

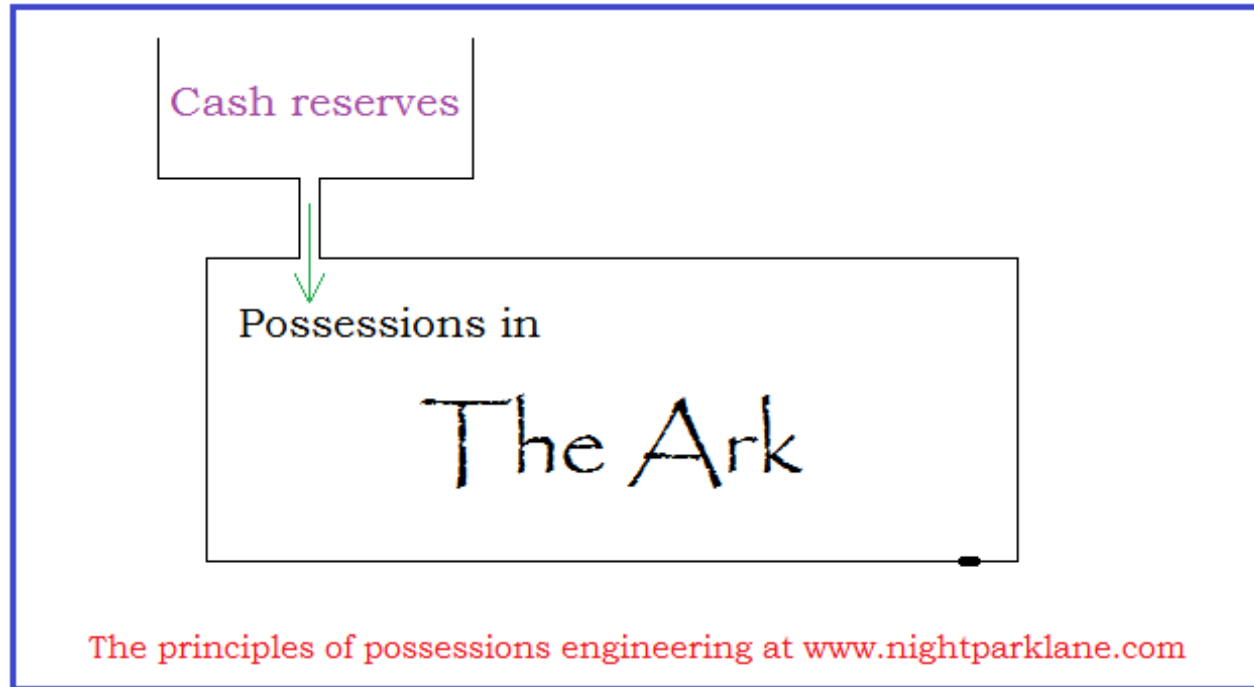
The Principles of Possessions Engineering

by Anthony van Bick

This project examines the efficient control and management of personal possessions.

To start with, imagine that personal possessions can be regarded as liquid assets and that these possessions are stored in a reservoir known as “The Ark”.

The system can then be modelled as water in a bathtub.



Purchases can be made using cash reserves and the purchased possessions are then stored in The Ark.

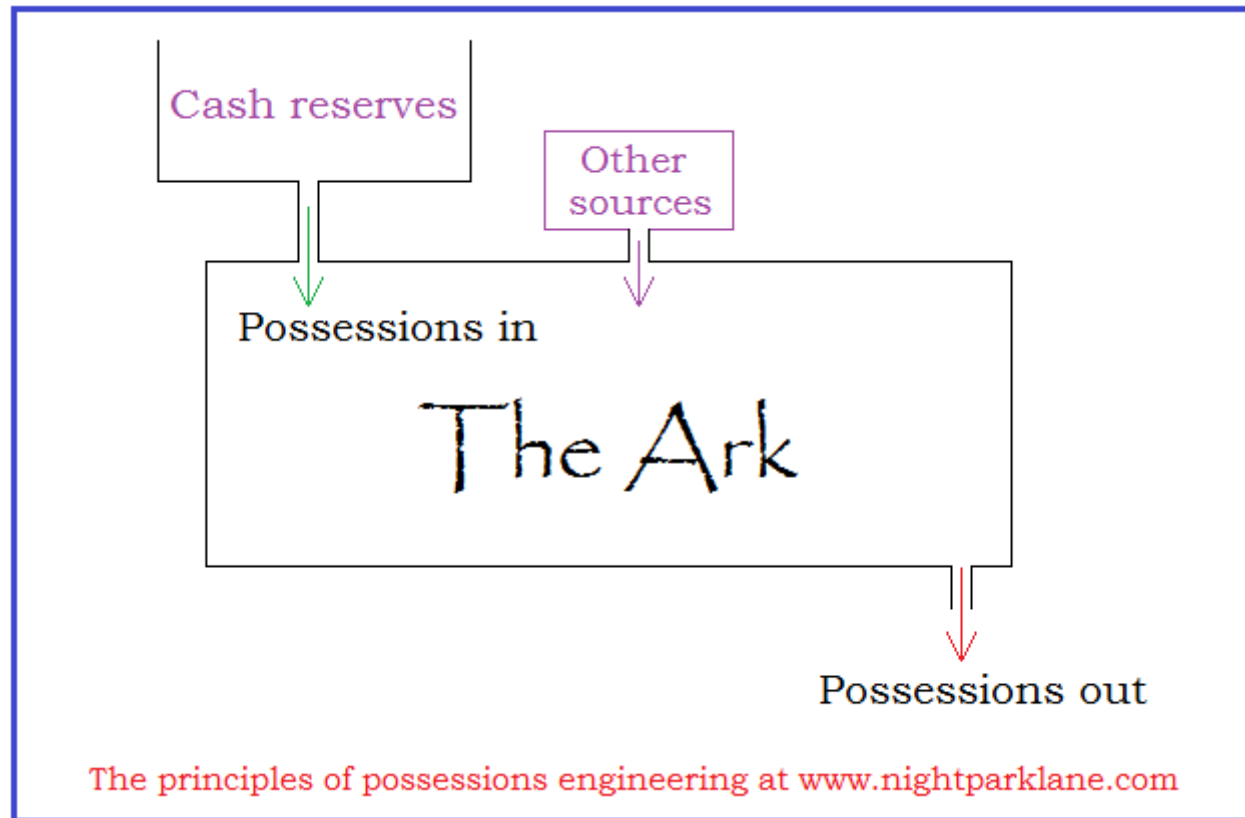
However, there are other sources which can produce possessions such as presents from friends and relatives for birthdays and other festivals or family heirlooms from an estate.

If the taps are turned on, and the bathplug is left in, the bath will fill up and eventually overflow.

These are the conditions for hoarding.

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So the first element of control is to allow an outlet for unrequired possessions.



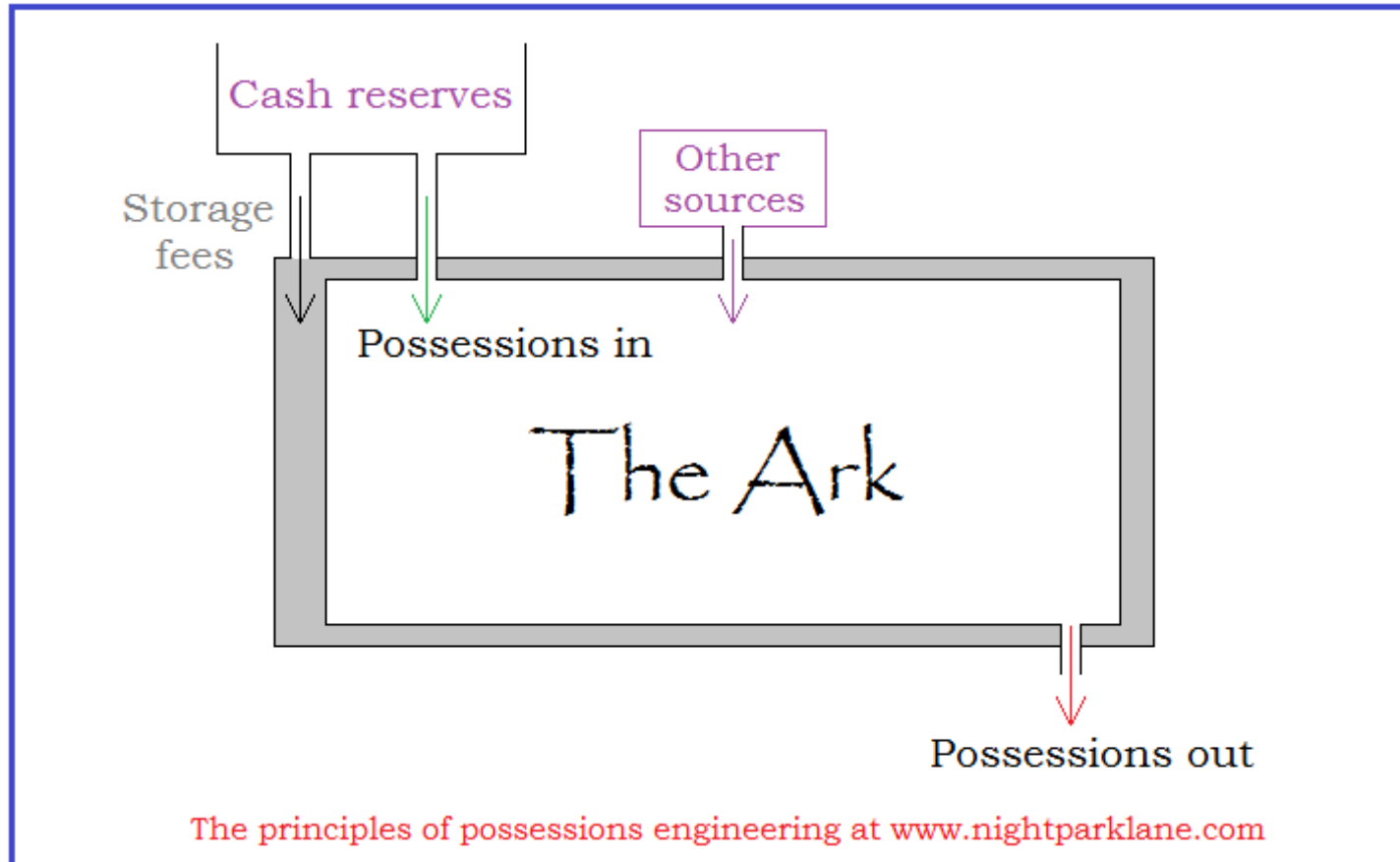
If the taps are turned on, and the bathplug is removed, the bath will still fill up if the rate of flow of water into the bath from the taps is greater than the rate at which the water can escape down the plughole.

Provided that the rate of flow of water into the bath from taps is less than the rate at which the water can escape down the plughole then the level of water in the bath will decrease.

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Storage Fees

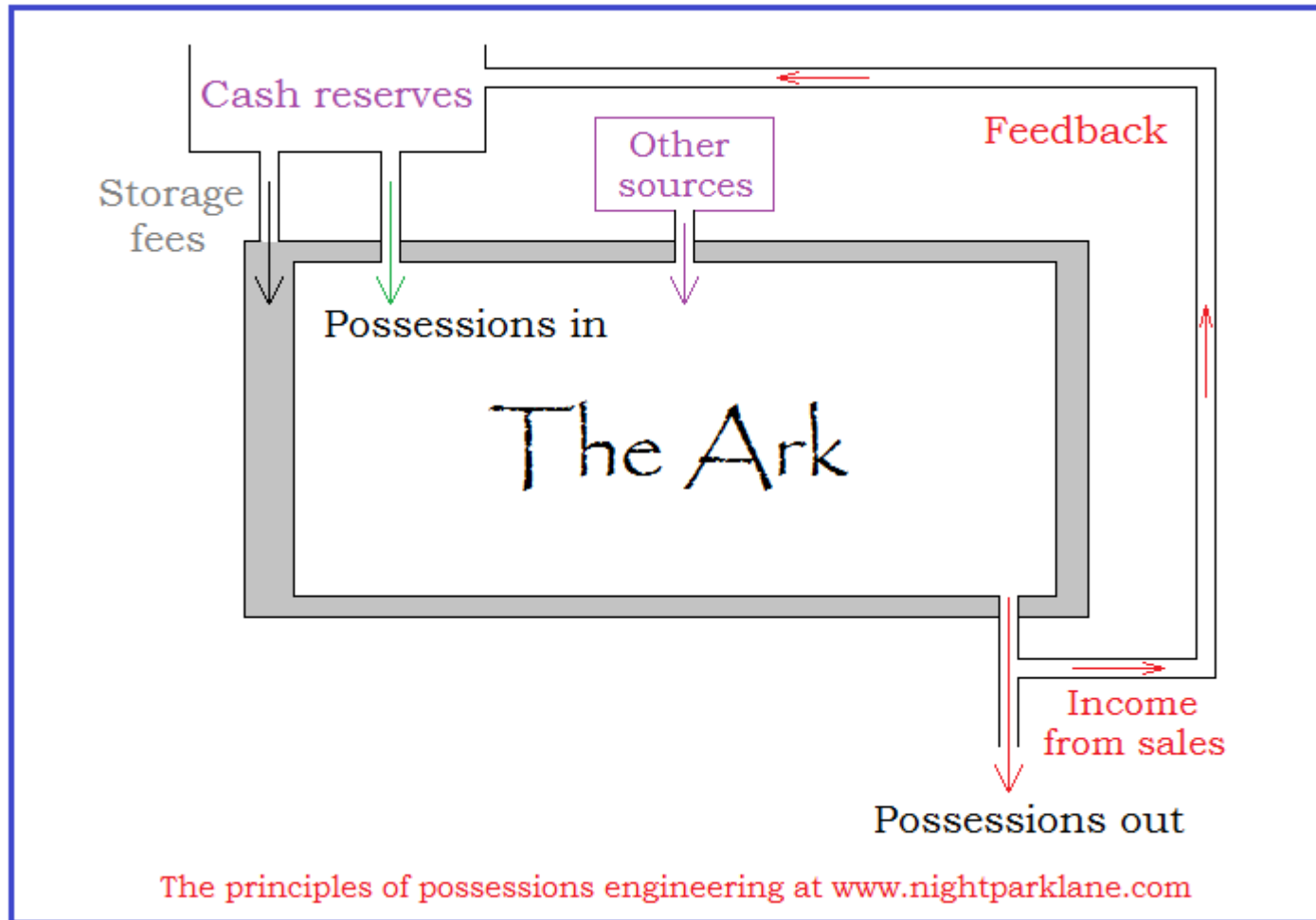
It is worth noting that the cost of storing the possessions has to be accounted for. This might be via rent or mortgage payments if the possessions are stored at the main place of abode or fees to pay for a storage unit.



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Feedback

Funds from the sales of possessions can be put back into the cash reservoir.



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It is now time to consider ten reasons why possessions may build up to such an extent that they become unmanageable.

1. Items for Work

The work materials or records of some professions can cause storage problems over the long term. Teaching is one such profession.

2. Delusions of Grandeur

A person may wish to give off the impression of following a certain lifestyle and purchases possessions to feed the delusion.

3. Chasing Flights of Fancy

A person may have certain aspirations about following a certain lifestyle or career and although no such connection is made in the real world the dream persists as demonstrated by the ongoing purchase of associated items.

This is a psychological issue since the prospect of dispensing with these possessions is facing the reality that a dream is not going to be fulfilled.

4. Proportion

Possessions should be in proportion to the living accommodation. Ducking under a chandelier in a studio apartment springs to mind.

5. Isolation

People living in isolation do not need to modify their living conditions to fit within social norms. Without visitors there may be little incentive to produce a tidy environment.

6. Family Duty

Certain items may be kept on behalf of a family. These could include large pieces of furniture!

7. Nostalgia

Bulky items may be kept purely on the grounds that they are a link to memorable times in the past.

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8. Sentimental

Small items held for sentimental reasons may build-up over time to produce box-loads of cards and gifts.

9. Legal Requirements

Legal requirements to hold documents for years just adds paper to the pile.

10. Waste Collection/ Disposal Issues

As councils become more pedantic regarding the type of materials that they are prepared to collect from households then the miscellaneous items which do not fit within the prescribed categories are prone to accumulate.

How to Start the Process of Getting Possessions Under Control

Start by making the simple declaration: **"I hereby declare that I am going to get my possessions under control!"**

Locate and list key items for The Ark.

These items include documents such as: birth certificate, driving licence, passport, academic certificates and so on.

Then go through possessions. They are either in The Ark or out. Those possessions not in The Ark need to be disposed of. It is worth recording the disposal of significant possessions so as to avoid confusion at a later date!