



Finance and Your Relationship

What does money mean to you?

Financial strain can be one of the biggest causes of conflict in a relationship.

Learning how to manage money and finances with your partner is important.

Being aware of each other's values about you spend and save money is an important step in any relationship. This will help you to manage finances in the

short and long term.

Communicating and budget planning are key to managing finances.

What does money mean to you?

Everyone has different attitudes to money, spending, saving, and budgeting. You and your partner may have similar or different attitudes and values.

Our values towards money develop over time and are shaped by the values which you grew up with. It is important to know your values will influence how you spend, save and budget together.

Talking about priorities, differences and similarities may help you make joint decisions in the future.

Working together

When you are in a relationship that involves shared expenses, it is important to work together and have a money plan so you both can pay for things you need.



You may have a different attitude to money than your partner. But working together can ensure you manage your finances in a way that suits both your values and needs.

If you want to plan your finances, a good place to start is to think about financial goals you would like to achieve. Both individually and together.

- Write down your financial goals, break them down into short (1 year), medium (1- years) or long (5 years or more) term goals.
- Think about how much they will cost and be realistic on time frames.
- Compare yours and your partner's goals and prioritise the list together.

Together, look at what you came up with and discuss what could be joint goals.

Conflict/stress resolution

Financial strain can cause tension between you and your partner.

Debt can lead to worry, stress and conflict and can affect how a couple get along.

Debt investment, such as buying a house or land, is less likely to be viewed as negative.

Talking to a financial advisor or mediator can assist if discussing money, and money planning, leads to conflict.

Reducing and managing debt

To help you manage, reduce, or eliminate debt try this:

1. Identify a debt you wish to eliminate.

Suggestion: an item with the highest interest rate is a good start or one with a relatively small balance.

2. Set a date to eliminate it and calculate the amount of money to be paid off each fortnight or month.

3. Identify 2 things you spend money on that you don't need to. Put this money towards paying your bill.

4. Try the above for 3 months and then see how it is working.

Review Spending

Another good way is to see if you spend more money than you have. If “yes”, return to your list of goals. Is the spending consistent with these goals? Then look at places where you can reduce spending. These could be:

- Clothing
- Gifts
- Transport
- Takeaway or eating out
- Entertainment
- Build ‘pocket money’ into your spending.

Credit cards and debt

If used appropriately, credit cards can provide a way to manage and budget your money. However, it can increase your risk of spending money you don’t have, leading to greater debt.

- When managing your credit try to:
- always pay your card on time,
- track spending and stay within your limit,
- pay more than the minimum repayment each month,
- consider setting up direct debit to pay a fixed amount each pay. Or use Centrepay to take regular deductions from your Centrelink payments.

Many banks also have credit card calculators designed to work out the fastest way you can pay off your credit card.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, there are free financial counselling services available. You can contact the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007.

Next Steps

For more information on our services and how they can support you, or to find your nearest centre:

Call 1300 364 277

Visit www.tas.relationships.org.au