

Achieve Your Financial Goals with \$12

Losing weight, exercising more, and getting your finances under control are usually the most common New Year's resolutions. What is uncommon this year is that the desire to get financially fit is the number one resolution. Although I know that this desire is a direct result of a bad financial year for many people, the potential focus on finances fills my heart with joy. I could ask for no holiday gift greater than millions of people determined to tackle their personal finances.

I say "potential" focus because we all know what usually happens to New Years resolutions by about January 15th. Since I want 2010 to be your best financial year ever, I'm going to share my secret to financial success. For the low, low price of \$12, you too can be on the road to financial freedom when 2011 rolls around. No, you haven't stumbled into a bad infomercial. It really does cost only \$12 to tackle your financial issues and concerns.

Before you start scrounging up \$12 in change, I want you to find a friend who also wants to get a better handle on their finances in 2010. This person should be someone you like, trust, and who isn't offended by constructive advice. They should also like and trust you - I know if you're reading this that you're already open to advice on ways to make your life easier and better.

Your friend is now your handpicked "budget buddy". Since people who have a support system are more likely to succeed in reaching their goals, the two of you will provide support, encouragement, and the proverbial kick in the butt for each other when needed.

Now that you have your budget buddy, I want you to each grab your \$12 and take a field trip to the nearest store that sells small notebooks. You have my permission to skip the comparison shopping for these notebooks, since they are usually pretty inexpensive (usually \$1 each, which is why you have \$12 with you). Buy 12 little notebooks (one for each month). Put 11 of the notebooks in a safe place and keep one notebook with you. Believe it or not, this notebook holds the key to your great financial future.

Now that you have your handy-dandy notebook, you will need to do two things each day to make this \$12 investment work:

1. Write down everything you spend this month in the notebook
2. Call your budget buddy to make sure they are recording their expenses

Once a week, call or visit with your budget buddy and discuss (or confess) what you spent your money on. Just the act of writing things down and reviewing them with someone else should make a big difference in your spending. It is a proven fact that people spend less when they keep track of their

expenses. This is why diet gurus recommend that you record everything that you eat – just being more aware of your intake (or expenditures) can help you cut down on your eating (or spending).

One word of caution from someone who's been recording expenses for years – your desire to write down expenses may diminish around the 15th of each month. This is another reason you have a budget buddy. The daily phone calls can help keep you motivated so you can get a full month's look at your spending.

Start keeping track of those expenses, then tune in next month to find out how the information in your notebook can put you on the road to financial freedom.

About Alison

Alison Hinson has more than 10 years of experience helping individuals with their personal finances. She hosts an award-winning radio show and is an author and speaker. For more information about her personal financial coaching, visit AlisonHinsonMBA.com or call 207-671-1491.