

Credit Education Week Canada
FOCUS
MAGAZINE



Money Mindfulness



Credit Education Week 2018

Money Mindfulness | November 13th – 16th

All content, unless otherwise indicated, © 2018 Credit Education Week Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including electronic, mechanical, or photocopy, without the written permission of the copyright holder.

Enquiries and requests for additional copies should be directed to:

Credit Canada Debt Solutions
45 Sheppard Avenue East, Suite 810
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M2N 5W9
Telephone 416 228-DEBT (3328)
1 800 267-2272 from outside Toronto
Fax 416 228 1164
Email info@creditcanada.com

Publisher: CEWC
Executive Editor: Elena Jara
Editor: Robert McDougall
Art Director: Steve Dunk
Studio: Reactor art + design

Mission Statement

Credit Education Week Canada (CEWC) brings together partners from Canada's private and public sectors to forward the cause of financial literacy among Canadians at large. Through expertise, public forums, and special initiatives concerning credit, debt, and personal money management, CEWC aims to bring knowledge and peace of mind to families and individuals across Canada, and thereby strengthen our country and our economy.



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

November 13–16, 2018

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone taking part in the 12th annual Credit Education Week Canada, presented by Credit Canada Debt Solutions.

This week, with the theme “Money Mindfulness”, raises awareness of the importance of financial literacy and provides tips on how to achieve personal financial goals. I am certain that participants will appreciate the wide range of information available, and will welcome the insights offered by professionals in the field.

I would like to commend Credit Canada Debt Solutions for helping Canadians of all ages acquire the skills they need to make sound decisions that improve their financial security and quality of life.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful week of activities.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Hon. Justin P.J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada





CEWC 2018 – THOUGHTS ON MONEY MINDFULNESS

Welcome to Credit Education Week Canada 2018, now in its 12th year! It's going to be another lively, thought-provoking week as we explore this year's theme of "Money Mindfulness." Call it a new-age approach to improving personal financial know-how through powers of mind and practices of meditation that make for all sorts of positive outcomes. Truth is, financial literacy is one of the wisest ways to make our households happier and our communities stronger.

We're staging plenty of sponsored activities in our Toronto hub, throughout Ontario, and across the land. Special guests, interesting presentations, fun contests, informative workshops, and much more are all coming together, along with this edition of CEWC Focus Magazine also devoted to Money Mindfulness. As always, our aim is to improve personal money management skills amongst Canadians of all backgrounds, ages, and income brackets. At the same time, we're proudly supporting initiatives of Financial Literacy Month throughout November.

For 2018, we're keeping to tradition with Professional Development Day and Dinner Gala events in Toronto highlighting lively gatherings and conversation amongst bright lights and experts in finance, media, public service, and other areas. As well, we're celebrating youth through our annual Grade 12 Essay Contest wherein up to 30 youngsters from across Canada receive Student Scholarship Awards.

On behalf of CEWC Platinum Sponsors Capital One and Credit Canada, I give a big shout to all sponsors of this year's event including: our Gold Sponsor OLG; our Silver Sponsors RBC Royal Bank, TD Bank, Futurfund, and Scholarships Canada; and our Bronze Sponsors the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, Equifax, BMO Financial Group, MNP Ltd., Harris & Partners Inc., The Oakman Group Inc., and Bromwich + Smith.

Sincerely,
Laurie Campbell
Chief Executive Officer
Credit Canada Partnerships

Helping Canadians succeed with credit.

Proud co-founder and Platinum Sponsor
of Credit Education Week.

[#CEWC2018](#) [#MoneyMindfulness](#)



Capital One is a registered trademark of Capital One Financial Corporation, used under license.
© 2018 Capital One, All rights reserved.

Credit Education Week Canada
TABLE OF CONTENTS



What is Money Mindfulness? 1

Money Mindfulness Quiz 3



Know Your Money Script 7

Tips to Break the Cycle
of Bad Spending and Debt 9



Mindfulness Can Save You Money 13

Advice for a Cash-Strapped Christmas 15



Paying for Stuff with Cash in Mind 17

Minding Bargains 21



Investment Products to Reach Your Goals 24



Be Mindful of Toxic Debt Relationships 25

Mind Over Fomo 27



Organize Your Spending 29

Monthly Budget Tracker 29



Mind Your Credit Report 33

Top Picks for Brainy Financial Apps 35



The Goods on Financial Goals 37

Setting Financial Goals 39



Know Your Expenses. Here's the Plan 40



WHAT IS MONEY MINDFULNESS?

More and more in recent years we hear the term mindfulness being bandied about as some loosely defined method that allows for healthier states of mind and being. The term actually is a popularized way of referring to time-honoured forms of meditation founded on Buddhist spiritual practices going back some 2,500 years in India.

In essence, mindfulness is a practice that promotes living in the here and now, and being fully engaged in whatever is happening, free of distraction through an open and accepting mind. Traditionally, the practice involves sitting meditation wherein a person's attention is focused on the act of breathing while observing wandering thoughts and emotions that are allowed to emerge and subside naturally without resistance. Gautama Buddha is said to have described the practice as, "sitting quietly, doing nothing."



Mindfulness is not restricted to sitting meditation, however. Today, yoga – and improvised schools of “mediation in action” such as music and dance therapy – can qualify as mindful “therapeutic” practices. Aside from Buddha’s age-old revelations about the positive power of mindfulness (he said it’s the path to overcome human suffering), modern scientific research shows that benefits of the practice are many.

Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. It can improve cognition, self-esteem, and compassion towards oneself and others. There is evidence to suggest it can even positively influence physiological

processes associated with healing and the prevention of disease. Mindfulness also can bring insight into unconscious psychological processes and habits that make for unrealistic, self-defeating behaviour.

Given its many benefits, mindful meditation certainly has a role to play in matters of personal money management, where realism, clearheadedness, and calm responsiveness make for positive action and peace of mind, according to Solomon Halpern, a financial expert who knows whereof he speaks. He is a pioneer of “mindful finance.” For more than 30 years he has advised some of the world’s largest financial and educational institutions.

Halpern maintains that mindfulness allows our personal experiences, narratives, and emotions to become valuable tools rather than obstacles in our financial lives. A gentle, non-judgmental awareness of the present moment helps to create a clear space around financial matters.

A meditative approach to life “bridges the rift that can exist between your financial self and your ordinary human self, and can minimize anxiety and difficulties surrounding money. Acknowledging your emotional experiences while making financial decisions provides a compass you can trust. It helps you make plans that are in line with your resources, needs, and goals. In other words, money matters require advanced emotional skills that you can cultivate,” Halpern explains.

Through money mindfulness, people learn to handle personal finances dispassionately but intelligently. It’s as though you step outside yourself and take pictures of negative thoughts and behaviour through a clear rather than a smudged lens. You see the truth of the situation, accept it, and are in a position to act in your best interest. You drop emotional baggage from your past, or wishful thinking about your future.

When unexamined or unconscious thoughts and feelings no longer drive your financial decision making, you act from a considered position promoting calm, perceptive equilibrium, Halpern says.

Very importantly, money mindfulness helps you to face what fears you might have about money, and to address habitual, counterproductive patterns associated with those fears.

Mindfulness Apps

Stop, Breathe & Think

This meditation app boasts more than 55 options for guided meditation selections, so you’ll never get bored with your practice. It also segments exercises according to topics such as sleep, compassion, depression, and anxiety. You can tailor chimes and sounds to your preferences, and record your daily meditation practice to track progress throughout the year. Even more content is available with a premium subscription. For iPhone and Android. **Price: Free.**



MONEY MINDFULNESS QUIZ.

Take this fun quiz to measure your mindfulness.

Don't worry if you come up with a low score, just as you shouldn't think you compare to a financial guru if you achieve a high score. The quiz formula has been developed through adapted research and is not purely scientific. Though your results are not written in stone, they are likely to encourage worthwhile examination of your mindful thoughts and behaviour.

1. When someone asks how you are feeling about your money, can you describe your emotions easily?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
2. When your money emotions change, are you conscious of them as they occur?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
3. Are you aware of the money thoughts that pass through your mind?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often

4. When you speak with other people about finances, are you aware of their facial and body expressions?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
5. When you are surprised or alarmed about your finances, do you notice what is going on inside your body?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
6. When you speak with other people about your finances, are you aware of your emotions?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
7. Are you aware of your money thoughts when your mood changes?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
8. Do you notice changes inside your body, like your heart beating faster or your muscles getting tense?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
9. When you are sad about your finances, do you allow the feeling to freely unfold?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
10. When you take a shower, are you aware of how the water is running over your body?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
11. When you walk outside, are you aware of how the air feels against your face?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
12. Do you let your thoughts flow without resistance?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often



Mindfulness Apps Relax Melodies

A meditative app designed to help improve sleep quality at a time in history when more and more people (urban dwellers mostly) are finding it difficult to get a good night's sleep, particularly during the work week. What's unique about this app is that each user can select the sounds and melodies they like and mix them together for a relaxing playlist. It's that straightforward. Make this app go further and try it out during your next meditation or yoga session. For iOS, Android, Web. **Price: Free.**

16. If there is something you don't want to think about your finances, do you stop to wonder why?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
17. Do you examine aspects of your finances that are disagreeable?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
18. Are you interested in knowing why certain regular money thoughts and feelings bother you?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
19. Do you face bad money memories in an effort to come to grips with them?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often
20. Do you feel like you are in control of your financial emotions?
a) Never b) Rarely c) Sometimes d) Often e) Very Often

13. When you experience unpleasant feelings about your finances, do you look for ways to distract yourself from them?
a) Never b) Rarely
c) Sometimes d) Often
e) Very Often
14. Do you face your financial problems head on?
a) Never b) Rarely
c) Sometimes d) Often
e) Very Often
15. Do you allow thoughts or feelings to come to mind by slowing down and being less busy?
a) Never b) Rarely
c) Sometimes d) Often
e) Very Often

Calculating your quiz Results.

The score ranges that follow reflect the moment-to-moment awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and environment, as well as your acceptance of these aspects of your life. Calculate your overall score by giving yourself 1 to 5 points for each of the 20 answers you have provided:

- a) = 1 point
b) = 2 points
c) = 3 points
d) = 4 points
e) = 5 points

Your total sum of points provides a general idea of where you stand on our scale of mindfulness as follows:

- 20 points – Low Mindfulness
20 to 40 points – Low to Medium Mindfulness
40 to 60 points – Medium Mindfulness
60 to 80 points – Medium to High Mindfulness
80 to 100 points – High Mindfulness

If your money mindfulness score is low, you will probably find that it reflects your everyday thinking and behaviour surrounding the way you handle money.

This could mean that you face money problems or debt problems that require action. If so, you should consider taking up some sort of mindful meditative practice.

At the same time, financial education tools and learning may be helpful through the not-for-profit credit counselling service CreditCanada.com, which specializes in debt solutions.

Finance Apps Debts Break

Tracking your regular expenses and bills can be pain enough, so if you're paying off credit debts you'll need a dedicated app to help you manage your various payment schedules and calculate the best plan to get you paid off quickly. The sleek and useful interface of the Debts Break app is perfect for getting you out of debt. For iOS. Android users should check out the similar Debt Planner & Calculator. **Price: Free.**

Mindful Quotes

"Training your mind to be in the present moment is the number one key to making healthier choices."

– Susan Albers



KNOW YOUR MONEY SCRIPT.

Life is like a movie that starts with a script, according to some psychologists. The script begins for each human being at birth, then frames the life story for about seven years as the child develops the basis for habits that usually continue for another 70 years or so until the final movie credits roll.

Money habits figure very strongly in the scripting process. An early, well-written money script often affords the movie's lead character (you?) a comfortable life without serious financial setbacks. An early, badly written money script frequently burdens the lead character (you?) with financial problems that can continue throughout the decades-long drama. Fortunately, though, no bad money script is written in stone.

Money scripts are core beliefs that drive financial behaviour.

Each character in the life movie has the potential to change the money script from bad to good as youth progresses to marriageable age and beyond. However, the change usually comes at the cost of financial wisdom earned through various degrees of suffering and emotional turmoil before a climax of psychological awakening takes place.

Each script typically is unconscious, passed down from generation to generation primarily through parental influence. When a script is based on half-truths and misconceptions – or developed in response to neglect or flashpoints such as fear and anger – trouble is bound to follow in the form of

hang-ups about money. If the hang-ups are not addressed, the money problems can last a lifetime as the same old story keeps being repeated.

Changing bad money scripts through mindfulness and meditation.

Weighing in on financial scripts is celebrated Business Strategist and Money Coach Leisa Peterson. On the side of changing scripts to overcome hang-ups about money, she gives a big shout out to solutions based on practices of mindfulness and meditation. “The funny thing about hang-ups and habits is that we often don’t even realize we have them. To identify the money patterns that are holding us back, we need to delve deeply into the subconscious mind to discover where our money scripts originated,” Peterson says.

To better understand your money scripts, take a moment to answer some questions concerning who and what has influenced your financial behaviour and thinking.

- What three things did your mother teach you about money?
- What three things did your father teach you about money?
- What’s your most painful financial experience?
- What’s your most joyful financial experience?
- What are your biggest financial fears?

Understanding how your financial script controls your life.

Once you get to know your money scripts, you are in a strong position to be more mindful of your finances. Through mindful meditation practices, you can confront your money weaknesses and fears, and gain insight into how money influences so many aspects of your thinking. Most importantly, you set the stage for positive financial outcomes in your life.

When you become mindful about money, you learn a lot about yourself.

Leisa Peterson says that the payoffs from establishing a meditation practice are well worth the time, even if it isn’t easy to get started. Support groups can be of help. If you decide to take the journey on your own, you should know that there are many different types of meditation techniques and it helps to be patient as you try different approaches until you settle on one that feels right, she explains.

Mindful Quotes

“Surrender to what is. Let go of what was. Have faith in what will be.”

– Sonia Ricotti

TIPS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF BAD SPENDING AND DEBT.

Money mindfulness is not just about meditative and other healthy mind-body practices. Money problems don't just disappear because you undertake a half an hour of breathing or yoga exercises each day. No, meditative processes simply clear away the brain clutter that prevents you from seeing your world and behaviour clearly and honestly so that you can act decisively and intelligently. This is what the sages call self-awareness, or meditation, in action.

The wisdom of self-empowerment.

With self-awareness comes the knowledge that you are empowered to take command of your life and finances, and that you are not alone in the adventure. Time-honoured wisdom, tools, and practices are available to you thanks to others who over many years have lead the way. They have done so knowing that responsibility and discipline – combined with realistic goals – give life spirit and meaning.

With these thoughts as a guide, we offer seven tips about proven, practical processes and tools that work with mindfulness to bring a sense of spirited calm to just about any financially troubled soul.

1) Be mindful of the difference between “needs” and “wants.”

Decode the difference between your needs and wants to restrain bad spending habits. Wants are for your financial goals; needs apply to your basics for living. Ask yourself, do you really need to buy a new dress or suit to attend your best friend's daughter's wedding reception? Or will an oldie-but-a-goodie from your closet do? Do you really need to shell-out for a limo ride or will your regular mode of transportation do the trick?

2) Put a spending plan (monthly budget) in writing.

If you have never created a monthly budget, the process can seem overwhelming. If you need help, download Credit Canada's free Budgeting Worksheet. Visit www.creditcanada.com/how-to-create-a-monthly-budget to get your worksheet – just remember, when you land on the page, scroll down and hit the orange button for the worksheet.

Alternatively, you can book a no-cost appointment with a professional credit counsellor who will build your budget for you – for free! Just call Credit Canada at 1-800-267-2272. As well, check out the “**Know Your Expenses**” chart on Page 40 of this magazine.

3) Set goals and monitor your progress.

Write down your personal financial goals with the understanding that you don't have to accomplish the goal in a month. Setting a financial goal is your motivation to save, because saving just for savings sake can get old fast. It's too easy to lose steam.

For help in writing down your goals, see the “**Setting Financial Goals**” chart on Page 39 of this magazine.

You need something driving your savings – a purpose to save. The purpose might be to create an emergency fund for peace of mind, or savings for a vacation, or adding an extra \$2,000 for a down payment on a home, or paying off a debt, for good; or maybe saving up for a wedding or a child's education. Whatever the goal, write it down.

As you reach savings milestones, celebrate a little (but not to the detriment of your progress). As well, be prepared to revise goals to fit with changing life circumstances as time goes on.

4) Track your spending.

You need to know where your money goes to manage it properly. Take a good, close look at your credit card bills, utility bills, and your debit transactions. Also, track the physical cash you're spending. If you need help tracking your spending, download Credit Canada's free Monthly Budget Tracker.

Visit www.creditcanada.com/documents/BudgetTracker.pdf to get a printable PDF of your Monthly Budget Tracker.

5) Cut out expenses that don't serve your goals.

You know that coffee you get every morning and that lunch you buy every day – these expenses could actually make the difference between going on vacation or not, or paying off your debt versus being caught in an endless cycle of just paying the interest.

BMO  **Financial Group**

A proud sponsor of
Credit Education
Week 2018 -
Money Mindfulness

www.bmo.com

Once you've identified all the expenses you (and your budget) can do without, get rid of them. That might seem harsh but just try it for 30 days. Just get started and you'll find that you will go the extra mile because you know there's a finish line. In the process, you build healthy money habits, which then help you spend responsibly.

For instance, you might find yourself buying a Starbucks coffee two days instead of five days a week, or you might take a special night out once a month rather than once a week. Cut costs on "wants" – as opposed to "needs" – wherever and whenever you can.

6) Keep account of your savings.

As the experience and benefits of saving money grows on you, you will feel more motivated to keep the process going. Credit Canada's online Budget Calculator is a great tool to help you evaluate what expenditures you can cut from your budget today for more gratifying years ahead. To make use of the calculator, visit www.creditcanada.com/budget-calculator

7) Be mindful of unexpected expenses.

Truth is, most of what we classify as "unexpected expenses" are not so unexpected. Your car is going to need repairs, your cat is going to need to visit the vet, and you're going to be invited to a few events, like weddings, baby showers, or other important get-togethers, ceremonial or otherwise.

Still, for all the not-so-unexpected expenses, you need to remain mindful of the fact that financial emergencies (sometimes big ones like the loss of a job) can happen suddenly or with little warning. It's therefore imperative to first devote any savings to an "emergency fund" equivalent to no less than three month's – and ideally six-month's – worth of your take-home pay.

Combine all of the above practical matters with healthy mindfulness, and you are likely to not only break cycles of bad spending and debt, you are in a position to prosper.



A proud sponsor of
Credit Education
Week 2018 -
Money Mindfulness

mnpdebt.ca/gta



SHINING A LIGHT ON GAMBLING.

When it comes to gambling, a little knowledge can be the difference between playing, and playing smart. Enter PlaySmart: a world-class gambling program striving to share knowledge that Ontarians can trust, understand and, most importantly, use.

Spark your gambling knowledge today and visit PlaySmart.ca.

 PlaySmart.ca
Knowledge you can bet on.

olg.ca  Ontario's
Lottery &
Gaming

MINDFULNESS CAN SAVE YOU MONEY.



Meet Claudia Hammond, a big advocate of financial mindfulness. As author of the celebrated book, *Mind over Money: The Psychology of Money and How to Use It Better*, Hammond knows whereof she speaks on matters of personal finance.

“If you put someone in a brain scanner and give them something delicious – say, wine or chocolate – the reward centers of their brain light up. In other words, the tasty stuff makes the person feel good. But if you promise the person a delicious

item in the future, there’s no reward-center activity. If it’s not in our hands (or mouths), we don’t care,” Hammond explains. She notes the rare exception to this rule is how money affects people. “Recent studies show that money has a unique ability to affect the way we think, feel and behave – even if we don’t physically have money in hand, and even if we’re unaware of its influence.”

By being fully aware of money in the present moment, we reap benefits.

Through money mindfulness – or being fully aware of how we use money in each present moment – we reap benefits. Hammond says that when people pay in cash instead of by card, they’re likely to spend less because the value of money is more tangible.

Meanwhile, awareness of how we respond to money can also help us spot tricky sales methods – used by brick-and-mortar or online stores – to entice us into buying more expensive goods.

“Imagine you’re buying a new laptop. Whether in store or online, you often see them displayed in threes – a cheap model, one costing a little more, and then a sleek, fancy one with a high price to match.

“With the expensive one present, twice as many people go for the mid-priced one as they do when that expensive one isn’t there. It’s known as the ‘compromise effect.’ So next time you see something laid out in threes, beware the mid-priced item,” she says.

The “act” of buying makes people happier than the material goods themselves.

“The most important mind hack, though, may be to spend money in ways that are proven to make us happier,” Hammond explains, citing work by Psychologist Elizabeth Dunn from the University of British Columbia.

Dunn has shown that the “act” of buying makes people happier than the material goods themselves.

“We anticipate experiences more, and afterward, we’re left with the warm glow of our memories, whereas a new TV isn’t new for long. If you can pay in advance and divorce the pain of paying from the pleasure of the experience, it’s even better,” Hammond says.

Finance Apps

You Need A Budget

You need a budget is a great way to manage your money: you can track expenses as well as make micro-budgets for smaller categories, so you’ve got complete control of every nook and cranny of your finances. For Android and iOS.

Price: Free.

Proud to support Credit Education Week 2018.

We’re working with CEWC to help people feel more confident about their finances.

It’s one of the many ways we’re opening doors to a more inclusive tomorrow.



Learn more at td.com/thereadycommitment



ADVICE FOR A CASH-STRAPPED CHRISTMAS.

Okay, the end of the year is fast approaching and ideally you've already been mindful of financial planning for the holidays – especially if you're cash-strapped. Then again, maybe your mind is scattered and you haven't got your Christmas ducks in order; not to mention, your bank account is freezing up. Don't despair; there is time and there is hope. You can enjoy the holidays without a lot of spending. But you had better get started now with some smart planning and creative thinking. The following tips can help you prepare for a stress-free (and debt-free) holiday season:

- **Review your income and expenses.** Figure out what you can safely afford to spend on your holiday needs.
- **Establish a spending plan.** Remember that in terms of spending, there's more to consider than just gifts. There are costs associated with extra food, decorations, maybe travel expenses, giftwrapping, and postage for mailing out greeting cards and possibly gifts.
- **Make sure your kids have realistic "Santa" lists.** It's better to deal with this sooner rather than later so the kids aren't disappointed when they receive an iTunes gift card instead of an expensive video game.
- **Try a holiday potluck.** You don't have to provide all the food yourself for the family/friend get-togethers you'll be hosting. Start a new tradition – encourage others to prepare and bring some of the food, too. It makes for great variety, and some people actually like to showcase their culinary skills.
- **Be creative and get crafty.** Some people might think homemade gifts are hokey, but for those of us who don't bake, knit, or do any kind of woodwork ourselves, we can really appreciate these homemade goods. Family and friends love to get their homemade gingerbread cookies with their names on them every year. Meanwhile, if you're skilled in art, photography, or some other discipline or hobby, you can create highly personalized gifts that come with a lot of heart at little cost.

Mindful Quotes

"The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything they have."

– Anonymous



- **Gift your time.** Instead of spending on gifts, offer your services to older relatives or neighbours. You could offer to shovel their snow, drive them to the grocery store or bank, clean up their kitchen, give them a manicure, etc. They will appreciate this much more than a trinket they'll just have to dust.
- **Barter for gifts.** Not all gifts have to be brand new. You can try providing a service to someone you know in exchange for a gift you know a family member or friend would want. For example, if you don't want to pay \$400 for an Xbox but you know someone who has the gaming system and would like to get rid of it, you can exchange your time or services for that gift.
- **Don't go overboard on holiday clothes.** Such clothes are worn for a short period of time. Last year's still-good sweater may fit your son or his younger brother or cousin. And as adults, we don't tend to wear out our clothes as much. Think about holiday sweaters that get worn for years simply because they don't get worn outside of the season.
- **Plan early for next year.** If possible, set aside some of your holiday budget this year to cover next year's holidays costs. For instance, buy holidays cards and gift wrapping supplies come Boxing Day when the prices are slashed.
- **Stay within your spending plan.** After all, you set it for a reason.

All told, the true purpose of the holiday season is to share company and good times with family and friends, not to run yourself into debt. Your kids don't always remember what gifts they had under the tree, but they do remember the special time they spend with loved ones.

PAYING FOR STUFF WITH CASH IN MIND.

Is paying by cash going the way of the dinosaur? Will it soon be gone what with credit cards, and debit cards, and payment apps taking over the world? Personal Finance Specialist Miriam Caldwell hopes it ain't so. "Using cash may not always seem very convenient, but it is a great way to stop yourself from overspending. It makes you think about your purchases, and consciously consider how much you are spending," she says.

Identify the spending categories that allow for cash payments.

She explains that for cash payments, your first step is to identify the spending categories that actually allow for such transactions. Certain categories – such as a mortgage or student loan payments – may only be able to be made online. "But for those categories that you are able to use cash for, determine where you are consistently overspending. This may be groceries or entertainment, eating out, or clothing. Everyone has their own problem areas when it comes to spending. Once you know what yours are, you can switch them over to cash in order to curb your spending." Caldwell says.

With cash payments, you're less inclined to rack up credit card debt.

**HARRIS
& PARTNERS INC**

A PROUD SPONSOR OF
CREDIT EDUCATION
WEEK 2018 -
MONEY MINDFULNESS

harrisandpartnersinc.com

A big incentive to paying by cash is that people are less inclined to rack up credit card debt, she says, adding that if you need to make online purchases, consider using Google Wallet to divide the categories from your checking account.

"If you manage your money with a partner, a cash budget can help make budgeting easier.

You can divide the money between your individual categories, and leave the grocery money or entertainment money where you can both access it if you need it," she notes.

Next, you should stop using your debit card or checkbook for purchases in the categories you've outlined, she says. Do so no matter what.



You need a way to track your purchases.

"Consider leaving your debit card at home for a few weeks and disconnecting any automatic payments you can access online, such as those through Paypal. This will help you break this bad financial habit." With a cash-based budget, you need a way to track your cash purchases and also keep the different areas of your budget in which you'll be using cash separate.

Caldwell recommends using the envelope system. "You put the correct amount of cash into envelopes labeled with each budget category. You can only spend that amount on that area of your budget each month. You should also put your receipts into those envelopes so you can see where you spent the money at the end of the month.

Set up a time to take out the cash.

Of course, with a cash payment system, you need to get the cash in hand in the first place. "This may mean a trip to the bank or the ATM on payday, or another set day. You can request that the teller gives you the money in the

Mindful Quotes

"Don't expect more than you need to be happy – but definitely don't accept less."

– Lisa Messenger

Mindful Quotes

“Be mindful. Be grateful. Be positive. Be true. Be kind.”

– Roy T. Bennett

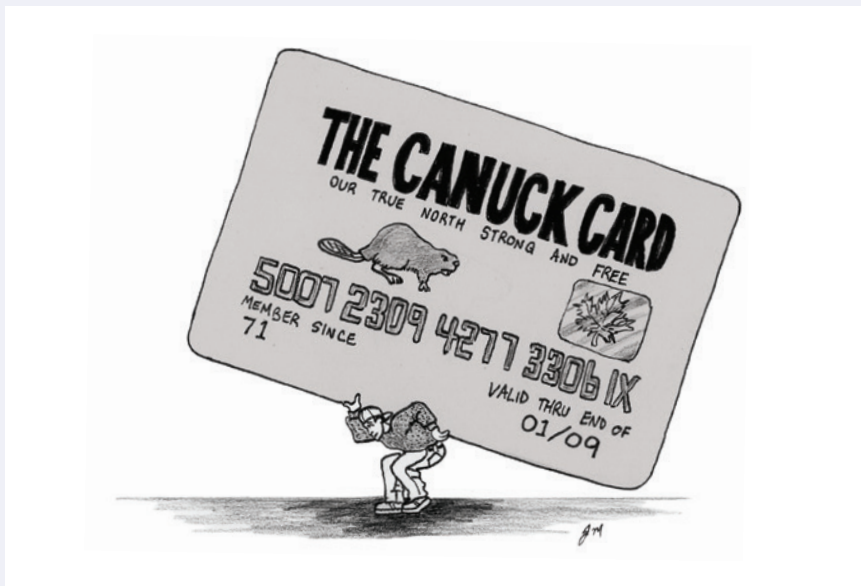
correct denominations, such as all \$20s or \$10s, so you can easily separate the money into the correct categories,” Caldwell says. For all this you need to plan ahead, since carrying around a lot of cash all the time is not wise. “So you leave your grocery money at home unless you are going to the grocery store, and take only \$20 to work if you plan on eating out that day. You get the idea. Bonus: This will also help to cut back on your impulse purchases.”

Stick to your limits.

As with any spending plan, self-discipline comes into play. Do not spend all the money in one category, and do not use your debit card or your credit card to cover shortfalls, Caldwell says.

Adjust your categories.

“You should adjust your budget once you have followed it for a few months. You may find that you don’t have enough budgeted for groceries, but you always have money left over in the gas category, or you that you may need to sacrifice some of your entertainment money so that you can eat all month.”



Credit Canada

Debt Solutions

Proud co-founder and
Platinum Sponsor of
Credit Education Week 2018
- Money Mindfulness

CreditCanada.com

MINDING BARGAINS.

Things sure have changed since the days when the only place to purchase a bar of soap or a new pair of shoes was the local general store. Nowadays, super markets, drugstores, and other retailers offer some very interesting deals to try and bring in more customers than the competition.

Financial planning can reduce your bills. Consider taking advantage of some of the following money saving tips in order to save yourself a bit of cash at the till.

- **Use a points card.**

If you shop at a store frequently, consider signing up for a points card. Some programs out there let you redeem money off a purchase after a certain point level has been reached while others may stamp a card and offer you your 10th purchase free.

- **Price compare.**

Do some pre-shopping research. Check out weekly flyers to be up to date on the best deals out there. Planning your finances means planning to save. For the tech-savvy shopper, consider checking out some apps that allow you to price compare items from a variety of retailers all at once.

- **Coupons.**

Old fashioned coupon cutting can help save money too. Just ensure that you are buying items that you would buy even if it weren't a dollar cheaper. There's no sense in buying a carpet cleaner because it's on sale if you have hard wood flooring at home.

- **Group deals.**

There are websites out there that sell vouchers for goods and services at discount prices if enough people sign up to get a group rate. While you will most likely need to sign up to be a member to take advantage of these deals, opt for a site with no membership fees such as Groupon or WagJag.

Finance Apps

Pocket Expense

If you want a tracker with some customizable options and the ability to create categories, Pocket Expense is the way to go. A cool interface helps, according to a review of the iOS version: The graphs it uses are a really cool way for you to see which categories you spend money on the most which can help you set budgets. For Android and iOS. **Price: Free.**

- **Outlet stores.**

What could be more satisfying than stocking up on goods at a fraction of the retail price? Outlet stores are a great opportunity if you like to shop in bulk and don't mind if an item is out of season or mislabeled. Buying straight from a factory or warehouse means that transportation costs and retail store costs are cut thus passing the savings on you, the customer.

Want cashback? Check out these sites.

Great Canadian Rebates

Great Canadian Rebates offers great payouts and has cashback from regular online retailers. You also get paid cashback through friend and family referrals. Get your cash back via an Amazon gift card, PayPal deposit, or have a cheque mailed to you.

Ebates.ca

Ebates partners with online retailers in affiliate programs. They make their money when you make a purchase through their site. Their Daily Double doubles the cash back that day. They also pay for referrals. You get paid by cheque, PayPal, or donate your cash back to whomever you like.

Apps for comparison shopping, coupons, price matching, and cashback.

Mindfulness Apps

Breethe

More meditation tools these days are aimed at beginners because meditation isn't as common in some areas of the world as others. Breethe has mindfulness and meditation techniques to get people meditating more regularly. The developers say it takes just 10 minutes a day to get into a meditation routine, and the app brings you content for mornings, sleep, and other tailored topics. You can use it for free, forever, or unlock all content with a premium subscription. For iPhone and Android. **Price: Free.**

Flipp

This is a flyer app and so much more. Great search function, shopping list, and discount slider; and great for price matching. Offers coupons as well, delivered to your inbox for printing to present at stores. (iOS, Android, Desktop)

Caddle

A new Canadian app that offers cashback for engagement and purchase from the brands you love. It's a new kind of app in that you can watch short videos about products and programs, answer a quick survey (they take less than 30 seconds) and get paid for it. Purchase that product and get additional cashback. (iOS, Desktop)

Mindful Quotes

In today's rush, we all think too much – seek too much – want too much – and forget about the joy of just being.”

– Eckhart Tolle

CartSmart

This is a flyer app that will automatically identify if your items are on sale at nearby stores. It's also a cashback app.

The app allows you to engage with brands and earn great loyalty benefits including exclusive offers and special content. (iOS, Android, Desktop)

Snap by Groupon

Snap is a cashback app that's simple and easy to use. Once you have decided on the offers you want for that week and have purchased them, simply snap a photo of your receipt and upload it to them. (iOS, Android, Desktop)

DISCOVER THE COST OF YOUR DEBT WITH OUR DEBT CALCULATOR.



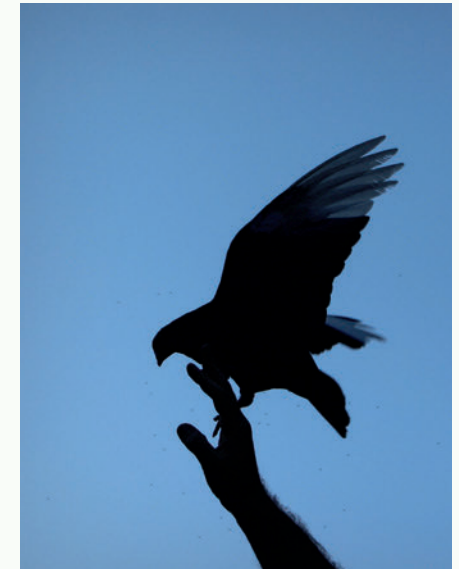
Here is a Debt Calculator for you. With it, you get the full story about what you are paying in interest on your debt over time. You can input the balance and interest rates for all your debts (credit cards, loans, lines of credit, etc.).

www.creditcanada.com/debt-calculator

INVESTMENT PRODUCTS HELP YOU REACH GOALS.

Get to know the investment product options that are available to you.

- **Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs)** – This investment account comes in different forms that bring earnings on your investment through interest at either fixed or variable interest rates. A fixed Interest rate does not change over the life (or term) of a bank loan or other form of credit. A variable interest rate is a bank loan interest rate that changes from time to time.
- **Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs)** – An RESP can help you save for your child's college or university education. This government-registered plan allows your savings for education to grow tax free until a child named in the RESP enrolls in a post-secondary education program. As well, the government matches 20 cents on every dollar you contribute to the plan, up to a maximum of \$500 on an annual contribution of \$2,500. The government does not apply fees to this plan, so beware of any extra fees that might be applied by a bank.
- **Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs)** – This is a personal savings plan designed to help you save for retirement. On an annual basis, as you put money into the plan, you can deduct your contributions from your taxable income, so your taxes for the year are reduced. You do not pay tax on the earnings until you withdraw money from the RRSP.
- **Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs)** – An RDSP can help Canadians and their families save for the long-term financial security of those with disabilities. It allows savings to grow on a tax-deferred basis. As well, the RDSP provides for government assistance, including grants of up to \$1,000 a year, and bonds of up to \$3,500 a year.
- **Tax-Free Savings Accounts (TFSAs)** – A TFSA will help you reach both short-term and long-term goals. Investment earnings in a TFSA are not taxed, even when withdrawn. You are allowed to contribute up to \$5,500 per year to a TFSA. You can also carry forward any unused contributions from previous years.



BE MINDFUL OF TOXIC DEBT RELATIONSHIPS.

We've all heard that debt impacts our relationships, but what about your relationship with debt itself? Is it healthy or toxic? If it's toxic and creating serious problems in life, then it's time to break up with debt in eight simple steps.

Step 1: Find out exactly what you owe. Resolve to sit down and take a close look at the debt you're carrying. Determine the total amount of your secured debt (including your mortgage, car loan, etc.) and unsecured debt (such as credit cards and student loans). Also, be sure to add up what you're paying each month toward your debt payments. For a real eye opener, you can also look at what you are paying each month in interest charges.

Step 2: Determine your monthly income and expenses. You also need to determine how much money you have coming in and how much you've got going out on a monthly basis, so you know what funds are available to make your monthly debt payments. Be sure to work with your net income, or "take home pay." This is the amount you receive after any deductions have been taken out. Next, subtract your monthly expenses. To get a handle on your expenses, see the "**Know Your Expenses**" chart on Page 40 of this magazine.

Step 3: Adjust your spending plan or budget. You need to make at least the minimum payments on your debts each and every month and do so on time if you want to maintain a good credit score and avoid late fees. But try to find extra funds in your spending plan and/or budget so you can increase your debt payments. Look at your expenses and see if there are areas where you can cut back or find cheaper alternatives. Download and print Credit Canada's Monthly Budget Tracker to see exactly where your money's going. Visit www.creditcanada.com/documents/BudgetTracker.pdf to get your tracker.

Step 4: Consider different repayment strategies. Use Credit Canada's Debt Calculator – www.creditcanada.com/debt-calculator – to see how long it will take you to pay off all your debts and how much you'll pay in interest just by making the minimum monthly payment or a fixed monthly payment. You'll also show you how that compares to other repayment strategies (like the snowball/avalanche methods). You might save thousands in interest and pay off your debt sooner by increasing your monthly payments.

Step 5: Use any extra funds to pay off debt. It might be tempting to use "extra" money to buy a treat. But if you are carrying debt, use any extra funds, like your tax return (or at least part of it) or overtime funds, to pay down your debts. Once you are free from debt, you can enjoy that extra money.

Step 6: Avoid new debt. Have you ever ended a relationship and rebounded with another person who is just like your ex? If we don't make a conscious effort to change, we tend to keep making the same mistakes over and over again – not just in relationships but with our finances, too. If you're going through all the trouble to break up with debt, don't take on new debt. Put your credit cards away and learn to use cash only. Follow your monthly spending plan and live within your income. Not only will this give you a great sense of control, you also won't be increasing your debt load.

Step 7: Consider a low-interest loan. If you're hitched to bad debt, see if you can change it to better debt. Check with your bank or credit union to see if you qualify for a loan (like a debt consolidation loan) with a lower interest rate than you're currently paying. The lower the interest, the sooner you can pay off your debts, especially if you can increase your monthly payments.

Step 8: Just do it. There's no point in staying in a bad relationship, so why prolong it? If something isn't working, it's best to deal with it sooner rather than later.

SCHOLARSHIPS CANADA IS A PROUD SPONSOR OF
CREDIT EDUCATION WEEK 2018 - MONEY MINDFULNESS

Student Success GPS

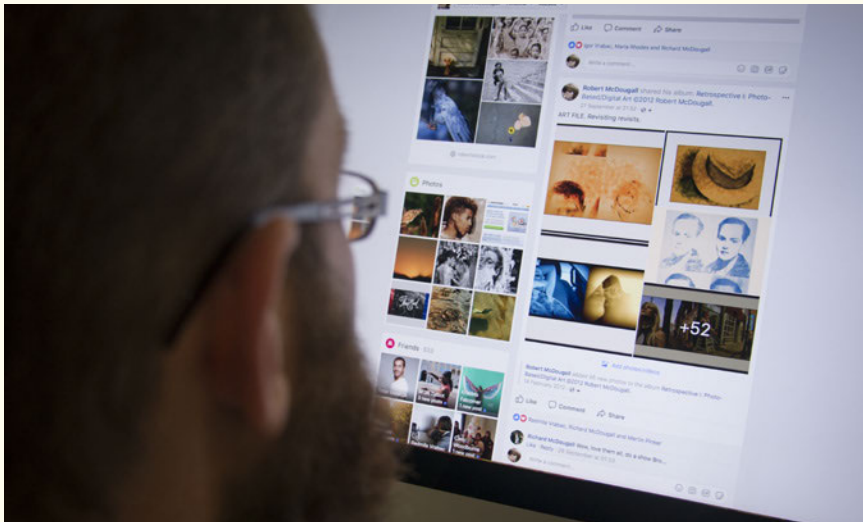


SCHOLARSHIPS CANADA

Find **99,701** awards worth **\$199,901,581!**

Visit ScholarshipsCanada.com to apply!

MIND OVER FOMO.



Anxiety. Sleeplessness. Depression. Such ailments are gripping people (particularly teens) nowadays as folks remain glued to social media feeds, with FOMO – the acronym for Fear of Missing Out – playing a big role in the turmoil.

FOMO may seem like a small matter to many of us, but research into the phenomenon shows it's emotionally destabilizing among growing numbers of us as we spend endless hours peering at our mobile devices and computer screens. We fear we might be missing social opportunities or in other ways be left out of our tribal technological gatherings.

Moreover, we join in the gatherings to boost our social status, posting images and comments about the exotic trips we take, the fine food we enjoy, the cool stuff we buy, and the extraordinary moments we experience. It all comes with a nice high. Trouble is, it's all so fleeting as the online news feeds proceed in addictive torrents. We need our daily social media fixes. Without them, we feel hollow – and run the risk of seeing pink elephants dance around us and rats gnaw at our heels as we fall into withdrawal.

According to the experts, FOMO is fortunately not yet epidemic. Most children and adults can shrug it off, but a significant and growing number of us struggle with it. "Those without self-esteem or self-confidence tend to follow the crowd more than rely on their own assessment of a situation, and that can lead them into difficulties. Social media offer strong visualizations of what everyone else is doing and thinking, creating a lot of peer pressure to act in certain ways," according to London School of Economics professor Sonia Livingstone.

So what's to be done about the situation? Well, the first and obvious answer is that people should be encouraged to spend less time on social media. With this course of action, however, we run the risk of falling prey to reverse psychology, making social media even more alluring.

Another approach to the problem is to deal with it from the inside, methodically and spiritually. This is where meditative mindfulness can play a big role, utilizing the very digital devices that have allowed FOMO to proliferate in the first place.

What follows are some great apps for the FOMO task at hand. Through these apps, teens and adults can not only monitor social media activity, they can access tools and processes for mindfulness and meditation that are shown to improve emotional health, and bring balance to negative or unrealistic attitudes and behaviour.

Here are two apps that can serve as mindfulness tools.

- **The Mindfulness App** Packed with features, this meditation app includes a five-day guided meditation practice, reminders for when it's time to relax, and other offers based on individual meditation habits. For iPhone and Android. Price: Free with trial.
- **Buddhify** Serious about maintaining a beneficial meditation practice? Want to avoid an annual subscription? Buddhify gives users access to more than 11 hours of custom meditation programs. Each practice is geared toward different aspects of your life. For iPhone and Android. Price: \$4.99 for iPhone, \$1.99 for Android.

Here is an app that can measure and manage mobile device use.

- **Offtime** Charts reveal how you use your phone, letting you set goals or restrictions on app use. (Android and iOS; free)

The advertisement features a woman with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt, sitting in a meditative pose on a grey and yellow cushion. The background is a blue gradient with radiating lines. At the top, there is a logo for the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC) in both English and French. Below the logo, the text reads "Be mindful of your finances". At the bottom, there is a call to action: "Visit our website for financial tools and calculators." followed by the URL "canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency". The word "Canada" with a small Canadian flag is at the very bottom.

FCAC IS A PROUD SPONSOR OF
CREDIT EDUCATION WEEK 2018
- MONEY MINDFULNESS

ORGANIZE YOUR SPENDING BY TRACKING EXPENSES.

For those not financially inclined, creating a monthly spending plan can seem like a daunting task – but it doesn't have to be. While you'll find some people suggesting standard budget categories like necessities and nice-to-haves, the categories can be too broad and not do you much good.

We've taken budgeting a step further and broken it down into 15 spending categories to really help you get a grip on your finances based on your "net income" or "take-home pay." Track expenses in the following categories to find out where your money goes, and where you cut spending for savings.

1. Housing – Home is where the heart is. It's also where we spend a lot of our money, so it's important to keep track of expenses. Thankfully, many of these items require the same amount of money month to month, so it's a relatively easy category to keep track of.

- *Mortgage* • *Rent* • *Property taxes* • *Condo fees*
- *Landscaping* • *Repairs and maintenance*

2. Utilities/Hydro – "Lights out!" is a miserable experience when you're remiss in your hydro payments. It's no fun getting into the shower and realizing the water has been shut off, or losing your cable during the last five minutes of a great movie. Make sure you're dedicating enough of your monthly net income to cover the following expenses, every single month.

MONTHLY BUDGET TRACKER.

One of the most important keys to money management is knowing how you spend your money. When you have this information, you can plan a budget that works for you.

Carry this pocket-sized booklet with you everywhere you go, and record all your spending for an entire month.

www.creditcanada.com/documents/BudgetTracker.pdf



- *Electricity* • *Water* • *Cable* • *Internet* • *Phone (landline or mobile)*
- *Gas* • *Garbage*

3. Food – Whether you're feeding yourself or a family of five, food costs can quickly add up (especially if you're dining out or rolling through Tim Hortons regularly). Some people might choose to leave these 'splurge' items out because they're not necessary expenses, but if you're spending the money they have to go into your budget. Remember, a budget isn't meant to make you feel guilty or ashamed, and it's not a goal of what your spending should look like either. It's a real account of the real spending that you do, so add every item you consume, guilt and judgment-free.

- *Groceries* • *School lunches* • *Coffee* • *Dining out* • *Fast food*
- *Alcohol/tobacco*

4. Transportation – By land or by sea, getting from point A to point B can be costly, especially depending on the distance you're covering. Some costs associated with transportation could be daily, weekly, monthly, semi-annually, or annually. Include them all in your budget. If you have a side hustle (aka a side job, like being an Uber or Lyft driver, making deliveries, or you do some type of contract work) making a note of all your transportation costs can be very helpful come tax time.

- *Gas* • *Maintenance (oil, etc.)* • *Registration* • *Insurance*
- *Repairs* • *Parking* • *Tolls* • *Public transit fares*

5. Medical – Whether it's a yearly checkup, a temporary injury, or that dreaded winter flu, we have to take care of ourselves. But there are many other medical expenses that we might forget to include in our spending plans.

- *Dentist* • *Physio* • *Chiropractor* • *Optometrist* • *Prescriptions*
- *Eyeglasses/contacts*

6. Insurance – Many insurance needs can be wrapped into other categories (and feel free to do so), but because of the variety of insurance plans, we gave insurance its own category.

- *Home* • *Renters* • *Pet* • *Auto/Boat* • *Life* • *Dental* • *Travel* • *Disability*

7. Household Items – This is your "everything-but-the-kitchen-sink" category. Sure, items like light bulbs could fit in here, but trying to count for fairly inexpensive and infrequent purchases can be a waste of time. So, stick to regularly purchased items.

- *Toiletries* • *Cleaning supplies* • *Kitchen supplies* • *Laundry supplies*

Finance Apps Splitwise

This easy way of tracking shared expenses is a must for partners, housemates, and bffs. One reviewer called the Android version "the only app I trust to keep track of who owes whom and how much." For Android and iOS. **Price: Free.**

8. Personal – Another catch-all category that keeps you (and the family, if applicable) looking good are your personal grooming expenses. These are regular expenses, like haircuts and clothing, that contribute to the way we present ourselves to the world.

- *Salon/Haircut* • *Makeup*
- *Grooming supplies*
- *Manicure/Pedicures*
- *Clothing* • *Dry cleaning*
- *Gym membership*

9. Entertainment – You know what they say, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Everyone needs some "me money" or "fun money" so make sure to include it in your budget.

- *Movies (theater or streaming)* • *Music/concerts* • *Video games* • *Netflix*
- *Sporting events* • *Nightlife* • *Hobbies* • *Vacations*

10. Child Care – Raising little ones can be costly. Thankfully, most expenses will decrease over time as your child gets older, but we all know teenagers aren't above asking for a handout here and there, nor are adult-children.

- *Babysitter* • *Daycare* • *Diapers* • *Clothing* • *Activities* • *Allowance*

11. Pet Care – Snowflake and Fluffy are members of the family too, so we've given them their own category.

- *Food* • *Supplies* • *Veterinarian* • *Dog sitter/walker* • *Grooming*

12. Gifts – It's easy to overlook this category, as gift-giving occasions don't come up every day, but when they do your pocketbook can take quite the hit, so it's best to plan for them.

- *Birthdays* • *Anniversaries* • *Holidays* • *Weddings*

13. Education – This category may apply to yourself or your child. Either way, education costs can be expensive, especially at the start of each school year, so be sure to include them into your budget.

- *Tuition* • *Books* • *School supplies (including electronics)* • *Field trips*
- *Extracurricular activities (music, sports, arts)* • *Uniforms*

Mindful Quotes

"Life is better when we don't try to do everything. Learn to enjoy the slice of life you experience, and life turns out to be wonderful."

- Leo Babauta

14. Savings – Hopefully, despite all the expenses listed above, you'll also be able to squirrel away some savings for yourself and/or your family.

- *Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)* • *Investments*
- *Emergency fund* • *Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)*
- *Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP)*

15. Debt – Last but far from least: debt. If you want to put more money towards the categories you want, you have to start putting as much of your net income as you can towards your debt. That stops interest from piling up, and as your balances start to drop off you can begin allocating more money toward savings and "fun" categories.

Now, if you're up for tracking your expenses in detail, go to Page 40 of this magazine to check out "**Know Your Expenses**" chart.

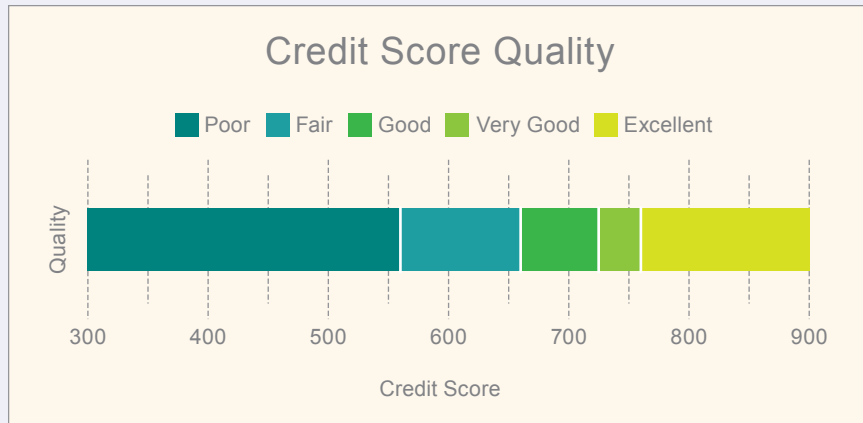
futurfund

A proud sponsor of
Credit Education Week 2018 -
Money Mindfulness

futurfund.org

MIND YOUR CREDIT REPORT.

Money mindfulness especially applies to where you stand with your credit. Your personal history includes your credit history, and your credit history can make you a winner or a loser when the time comes to borrow money – or maybe rent an apartment, or perhaps get a new job. There’s a crowd out there watching your financial moves and when you make the wrong ones, well, let’s just say you won’t make a lot of fans and should look into credit counselling sooner rather than later.



Credit reporting agencies know your credit history.

Your credit history comes in the form of a credit report carefully prepared by what are called credit reporting agencies (otherwise known as credit bureaus). Perhaps you’ve heard of the two that operate in Canada - Equifax (www.consumer.equifax.ca) and TransUnion (www.transunion.ca).

If you’ve ever used a credit card, taken out a personal loan, or joined a “buy now, pay later” plan – among other borrowing modes - you can count on the fact that Equifax and TransUnion have prepared a credit report in your name. It fully covers your credit history and it’s available for viewing by appropriate parties.

Your credit report covers a lot of ground.

And just who might those appropriate parties be? Well, in accordance with regulations, credit bureaus can sell credit reports to banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions, credit card companies, auto leasing companies, and retailers. Moreover, for assurance that you are trustworthy, other organizations are allowed to look into your credit history, too, including mobile phone companies, insurance companies, governments, employers, and landlords.

A credit report can cover a lot of ground in relation to your credit cards and loans. For instance, it contains facts about:

- When you opened your account
- How much you owe
- Whether you make your payments on time
- Whether you miss payments
- Whether you go over your credit limit
- How you handle mobile phone and Internet accounts
- Chequing or savings account closures due to money owing or fraud

Your credit report includes your credit score.

Now, take a breather, and prepare yourself for another important part of the game – your credit score, which is tallied not only by the credit reporting agencies but by lenders, too. In fact, credit scores even come with their own brand names such as Beacon, Empirica and FICO®. And yes, your credit score also is available for viewing by all of the parties outlined above. Credit scores consist of three-digit numbers that essentially show whether you are a good or a bad credit risk.

The scores are calculated on the basis of information in your credit report. They range from 300 (for very bad, high-risk folks) to 900 (for very good, low-risk folks). You raise your score when you show lenders that you can use credit wisely. Your score drops when you show difficulty managing credit. Your score changes over time as your credit report is updated.

There are many other things you should know about credit reports and credit scores. To find out more, visit an excellent Web site from the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC). It explains all the ins and outs of the scoring game, particularly coding details that get down to the nitty-gritty of how you are rated financially. The website also provides information about how you can get your credit report free by mail, or how you can access it online for a nominal fee. Check out www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca for more info.

EQUIFAX IS A PROUD SPONSOR
OF CREDIT EDUCATION WEEK 2018
- MONEY MINDFULNESS

Power Up With Credit Knowledge

www.Equifax.ca/education



EQUIFAX

Copyright © 2018, Equifax Inc. All rights reserved.
Equifax is a registered trademark of Equifax Inc.

TOP PICKS FOR BRAINY FINANCIAL APPS.

Apps can be very useful when it comes to keeping and managing your money. Acknowledging this benefit, countless apps have been developed in recent years to assist you. But with so many apps, it can be tricky narrowing your options down to which apps are the best and easiest to use. We're here to help with our brainy top picks.

• Your bank's app

RBC myFinanceTracker. RBC customers using the app can create a budget and a financial calendar in minutes, track expenses, set goals, and set budget alerts to know instantly if they are overspending. Free for banking customers.

TD MySpend. The TD MySpend app monitors your spending, providing a Daily Digest of the previous day's transactions. It categorizes your spending so you know exactly where your money goes, and provides a Spending Insights Meter to give you a look at how you're spending now compared to your spending in the past. Free for banking customers.

CIBC Banking App. Aside from normal banking functions, the CIBC app allows you to set savings goals and target dates. Then, it helps you calculate the monthly contribution and set up the necessary transfers. Free for banking customers.



A proud sponsor of
Credit Education Week 2018 -
Money Mindfulness

www.bromwichandsmith.com

Mindful Quotes

"Meditation is essentially training our attention so that we can be more aware – not only of our own inner workings but also of what's happening around us in the here & now."

– Sharon Salzberg

• Mint

Mint is the darling of the online budgeting world, and currently boasts more than 15 million users. The app allows you to connect all your banking accounts, enabling you to keep track of every withdrawal and deposit across every account. The app also lets you track and label your spending, pay your bills, and check your spending. For those of us who tend to be a little forgetful, Mint also allows you to enable notifications to alert you when a payment is due or if your account balance falls below a certain amount. Free.

• You Need a Budget

If you're living paycheck to paycheck, you need a budget. That's what **You Need a Budget** app, or YNAB, offers. YNAB encourages you to live within your means through a built-in "accountability partner" that keeps you on track with your income. There is a small monthly or annual fee for YNAB; however, the benefits can far outweigh the costs. In fact, YNAB reports that the average user saves \$200 in the first month.

• Mvelopes

What are your financial goals? Paying off student loans? Or maybe you're saving up for a new car. The **Mvelopes** app will ask you these questions when you sign up to help you easily reach your financial goals. It's all based on that age-old practice of keeping your money in separate envelopes, or jars, to keep track of how much money you're allocating to each area of your life, like rent, car, clothing, food, entertainment, etc. Using the app, you'll create up to 25 "mvelopes" and determine how much money you'd like to dedicate to each area of your life. \$4 per month Basic Plan.

• Stocard

According to a recent study, nine per cent of Canadians own at least one loyalty card, and the average Canadian carries four at all times. That makes for a fat wallet. Wouldn't it be nice to consolidate them? Now you can. **Stocard** enables you to scan your loyalty card using the camera on your device and, voila – an instant digital version of your card.

THE GOODS ON FINANCIAL GOALS.

Setting financial goals isn't a whole lot different from setting other life goals. If you want to lose 20 pounds, for example, you might join a gym or plan healthier meals. If you're struggling with a particular course in school, you may commit to studying harder or even get a tutor. You do this because you know that results don't magically materialize – you need to do some work to achieve them.

This applies to money management, too. The more planning and effort you put in, the better the results will be and the better you will feel about them, because, hey, you earned it!

Step 1: Be S.M.A.R.T.

Defining your financial goals is the first step – and you want them to be SMART; that is, Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Based. Instead of just thinking, "I want to save more money," get specific with your goal, such as, "I want to set aside a weekly sum of \$20 of my income for savings."

By setting a specific and measurable goal, you will be able to determine whether or not you actually achieve it; plus, you'll be able to see your money grow as it is deposited weekly into your savings account, which helps keep you motivated and on track.

Choosing budgeting goals that are attainable and realistic are important to ensure your success. Sure, you can say you'd like to be a millionaire by next fall, but how are you going to get there? You want to know that you can implement the plan you create. And the great thing about time-based goals is that they provide you with a clear deadline. Instead of planning to save \$2,000 for a vacation, your goal could be to save \$150 from each paycheck in order to afford a vacation in six months' time.

Step 2: Define your short, medium, and long-term goals.

Now that you've got a goal in mind, it can be helpful to identify it as a short-term, medium-term, or long-term goal.

Short-term goals are generally objectives to be completed in a year or less. For example, to be sure that you have enough saved for annual payments, like property taxes or income taxes, estimate how much the annual cost will be, then divide that amount by twelve (twelve months in a year).

Whatever that amount ends up being, set up a savings plan where you know that amount is going into a savings account every month, whether you decide to set up automatic deposits or you manually do it yourself.

You want to know that the money will be there when the expense is due to avoid relying on credit and/or going further into debt.

A medium-term goal is a plan looking one to five years into the future. Perhaps you'd like to save for a down payment on a home; knowing how far ahead in the future your home purchase will be can help you get there.

Long-term goals are generally five, ten, or even more years away. These goals may include saving for your child's education or your own retirement. The earlier you start implementing a plan for long-term goals, the more your savings will grow. A Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) is a good start for anyone because your invested money grows through compound interest over time.

Step 3: Explore needs vs. wants.

Finally, consider the idea of needs versus wants when it comes to prioritizing your goals. Today, the average debt for Canadians is over \$22,000. So if we want that shiny sports car or flashy diamond ring, we've got to plan for it. Once you've got a plan in place for your bills and other responsibilities, you can begin to think about these sorts of extravagances. That's what financial goal setting is for!

Step 4: Evaluate and if need be adjust your goals.

As time goes on, be sure to evaluate and if need be adjust your goals so that they match any changes that may happen in your life. Changes to your income and/or expenses – or changes in your hopes and dreams – will influence your list of written goals. It may be that where once you set a goal for X, now you want to revise the goal for Y. You've every right to change your mind; after all, it's your money.

So grab a pen, a calculator, and let the planning begin.



A proud sponsor of
Credit Education
Week 2018 -
Money Mindfulness

oakmangroup.com

SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS.

Know where you're going and you'll get there.

Good money management begins with setting financial goals because they give you direction and help you focus on how your money would be best used. Financial goals help motivate and encourage you to make the most of your available cash because they remind you of the bigger financial picture.

Use the chart below to identify your financial goals. Remember that these goals should be exciting to you, and encourage you to manage your spending. Determine how long you need to realize each goal and the money you need to put aside on a monthly basis to achieve success.

Short Term Goals (goals to be met within the next year or so).

Objective/Amount	Estimated Cost	Target Date	Monthly
1. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
2. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
3. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____

Intermediate Goals (goals that can be reached within 5 years).

Objective/Amount	Estimated Cost	Target Date	Monthly
1. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
2. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
3. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____

Long Term Goals (these goals take the longest to achieve, 10 – 15 years or longer).

Objective/Amount	Estimated Cost	Target Date	Monthly
1. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
2. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
3. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____

KNOW YOUR EXPENSES. HERE'S THE PLAN.

Putting your financial house in order.

By filling out the next few pages you will be able to determine how much available income your household has to put towards achieving your financial goals. Before starting, gather all of your bank statements, receipts, credit card statements, and monthly bills.

Your fixed expenses:

Due each month

Housing

Rent	\$ _____
Mortgage payment	\$ _____
Condo/co-op maintenance	\$ _____
Dues or fees	\$ _____
Property taxes	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Utilities

Gas/electric	\$ _____
Water/sewer	\$ _____
Heat	\$ _____
Trash/recycling	\$ _____
Telephone	\$ _____
Cell phone	\$ _____
Cable/satellite dish	\$ _____
Internet service	\$ _____
Security system	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Transportation

Public transportation (1)	\$ _____
Public transportation (2)	\$ _____
Car loan	\$ _____
Car lease	\$ _____
Auto maintenance	\$ _____
License plate renewal	\$ _____
Emissions test	\$ _____
Parking	\$ _____
Taxi fare	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Insurance

House insurance	\$ _____
Rental insurance	\$ _____
Medical insurance	\$ _____
Life insurance	\$ _____
Long term disability	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Family

School activities	\$ _____
School tuition	\$ _____
Alimony	\$ _____
Child support	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Savings

RSPs	\$ _____
Stocks	\$ _____
TFSAs	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Your total fixed expenses \$ _____

Your variable expenses:

Average monthly expense

Housing

Repairs/renovations	\$ _____
Furniture	\$ _____
Cleaning supplies	\$ _____
Appliances	\$ _____
Bedding	\$ _____
Lawn & garden	\$ _____
Snow clearing	\$ _____
Pool maintenance	\$ _____
Furniture/rug cleaning	\$ _____
Cleaning services	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Food

Groceries	\$ _____
Lunches	\$ _____
Restaurants	\$ _____
Order-in	\$ _____
Coffee	\$ _____
Snacks	\$ _____
Alcohol	\$ _____
Vitamins/supplements	\$ _____
Entertaining at home	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Automobile

Gas	\$ _____
Repairs	\$ _____
Maintenance	\$ _____
Tires	\$ _____
Car wash	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Children

Child care	\$ _____
Diapers/formula	\$ _____
Allowances	\$ _____
Birthday parties	\$ _____
Toys/games	\$ _____
Music/dance lessons	\$ _____
Sports	\$ _____
Sporting equipment	\$ _____
Computer maintenance	\$ _____
Class Trips	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Medical

Prescriptions	\$ _____
Over the counter drugs	\$ _____
Dental/orthodontist	\$ _____
Eye exams	\$ _____
Hearing exams	\$ _____
Chiropractor	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Clothing

Work clothes	\$ _____
Sports clothes	\$ _____
Casual clothes	\$ _____
Tailoring	\$ _____
Shoes	\$ _____
Coats	\$ _____
Accessories	\$ _____
Underwear	\$ _____
Laundry	\$ _____
Dry cleaning	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Entertainment

Movies	\$ _____
Plays	\$ _____
Concerts/sporting events	\$ _____
DVD rentals	\$ _____
Music downloading	\$ _____
Music/CDs	\$ _____
Books/magazines	\$ _____
Newspaper subscriptions	\$ _____
Vacations	\$ _____
Gym memberships	\$ _____
Hobbies	\$ _____
Gambling/lottery	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUB TOTAL \$	_____

Taxes
 Federal taxes \$ _____
 HST \$ _____
 CPP \$ _____
 Employment insurance \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Pets
 Food \$ _____
 Pet day care \$ _____
 Grooming \$ _____
 Toys/supplies \$ _____
 Walking services \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Grooming
 Haircuts \$ _____
 Colour \$ _____
 Hair treatments \$ _____
 Manicure/pedicure \$ _____
 Waxing \$ _____
 Massages \$ _____
 Cosmetics \$ _____
 Personal hygiene products \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Professional Fees
 Doctor \$ _____
 Lawyer \$ _____
 Accountant \$ _____
 Bookkeeper \$ _____
 Financial planner \$ _____
 Tax preparation \$ _____
 Bank fees \$ _____
 Brokerage commission \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Holidays & Gifts
 Birthday gifts \$ _____
 Holidays \$ _____
 Weddings \$ _____
 Engagement presents \$ _____
 Anniversary gifts \$ _____
 Bridal showers \$ _____
 Baby showers \$ _____
 Greeting cards \$ _____
 Gift bags/wrapping paper \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Miscellaneous
 Charitable donations \$ _____
 Religious donations \$ _____
 Stamps \$ _____
 Cigarettes \$ _____
 Magazines \$ _____
 Computer supplies \$ _____
 Electronic gadgets \$ _____
 Unexpected expenses \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 SUB TOTAL \$ _____

Your total variable expenses \$ _____

Calculations:

Total fixed expenses \$ _____
 Total variable expenses + \$ _____

TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES \$ _____

Gross monthly income \$ _____
 Federal tax deductions - \$ _____
 CPP deductions - \$ _____
 E.I. deductions - \$ _____
 Group insurance - \$ _____

NET MONTHLY INCOME \$ _____

Net monthly income \$ _____
 Total monthly expenses - \$ _____

Your total money available per month \$ _____



Credit Education Week 2018

Money Mindfulness | November 13th – 16th

THANK YOU CEWC SPONSORS

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsor



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Financial Consumer
Agency of Canada

Agence de la consommation
en matière financière du Canada

