



How to get financial stress under control

Financial issues can look different for everyone. Some people struggle to pay bills, feed the family, or maintain a place to live. Others meet their basic needs but are dipping into their savings for extras.

Research shows that the number of people stressing about their finances is increasing. Understandably, financial issues can cause distress, anxiety and worry. But understanding and finding ways to reduce our financial stress – and its emotional impact on us – can help make this challenging time much easier.

Here's our seven-point checklist to help you ease the stress of money worries and begin to find stability again



Talk to someone

When you're facing money problems, there's often a strong temptation to bottle everything up. Although this

may provide short term relief, it's likely to only make financial stress worse in the long term. Talking face-to-face with a trusted friend or loved one can help to put things in perspective. The person you talk to isn't there to fix your issues, they're there to listen.



Make a plan — and stick to it

Make a plan - which could include a number of things

such as budgeting, tactics to increase your income or seeking professional help - and stick to it. Write it down on a piece of paper or type it up on a computer, print it off and make sure it's visible.



Take inventory of your finances

Detail your income, debt, and spending over the course of at least one month so you have

a full overview of where you stand. Write down the following in the inventory: your income, your spending (however small it might be), and your debts. There are a number of banking apps that show visual representations of your finances which can help you to see your financial situation more clearly.



Outline a monthly budget

Setting and following a monthly budget can really help keep you on track and

regain your sense of control. Remember to include everyday expenses in your budget - such as groceries, travel, bills, rent or mortgage - as well as contingency for unexpected expenses.



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Set up automatic payments

Where possible try to set up automatic payments to help ensure bills are paid on time and you avoid late payments or interest rate hikes.



Enlist support from others

Make sure others in your household are on board with the plan. Enlist support from your spouse, partner, or kids and make sure everyone in your household is pulling in the same direction and understands the financial goals you're working towards.



Get professional help

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Non-profit debt and finance counselling agencies

The Money Charity

www.themoneycharity.org.uk

For over 25 years, The Money Charity has been helping people of all ages to manage their money well and increase their Financial Wellbeing.

StepChange debt charity

www.stepchange.org

Contact the UK's leading debt charity to get expert debt advice and fee-free debt management to help you tackle your debts.

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

You can talk about your debt issue with a trained adviser online. We'll try to help you solve your problem or make good progress towards it. In some cases, we might need to send you to your local Citizens Advice or a specialist organisation.

National Debtline

www.nationaldebtline.org

All our advisers are experts in debt advice and our service is always free. We'll give you all the help and support you need to deal with your debts yourself.

Our tip of the month

The one thing we ask you to do today if you do nothing else...

Challenge yourself to make at least one meal a week from scratch

When you make a meal from scratch you have full control over what goes into your food, which means less sugar and salt and more good fats and nutrients. It can also be a fun and mindful activity, not only helping to improve physical health but mental health, too.

If you're not confident in the kitchen, it can feel daunting at first. The great thing is that many online recipes now include a video so you can follow the chef step-by-step in your own home.

To develop your confidence and skills in the kitchen you could start out by making something simple like a salad (which requires no or little oven time) or a spicy vegetable soup (a fuss-free way to pack a lot of vegetables into your day).

Take a look at the following websites

for inspiration:

www.bbcgoodfood.com

www.deliciousmagazine.co.uk

www.jamieoliver.com

