. And if you hear me talk about something, give an opinion, answer a question, and you feel like I did not deliver on that mission, serving you and empowering you. I need to hear from you. All you do is go to Clark dot com slash Clark Stinks and post where you feel. I didn't do the job you expect from me.

1 (1m 16s):

I should have never been encouraged to, to speak to you. How much to think I'm pretty stupid, or you shouldn't be ashamed of yourself. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe a right. Happy, happy.

3 (1m 34s):

Clark Stinks Day Clark I know you always love this episode.

2 (1m 38s):

It is my absolute favorite because I'm one of those people who is all about continuous improvement. And this really helps me learn.

3 (1m 48s):

All right. Well, Matt wants you to learn this. He says your advice on the podcast to the recent grad who was living at home and saving \$20,000 a year stunk. He said he was invested in growth funds, and you went into your usual rant describing your obsession with a low cost index funds. Not all low cost index funds are better than all higher fee growth funds, but that's for a future. Clark Stinks what really stinks is that you are obsessive rant of was about the tax efficiencies of these funds. When the obvious tax question would be, if he makes less than \$37,000, because then he would be in the 0% capital gain tax bracket.

3 (2m 29s):

And all those tax efficiencies would be worthless anyway. And in the growth funds, the capital gain distributions could be reinvested, essentially. Tax-free P

2 (2m 39s):

Yeah. Thank you. And I appreciate that post. So here's the thing is that even though we've got the zero tax bracket on capital gains, if you're in an actively managed fund, you have the potential that you're going to have items that we'll not be held long enough in the fund to create longterm gains, instead of you create a short term, and then those are taxed at your regular income tax rate. And so you avoid that in an investment account with index funds almost entirely, but you know, growth funds are not a bad choice in that case.

2 (3m 22s):

I just think that index funds are a better choice.

3 (3m 27s):

Clark you are right that Walmart has tuition for \$1 a day for employees, but people need to also know that many Walmart stores will hire them as temporary status employees for up to six months. In this case, the new employee will not qualify for tuition assistance or any benefits offered at Walmart. I thought it would be a good idea for people to know this before choosing Walmart based on the tuition assistance program.

Thanks. Clark Dwayne,

2 (3m 53s):

Dwayne. Thank you. I was not aware of that. Basically a six month holding cell that people are in before they are eligible for the college education benefit. And if somebody stays, which is one of the advantages for Walmart is reducing turnover. Then they do have access to that benefit. But I hear you loud and clear that it's not as simple as I made it sound.

3 (4m 21s):

I've been listening to you since I was a pizza delivery driver back in the early two thousands. I love your show in my life is better for having listened. There is one aspect that smells like a rotting pizza that fell between the seats of my car all of those years ago. Just like you like to wear a Kirkland signature gear, because you're proud of it. Your listeners would like to show off some merch as well. I've been able to buy one t-shirt from a few years ago, but I can't replace it. Now that it's worn out. I'll promise to get the old pizza cleaned out of my car. If you could try to sell some Clark deal gear Daniel.

2 (4m 54s):

So Daniel, thank you. What would we do? Don't we have some Clark Howard university shirts leftover. What do we do with those?

3 (5m 1s):

We're going to have to ask you on that. We definitely had some, and I'm sure that there's still some of that remain. I saw someone in a storage closet recently.

2 (5m 11s):

So here's the scoop is that we discontinued our e-commerce site a while back. And so I don't even know what we did with the inventory, because we had very little, what is called sell through a very little inventory left at the time we shut down the commerce. So God

3 (5m 34s):

T-shirts have the wrong, a web address on them. And it's just, we, the pricing we were looking at for Clark year, it's just so expensive. We don't think any of our lip. Yeah, because we're so small. Yeah. Okay. We'll think about it. Okay. Anonymous says upon your recommendation, I bought some of the wrong type of batteries from woot. I assumed your recommendations would only recommend alkaline batteries. I will be throwing out the batteries I got do to your recommendation. I think this was on Clark deals.

2 (6m 3s):

Thank you. And I, and I know the deal you're talking about and in the deal, the batteries did not say that they were not alkaline. And I think that's something that we will always post from here forward when we post a battery deal, because there are so few items that they were heavy duty batteries, which is like a euphemism for not very good batteries when it says heavy duty and not alkaline. So that was a, an omission on our part that cost you money. And I apologize for that.

2 (6m 43s):

And as to what you do with heavy duty batteries, I don't really know what heavy duty AA or AAA are used in because anything that I have I use alkalines. And so that was our bad a

3 (7m 0s):

Followup to Clark Stinks from Jeff and Arizona, where he said, Clark uses words that are too general and not useful. Clark still didn't get it. So here's an example. When Clark speaks about when to get a lawyer, to help with wills and trusts, he says, quote, if you have a lot of money, you should seek professional help. A lot is not helpful as it can be 10,000 to some and 10 million to others. Thanks for clarifying Sal

2 (7m 25s):

Sal. Thank you. And so why am I mamby pamby on how much money equals a lot with a will? So if I said a million dollars, just as an arbitrary number, that would probably be a good number, but to many other people, it might be 500,000. In fact, Wes Moss, who is a financial expert, extraordinary who is involved some with us at Clark dot com,

3 (7m 58s):

We're going to launch a new podcast with him soon.

2 (8m 0s):

That's right. So West says that really the tipping point would be 500,000. He's not thinking specifically about a will, but he's telling about it being the point at which you can have comfort in retirement based on other factors, like what you'd be getting from social security. And so maybe my predisposition that a million is that number. Maybe it should be 500,000. So in that case, giving a specific hard number is difficult to do.

3 (8m 35s):

Clark that awful smell is about half of what you spend on Amazon, Amazon prime, going up in smoke instead of paying full price, you can use your daughter's college email and sign her up for a six month free trial followed by a discounted \$6 and 49 cents a month. It's no problem streaming from or shipping to more than one location. Just be careful to select the right address with each order. Another great discount for college students is Spotify for students for four 99 a month, get a Spotify premium non shareable account, plus Hulu and Showtime. The streaming can be done for multiple locations. And that's from Russell in Missouri.

2 (9m 16s):

Russell, thank you for that. And the irony is that I'd say almost everything ever ordered on our Amazon account is by my college daughter. So I haven't wanted to renew our Amazon prime. I already checked and I've already put in the reminder to not renew Amazon when the time comes. And that would be the wonderful worthy alternative is for my daughter who actually uses Amazon regularly to be able to do it at a much lower cost on her student prime membership.

3 (9m 55s):

Levi's the color to connect their Venmo to a separate bank account with a small balance. That way, if their Venmo was hacked, they would only lose a small amount. Well, I did exactly this and my wife's Venmo did get hacked for nearly \$2,900. I thought we were safe, but then my bank withdrew the money anyway, leaving us with a massive negative balance. Then the bank charged us \$38 in insufficient fund fees. On top of that, fortunately, after some hassle Venmo refunded the money and the bank refunded the fees. After that, I went to the bank and removed overdraft protection. Hopefully that solves the problem. Please advise your listeners to make sure they do not have overdraft protection on their account tied to Venmo.

3 (10m 39s):

Chris,

2 (10m 40s):

Chris, thank you for that alert because this is something that I've talked about for 10 years and that is the banks have been lying and cheating and stealing from their customers. Pretending that overdraft quote unquote protection is a benefit. It is something that like only the mob could be looking at is a protection racket, because it is a bank license to steal from you. When you set up overdraft protection, they lie to you telling you this is a benefit to you when it's only a benefit and profitable to the bank. If you have been cheated by your bank and kind, and to setting up a quote, unquote, overdraft protection, remove it from your

account, it is better for you to have an item returned NSF than to have your bank just put it into overdraft so they can fee you to death.

2 (11m 37s):

And in this case, it could have cost you \$2,900.

3 (11m 43s):

Do your Clark during a PO Podcast and older person called in looking for advice about getting life insurance. As his policy was going from \$1,800 a year to over 20, you told him essentially that he didn't need life insurance due to his age. Clark you don't know his family situation. Maybe he had children later in life, or maybe he has a special needs child that will need Karen support for many years while it's true that most people may not need life insurance later in life. In this case, he might have, please answer the questions that are asked, even if you don't think that's necessary. Thank you for all. You do love the show. Karen,

2 (12m 20s):

Karen, thank you for your post. And the, the proper answer in your case is that if somebody is getting older, does have a, a, a dependent, like a special needs child who depends on the money that they can provide or had children much later in life. The answer is to replace your, a level term insurance with a new one when you're younger and its more affordable and more likely to be able to be obtained than to wait until you've run out the full string on your existing policy. I mean, a policy was as inexpensive as it was for those years.

2 (13m 2s):

It might've even made sense to piggy-back and have two policies. One that would carry on after the first one would expire. And I appreciate all your posts on Clark Stinks when you feel that I'm just really not giving a clear, concise answer is you heard in several of the posts today, you feel like the advice I gave is off the Mark. Please take a moment to go to Clark dot com slash Clark Stinks and post it. And coming ahead on our podcast, I want to talk to you about things that are going to be a real deal next week, with a holiday week sale cycle coming up,

0 (13m 45s):

You decided to upgrade your outdoor deck. So you ordered the essentials, a power washer or a set of patio chairs and a shiny new grill. And you used your bank of America, cashew awards, credit card, choosing to earn 3% cash back on online shopping or up to 5.2, 5% as a preferred rewards member, which you put towards the cost of your most essential deck edition. A bird feeder apply for yours@bankofamerica.com slash more rewarding copyright 2020 bank of America corporation.

2 (14m 20s):

I love bargains and I love using the calendar is a key to saving money and I'm glad you're with us as we continue today. Today's Podcast. So next week is not only Valentine's day, but it's president of the day,

holiday weekend. And even though we're supposed to be celebrating the Presidents that have served our great nation, most people celebrate by pre pandemic going to take a trip and not as many people doing that right now, or taking advantage of the great Midwinter sales that happen is this is the next weekend is the biggest sales opportunity.

2 (15m 5s):

Since about November. A lot of things that I did not sell through for the winter selling season have to be moved by retailers, both online and physical store retailers next weekend. Why if you go in a store, what's filling up the shelves right now, all spring merchandise. So anything that is left over retailers do sales and clearance sales on those items. Any kind of winter clothing will be from moderately to heavily marked down.

2 (15m 47s):

And now there's been an odd pattern with winter gear wear for a number of weeks, we had milder than normal temperatures and then a big swath of the country recently had a lot of snow and a lot of cold weather. And so some places in America, aren't going to see the overstock and winter type items that other places are. So that's why they are truly clearance sales. No rain checks limited to quantities on hand as the retailers like to say, but you will find a lot of things that are deals that are related in any way to winter.

2 (16m 30s):

Next weekend, second thing is electronics are normally not a deal this cycle, but there's a lot of factors involved with why cell phones are such a deal right now and will be especially next weekend for the president's day weekend holiday sales. The reason is as people in larger numbers or spending more time at home, and then we have tens of millions of Americans that are suffering financially. The normal replacement cycle for cell phones is not present. And so there's more deals that I'm seeing going on right now.

2 (17m 14s):

Even Samsung's new flagship S 20 ones. There are a lot of deals on those right now in Samsung even lowered the price of that. Basically the equivalent of units, 200 bucks from where the prior model was. And this is a change in pricing from where a Samsung generally is a pot, more features into their flagship, tend to boost the prices right now, cutting the prices. One category in particular, the there have been a huge number of deals in January. We're going to have more next weekend mattresses.

2 (17m 57s):

The mattress market is way over inventory because after we went from a cartel of three producers of mattresses in the country with the new technology, the compressed mattresses, the mattress and the box, everybody thought this was Eldorado. And all of these companies well more than a hundred started making these, there are way too many available. Why are these companies aren't gonna make it to you? The truth. So mattresses have been falling, falling, falling in price. And for equivalent purchases, mattresses are probably less than half the cost.

2 (18m 38s):

Now what they were two years ago. And if your mattress is old and lumpy, you can look now you'll gosh, we bought a new King mattress and a box recently, and it was \$479. And my wife says it's by far the most comfortable mattress she's ever been on four 79 for a King is really good. And the price points, whatever size you get are all down from where they were. It's time for your questions that you have posted for me at Clark dot com slash ask. And what are you going to start with? Christa

3 (19m 16s):

Dave in Tennessee says I've had some situations where prescriptions have been cheaper, via good RX than they have been with insurance. I don't understand how the economics of this works both good RX and the insurance company getting rebates from the pharmacy that fills the prescription.

2 (19m 34s):

So this is one that just is so befuddling to people. But if you take a generic drugs, which most people do like 80% or so a prescriptions filled this generic and you are a filling a generic that is actually a, an ultra low cost generic for the a retailer pharmacy, whoever it has become typical that the drugs are cheaper. Either direct store price saying you don't have insurance or using good RX. So one of their competitors that have the prescription discount cards, then using your own insurance, the insurers are taking advantage of people thinking that using the drug benefit with your insurance plan for generics will absolutely be cheaper than other ways of buying prescription drugs.

2 (20m 38s):

And actually it is now very much the opposite. So no that the insurance companies are taking advantage of you. And it's why anytime I'm filling a prescription, I compare the good RX price versus what it would be otherwise. Also, if you are a Sam's club member and have a plus membership, Sam's offers fantastic deals with a lot of generics, potentially being free for you. And if you look on good RX consistently, the cheapest place to fill a prescription drug is Costco wholesale.

2 (21m 22s):

And Costco has to let you fill a prescription. Even if you're not a member. If you go to fill a prescription there at the door, you tell them when they wanna turn you away, cause you don't have a membership. You tell them you're going to fill a prescription and you'll have to pay cash or cash equivalent for that prescription. But you'll be able to get that Costco price, same as a member would pay.

3 (21m 48s):

Do you wear? It says I was contacted on my cell phone by someone who said my subscription with a virus protection company was up for renewal. I knew nothing about it. And they said to call a number to cancel it. When I did that, they wanted me to go to a support website. At that point I refused and hung up. Oh, thank

goodness. I called the company and asked them if they knew anything about the subscription offer. And they said they did not, was this.

2 (22m 12s):

It is a scam. And it is a hideously ugly scam that has a lot of ugly ways that plays out. So what happens is when you, when you end up with a quote unquote customer support or tech support, they then have you give them some codes from your computer that allow them remotely to control your computer. They can then use it to steal your money. And I'm not going to go into all of the ways they do that. Or they can use it to ransom your computer back to you, lock it down and then say, I know, well, you want your computer back.

2 (22m 53s):

You're going to have to pay us this terrible ransom. Those are the two most common poise with this phone call. And when you get it, hang up, the phone

3 (23m 6s):

Rod in Ohio says, my son is in college and the tuition is locked in at the same price for four years, we have the money to pay for his college, but are wondering if we should take out loans to pay now and keep the money and investments. Perhaps he gets a job that will pay for his college, or is there some other type of loan forgiveness? If not, we always have our savings to use.

2 (23m 29s):

So investing in a very short window is riskier more risky. I did go to college. I can't get my grammar. Right. Christa was an English major and just cringes. When I always up my grammar. Sorry. Christa no, not at all. Okay. So in this case, because if the investments did not do well over the short cycle, have a college education, or you could draw on savings to pay that tuition in, give the investments time to recover. If you want to do that as a strategy, that's just fine.

2 (24m 10s):

If you didn't have the backstop of the savings, it would be too risky. And that concludes today's podcast. I want to tell you that it is my honor, that you use time out of your day and your life to come here for advice and information. And if you just kind of found your way here, I hope you'll subscribe. If you're a subscriber and you're enjoying what you hear a hope you'll review it and know that Monday through Thursday, each week, we're available to give you one-on-one three advice and it's something we've been doing for more than 28 years providing one-on-one free advice.

2 (24m 58s):

You can see how to do that at Clark dot com slash CAC. And you can see the phone number and ours to call right there.