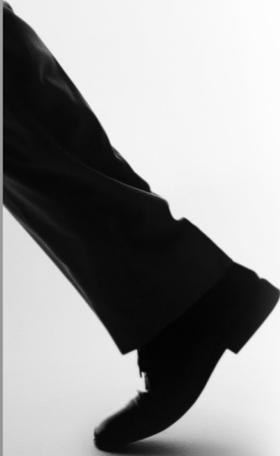


PRE-WORK FOR FREED-UP FROM DEBT

IMPORTANT

Please read and complete the following
pre-work before the first session.



Pre-Work

How Did You Get Here?

No matter how much debt you have, the good news is that it's possible to get out from under it, and not only that — it's possible to stay out of debt forever. The step-by-step plan you're about to learn will teach you how.

It may take some time, and it will take some changes in behavior and in attitudes and beliefs. All too often, those who quickly get out of debt eventually get right back in. That's because while their financial picture improved initially, they only addressed the outward symptoms of their financial issues without tracing those symptoms back to their root causes, which often include ways of thinking about money.

This pre-work will help you identify the true causes of your debt — including behaviors and attitudes.

What Circumstances Led to Your Debt?

Consider the circumstances on the next page and check each one that contributed to your debt. Chances are good that there was more than just one factor, so check off as many as apply.

- Unemployment
- Uninsured medical expenses
- Divorce
- Small business failure
- Couldn't find another way to pay for school
- Large unexpected expenses (home/car repairs, etc.)
- Living beyond my means
- No emergency fund
- Not using a plan (budget) to guide my spending
- Other: _____

Did you include “Living beyond my means,” “No emergency fund,” or “Not using a plan (budget) to guide my spending”? If so, that's not surprising. In many cases, those factors contribute to people's debt. Acknowledging them is a very positive step toward getting out of debt in a way that will give you the best chance of staying out of debt. By doing so you are taking responsibility for your debt.

You may have been through some very difficult circumstances, such as divorce or the loss of your job. But owning your role in your current situation is a very honest, healthy, and helpful step toward developing lasting solutions.

Now consider what attitudinal factors that may have played a role in your financial problems.

What Beliefs Led to Your Debt?

Look at the statements below, and check each one that applies to your situation.

- Everyone has credit card debt; it's normal, unavoidable.
See Proverbs 22:7, 1 Corinthians 7:23
- Buying things makes me feel good about myself. My credit cards enable me to pick myself up when I'm not feeling so great.
See Luke 12:15, 1 Samuel 16:7
- Using my credit cards gives me a sense of freedom, independence, control, or power.
See Matthew 6:25-34, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Philippians 4:19

One of the best ways to root out a false belief is to meditate on the truth. Below each statement, there are Bible verses for that purpose.

Are there any other ways of thinking that contributed to your debt? Once you become aware of any beliefs that played a role in your debt, ask whether each one is true, productive, or God glorifying. Chances are good that they are not.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

ROMANS 12:2

These steps — taking responsibility for your debts and identifying any attitudes or beliefs that contributed to your debts — are essential in solving your financial problems for good.

What You'll Need

Please bring to the workshop the details of your debts, such as your most recent credit card statements and paperwork showing the terms (balance, interest rate, monthly payment) of student loans, vehicle loans, or any other debts.

Remember, no matter how much debt you have, it's possible to get out of debt and stay out of debt forever. Be encouraged by this promise from God's Word: “I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13, NIV).