

# COPING FINANCIALLY IN DIFFICULT TIMES

## Some points to consider

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

These are some guidelines to consider and if at all possible, in consultation with a financial adviser.



### BUDGET

To determine where you are financially starts with a budget. Take your last 3 months' bank statements (incl. your credit card) and allocate the expenses for each month on a piece of paper or an excel spreadsheet. Use this to draw up a monthly budget. Also keep in mind that there may be additional irregular expenditure which was not necessarily incurred during the last three months, such as car maintenance, etc.

There are free Apps which you can use to help you set up a budget.  
<https://www.22seven.com/>



### LIST ASSETS & LIABILITIES DEBTS & ACCOUNTS

Make a list of all you own with reasonable values allocated to the various items. Likewise make a list of everything you owe. Refer to your latest statements when drawing up this list. Do not forget to include the interest rate for each debt you owe.

Once you have listed all you own, sit down and go through this list and ask yourself the question - do I really need this? (Your spouse should not be on either list). Mark all the items you do not need. Consider selling the stuff you no longer need or use. There are various applications (APPS) or platforms where you can list these items e.g. OLX, Gumtree, Facebook etc. With the current lockdown situation, a garage sale may not work.

### 3.1 FINANCING

If you have a consistent loss in income and have a bond, immediately contact your bank and ask for reduced monthly payments or a payment holiday. Check the insurance cover on your bond. The same applies if you have vehicle financing.

### 3.2 APPROACH OTHER CREDITORS

Approach your creditors explaining that you cannot pay and try to arrange alternative payment terms. Continue making payments, even if these payments are lower than what should be paid. Keep communicating with your creditors, keeping them updated on your situation.



### ASSESS EXPENSES

It is necessary to take a hard and honest look at your monthly expenses.

The distinction between needs and wants is not as clear-cut as you may think. A place to live, clothes to wear, food to eat are easy to allocate as necessities. Other expenses could be more difficult: Medical Aid, Life Insurance, Short-term Insurance, saving for retirement etc. When it comes to putting food on the table, even important expenses might have to take a back seat. Luxuries fall squarely in the 'Wants' category, even though we often convince ourselves otherwise.

Before cancelling the important expenses like medical aid, life insurance and short-term insurance, consider the following options: convert to a lower, cheaper medical aid plan; reduce life cover on your insurance premiums and/or remove some of the nice-to-have benefits; obtain alternate quotes for your short-term insurance; consider whether assets insured are insured at the correct values and consider increasing the voluntary excess on items with a lower risk profile.

Be careful not to reduce any critical insurance or medical aid cover, especially if you have any serious illness.

### 2.1 PROPERTY RENTAL

If you have a consistent loss in income, contact your landlord if you are renting your house or apartment. Ask for an extension, reduced rent or give notice so you can find a cheaper rental unit.

### 2.2 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Cancel DSTV subscriptions
- Move to a lower cell phone plan or pay-as-you-go, but calculate what the monthly cost would be before you do
- Do bulk grocery shopping, once monthly, or every 2 weeks instead of weekly or every few days
- Install a timer on your Geyser
- Install energy saving globes
- Reduce a 5-day domestic worker to twice or once a week
- Sell one of your cars (or both) and replace with a fuel- and cost-efficient alternative
- Consider downsizing your house, but keep in mind that property values may be low due to the state of the economy
- Shop around for lower prices, plan purchases by reviewing which products are on special at stores and plan trips accordingly
- Cancel store cards and only buy items you need, in cash the less access people have to credit, the less inclined they are to spend money
- Travel with someone else to work and share the fuel expense.
- Cancel subscriptions to magazines, newspapers, etc



## INCOME PROTECTION INSURANCE

If you have an income protection policy, contact your broker to assist you in the claim.



## DO NOT GO HUNGRY

Doxa Deo Parkview has a HOPE (Help Our People Eat) project that provides food for families going through a tough time. Please take the liberty to contact Gina-Lee if you need assistance.

[gina-lee.antoniou@doxa.deo.org](mailto:gina-lee.antoniou@doxa.deo.org)



## UIF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

If you have been retrenched, apply to the Unemployment Insurance fund for pay-outs whilst unemployed (assuming you were registered as an employee at the UIF and contributed to the fund while you were employed).



## CONNECT

If you have been retrenched during this time of crisis it is important that you find alternative employment as soon as possible. Chances are you may need emotional support too, as losing a job is usually very stressful. Join 'KeyConnection', Doxa Deo's ministry for people between jobs at:

[keyconnection@doxadeo.org](mailto:keyconnection@doxadeo.org)



## REACH OUT

When you are going through a financial crisis, it is important that you do not become isolated, although this is often the go-to reaction when we experience shame and disappointment. Connect with friends and support in a cell group, men's group or women's group.

**Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one'.** (CS Lewis)

If you are feeling overwhelmed and anxious please visit our LifeCentre <https://www.doxadeo.org/parkview/life-centre/> or contact Gina-Lee at [gina-lee.antoniou@doxadeo.org](mailto:gina-lee.antoniou@doxadeo.org) immediately.



## SEED & BREAD

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

The point is this: whoever **sows sparingly will also reap sparingly**, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

And **God is able** to make **all grace** abound to you, so that having **all sufficiency in all things at all times**, you may abound in **every good work**.

He who **supplies seed** to the **sower** and **bread for food** will **supply** and **multiply your seed** for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

You will be enriched in every way to **be generous in every way**, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

Don't eat your seed.

Ask God to help you discern between seed and bread and trust God for the harvest.

## UP-SKILL



Consider up-skilling or learning a new skill during the time of lockdown. Universities like Stanford and Harvard are offering free on-line courses. Other training websites like Udemy are offering training courses at vastly reduced rates.



# DON'T BLAME-SHIFT; ACT.