



Money Zone: Cutting Expenses

Each member can print this out and have it available to follow and take notes.

Want to have lots of savings and no debt? Don't we all! :) But...how to do it?

In this Money Zone, you will learn how to s-s-s-squeeze your budget for more cash, without living like a pauper, so you can start a savings program or pay down debt.

Icebreaker

Take some M&Ms, but don't eat them yet! Once everyone has taken some, each person must give one idea on how to cut expenses for each M&M she took.

Things to Talk About

Great ideas for cutting expenses can make a big difference in your financial life. There are lots of things you can do that won't make you feel icky or deprived but will save you lots of dough.

Pick the question your Club finds most interesting. If there's still time, pick another one -- or make up your own!

- Do you know someone who is very frugal? What do you think of his or her style?
- When you were growing up, how did your family approach spending?
- If you have a partner: Who is more frugal, you or your mate?
- What does living simply mean to you?

AS USUAL...

Catch Yourself Doing Something Right

Share your success with your fellow Club members:

- What Money Miracle (unexpected good fortune) did you have since last meeting?
- What did you do since last meeting to become a Money Star (a money-savvy gal in charge of her finances)? How did you further your financial goals?



What Will You Do Today?

Choose one **Small Step** to do before next meeting, and pledge to the group to do it. To select that 15-minute exercise, ask yourself these questions:

- What are your money challenges before the next meeting?
- What do you need to focus on?
- What is the next step in your life -- and what can you do before the next meeting to achieve it?

Don't drive yourself crazy. Remember, you can do anything for 15 minutes! For example:

- I will spend 10 minutes reflecting on how much pleasure I get from simple, inexpensive things -- and I am setting aside a date and time to do it right now.
or
- I will plan a fun weekend activity for myself and my loved ones that doesn't cost more than \$20 total -- and I am setting aside a date and time to do it right now.
or
- I will consciously choose to eliminate one small expense from my life that is bringing me neither joy nor productivity -- and I am setting aside a date and time to do it right now.

You get the picture. This is like Goldilocks. Don't try to do too much. Don't try to do too little. Do it just right.

[More Cool Ideas for Small Steps.](#)

Money Magic

Choose one affirmation to motivate you to achieve your goals, something like:

- I am living simply.
- I am happy with what I have.
- I am proud of my financial skills.
- I am a money-savvy woman.



The Money Zone for Next Meeting

Cash your vote: Does your Money Club want to stay in this Money Zone, or do you want to move on to the next Money Zone?

If your group decides to Stay in the Zone then, future Money Star, check out these fun articles so you can discuss them at your next meeting. Even if your group decides to move to the next Zone, you still can explore these on your own.

The Best Bargain I Ever Had <http://www.stretcher.com/menu/Best.cfm>

Discussion questions:

- Do you consider yourself a bargain hunter?
- What was your the best bargain? :)

A Crash Course in Creative Frugality <http://www.stretcher.com/stories/02/02mar04c.cfm>

Discussion questions:

- Do you agree with this family's approach to frugality?
- What can you do to become more frugal?
- What do you think of the idea of voluntary simplicity?

How Much Can You Save? Feed the Kitty www.wife.org/savingscalculator.htm

Discussion questions:

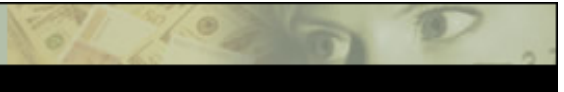
- What are you willing to give up?
- How much can you save each month without really trying?

Just for You

Before the next Money Club meeting, do the Just for You Exercise called "Where Does Your Money Go?"

<http://www.moneyclubs.com/moneyzones/cuttingexpenses-wheredoesmoneygo.htm>

Don't skip a meeting if you don't get this done. Half of life is showing up, Money Clubs included. You can tell the group you didn't get it done, and they will encourage you (not bug you) to make a date to do it soon.



Discussion questions for your Club meeting:

- Have you been able to cut an expense out of your life, or reduce one? How did you do it?
- What do you spend money on that you never would cut out or reduce? What expenditures give you the most pleasure in your life?