



# Making a Change

*Dear Dr. Per Cap:*

*Every month I try to manage my money better but I keep overspending. I ask myself if something is a want or a need but in the end I keep making the same mistakes and fall further behind with my bills. Getting ahead financially is not as easy as people make it sound. Help!*

*Signed, Ready to Give Up*

Dear Ready

Your honest and straightforward approach is refreshing and brave. Thank you for being real. Furthermore, I understand your frustration. There is no magic formula or easy answer for getting on track financially. Sometimes people assume because I'm Dr. Per Cap I have all the answers and they're disappointed when I have to tell them I'm only a guide. The answers they seek lie within.

Sure I give tips and share tools and resources to help you get there but ultimately success is all up to you. There are also tons of people giving personal finance advice on TV, online, and in books, but unfortunately much of it is the same - spend less than you earn, build a savings cushion, manage debt wisely.

Yes, much easier said than done I admit. I know how hard it is to save when there are fun things to spend money on. But here's something I can tell you from personal experience. The hardest part is getting started. Those first few weeks or maybe months can be brutal I won't lie. Making those first choices - less eating out, no bingo, less money on Christmas presents. It can feel like going cold turkey.

But trust me it gets easier. It really does. Once you get past that initial shock of making a change it gets easier as you go. And the key is not to try to condition yourself so you don't feel the pain but to instead create a new lifestyle. One where you don't want those things you think you needed before.

Bad habits don't usually develop overnight and while they're not broken overnight either I think many people are surprised at how quickly they can make a positive change when they put their mind to it. Every week you get stronger and more disciplined with a renewed sense of purpose. And the longer you stay invested in a new goal the more you have to lose if you slip up.

That's probably the greatest motivator - the fear of sacrificing all of your hard work. Diets are the same way. It's no big deal to cheat on a new diet you've only been on for a week. But it's a huge deal to cheat on a diet you've been sticking to faithfully for 3 months.

When you get through the suffering you'll be able to enjoy the rewards - more savings, bills paid on time, less debt. Confidence soars and you're on your way. Hang in there. The best is yet to come.

***Ask Dr. Per Cap*** is a program funded by First Nations Development Institute with assistance from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation. For more information, visit [www.firstnations.org](http://www.firstnations.org). To send a question to Dr. Per Cap, email [askdrpercap@firstnations.org](mailto:askdrpercap@firstnations.org).