



Image courtesy of See for Yourself.

Starting 'em young

Developing simple spending/saving habits when you're young ensures a more stable future

“We are largely who we will become by making wise promises and keeping them.”

Tim Keller

Spending, saving and investing habits formed in your 20s largely determine your financial circumstance in your 40s, 50s and beyond to retirement. If your 25-year-old self becomes accustomed to buying coffee and burritos out every morning, purchasing cheap, poor quality clothing and living paycheck to paycheck with the exception of indulgent and monthly credit card sprees, your 50-year-old self will be reaping the consequences.

Many 20-somethings live with relatively simple financial responsibilities, but these multiply and magnify each decade. With the accumulation of age; paying a mortgage; starting a family; saving for retirement and tapping into emergency funds for health issues, unanticipated natural disasters, or visits to friends increasingly spread out around the globe, there's a lot begging for your financial attention.

Fortunately, these don't have to be all-consuming and stressful growing pains. You can curb the hit these financial responsibilities take on your emotional and monetary reserves by anticipating them early and executing a thought-through plan accordingly.

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This month's recipe, a few laughs and how to connect with us on online.

Cook, Laugh, Connect.



Image courtesy of Getty Images.

Take baby steps. Like, really baby steps.

Don't overwhelm yourself with thoughts of 401ks and DOW stock exchanges (quick trivia: do you even know what DOW stands for?) Prioritize your actions by considering your most immediately influential and proximal options.

Are you a college student? Start by budgeting for groceries, minimizing eating/drinking out and opening up two accounts – one for withdrawals and one for saving. Learn how money works by observing those around you already managing their own finances and begin to play around (responsibly!) with bank accounts, building credit and cutting expenses where possible.

Are you recently out of school? Begin by creating a plan for paying off school loan and credit card debt. Don't get in over your head by fashioning repayments too big for whatever your entry-level paycheck allows for. Start small and be diligent satisfying those and gradually up the ante.

You're never too young (or old) to spend smart

Strategies for developing healthy habits early, for your (or your child's) stress free financial life

With one eye now off your slowly decreasing debt, keep the other on an emergency fund. A good primary goal for this fund is to save up one month's income. Have a direct deposit set up from your paycheck to this account to avoid spending temptations. Practice saving an appropriately ambitious percentage of your income every month, until you can be confident in a good chunk of cash saved up for inopportune life circumstances.

Think about investing.

According to Lee Wang, a *Huffington Post* financial education contributor, merely saving money is no longer sufficient to secure the younger generation's financial security. The world of the baby boomers was one in which one to two life-long jobs supplied benefits and pensions large enough to retire and live off of.

Today, individuals may hold a dozen jobs over the course of a couple decades, leaving retirement strategies largely up to the individual. This is why investing is the new name of the game.

Investing can be simple and accessible to everyone, regardless of season of life. Seemingly silly actions can reverberate powerfully and far into one's financial future. For example, joining a gym to avoid complex and costly health issues in the future; investing in wine traded on the Wine Stock Exchange; and insuring the two or three most valuable items you own can have a

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significant impact on financial circumstances later in life.

Once you have practiced small investments, try graduating to larger, more long term ones. This includes buying a home to replace the cost of monthly rents; consider beginning a 529 plan to defray the cost of your children's future college tuition; familiarizing yourself with and dedicating time and energy to stocks; and developing an estate plan that includes your last living will and testament, power of attorney and beneficiaries.

Financial planning is a huge monster to tackle and its tendency to eat away at your time and energy can seem insurmountable. With diligence, evenly-measured action and early, strategic planning, you can shrink it down to size and start worrying about more important, daily concerns, like what to wear.



Client of the month

Each month we honor an SDS client who has shown commitment to the program in the face of extreme challenge. We hope this story encourages you in your own hardships.

Name and location: Patty from New Hampshire

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I've worked in the accounting field for 35 years. When I found myself recently divorced with one child off to college and another left at home and no child support I had to figure out a way to get out from under all the debt I had and was still incurring. I've openly told my children of my debt issues and they are learning by my mistakes. No credit cards, pay cash and be sure to start a 'rainy day fund.'

What brought you to Superior?

Wanting to be debt free, researched various companies online & thought Superior sounded like a stable, long term company I could trust to help me.

How many accounts did you have when you started and about how much debt? I had five accounts & \$45,000 in debt.

What was the hardest thing about being in debt?

Juggling the finances every month & always coming up short, wondering who do you pay and who don't you pay and how will I get through this?

How did being in the program change the way you thought about money?

It makes me think twice before buying anything. I ask myself, 'Do I need it or just want it?' It's harder buying everything with cash. I can't buy it if I don't have the cash.

How has your life changed since being in the program?

I'm wiser with my money, and proud to know I will some day (soon) be debt free.

How many accounts do you have left to settle? One.

Do you have any advice for those just entering the program?

At times the monthly payments seem steep, it's hard paying for past debt and keeping up with current needs that you can only pay cash with. In the end it is totally worth it. I'm working with Marie Chamberlain and it's exciting when you get a call from her to know yet another one of your debts have been settled and you will some day be debt free. The program may seem long at first, but each month you are that much closer to debt freedom.

Omelet Muffins

A quick school-day breakfast, packed with protein

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound bulk pork sausage (or meat of choice)
- 12 eggs
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Image courtesy of 37 Cooks.

Directions: Preheat oven to 350°. In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add onion, green pepper, salt, garlic powder and pepper. Stir in sausage and cheese. Spoon by 1/3 cupfuls into muffin cups coated with cooking spray. Bake 20-25 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Laughing Matters

A Buddhist monk walks up to a hot dog vendor and says, "Make me one with everything."

Did you hear about the guy who got the entire left side of his body chopped off? He's all right now.

"AMC is coming out with a spin-off of 'The Walking Dead' that will show the apocalypse in other parts of the world. It's called 'The News.'" –Jimmy Fallon

"The royal couple had to keep Kate's pregnancy secret from the rest of the royal family. And that's not easy because Prince Charles is all ears." –Craig Ferguson

Connect with Superior

For more money-saving tips and a place to give us feedback, check out our blog at <http://superiordebtrelief.com/blog> or follow us on Facebook and Twitter @SuperiorDebt.

Refer-a-Friend

Know someone who could also benefit from our services? Contact one of our member services representatives to

Stay Up-to-Date on Debt, Online

Who We Are

Established in 1998, Superior Debt Services is a debt relief company committed to ethically helping consumers lower their credit card debt while encouraging healthy financial habits. Find out more at superiordebtrelief.com.