Lesson 7: Dollar Dumps

Everyday Money for Everyday People

Companion Workbook 2nd Edition
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Lesson 7: Dollar Dumps™ & Spending Barriers

Do you know where your trash ends up? Many people don’t. We toss things in the trash because we generally prefer clean homes and communities, but few understand where the trash goes to once it’s in the garbage can.

The same can be said about much of the money that we deposit into our checking accounts. Sometimes by sheer habit, we spend a few dollars here a few more there until, somehow, we’ve spend several hundred dollars that we may very likely have a hard time accounting for. These small purchases that we make on a regular basis are what I term, “Dollar Dumps.” For some, it might be a vending machine purchase they may every day at 2:15 in the afternoon “just to get me by till dinner.” For others, it might be the habit of going to a movie or a play every weekend. Some might habitually ask for a lottery ticket every time they buy gas (or a pack of cigarettes). Still others might dump their dollars by regularly meeting up with a friend to go shopping (at a clothing store, book store, or even a thrift store).

I am not one to suck all of the life of our life by saying, “get rid of all your Dollar Dumps!” However, I do highly recommend that we regularly consider where we’re dumping our money and ask the following questions:

▲ Are these Dollar Dumps top priorities in my household budget?
▲ Is there some other purchase I’d rather same my money for than spending it on these Dollar Dumps?
▲ Are these Dollar Dumps at all meaningful to me or are they simply mindless habits?

Such questions would make great subject matter for our New Year’s Resolutions, although revisiting them more frequently would be even better. Depending upon your answers, you may want to get rid of some Dollar Dumps all together, or you may decide that you don’t want to change a single thing about your Dollar Dumps.

Finally, if you believe that you are beyond the foolishness of dumping dollars, please reconsider. Virtually everyone has something they spend little amounts of money on that add up to big bucks over time. Refusing to consider our own dollars dumps often stems from a fear of discovering that we really don’t have a much control over our wallets as we had hoped for.

Use the tools on the following page to uncover your own Dollar Dumps and to minimize their negative financial impact on your household budget.
Determining Your Dollar Dumps

While many of us can identify where and when some of our “big expenses” have happened (buying a home, purchasing a vehicle or a television, or shopping for a new fridge or couch), we often overlook the smaller expenses in our budget that, if not kept in check, can add up to big money over time.

Use the following table to identify your own household Dollar Dumps, and determine how much money you likely spend on them each year.

**BE AS HONEST WITH YOURSELF AS POSSIBLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dollar Dump</th>
<th>Cost Per Expenses</th>
<th>How Many Times per Month</th>
<th>= Monthly $ Dump</th>
<th>x 12 = Annual Dollar Dump</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Lunch Out</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>x 15</td>
<td>= $90</td>
<td>x 12 = $1,080</td>
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<td>TOTAL ANNUAL DOLLAR DUMPS</td>
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**My Dollar Dump Deal with Myself**

By signing this deal, I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I’d rather spend $______ on ________________ rather than on the Dollar Dumps I’ve identified above.

2. If I minimize my Dollar Dumps, I should be able to spend that same money on the item or experience I’ve identified under #1 by the following date: ____________________________

__________________________________________

Signed: Date Signed:
Unwritten Goals Remain Unfulfilled Wishes

Saving Is a Commitment, Not an Amount!

Financial Success Happens at the BEGINNING of the Month!

What will you take away from your time with the Everyday Money for Everyday People program?

- Ideas for escaping the paycheck-to-paycheck treadmill
- Tricks for finally saving money without the risk of breaking the family piggy bank
- Tips for paying off debt and building financial stability

Whatever you take away from this program, you’ll find it to be practical, down-to-earth and financially helpful in the ways you need it to be.

This workbook accompanies our book, Everyday Money for Everyday People (available on Amazon and Kindle), Our Everyday Money blog (www.debtreductionservices.org/education/everyday-money-for-everyday-people) and our Everyday Money for Everyday People presentations and slideshows.

To schedule Todd as a meeting or conference speaker or for more help, materials, and publications from Debt Reduction Services Inc and Todd Christensen, see www.debtreductionservices.org/education/host-a-class or contact us at Education@DebtReductionServices.org or (877) 688-3328.