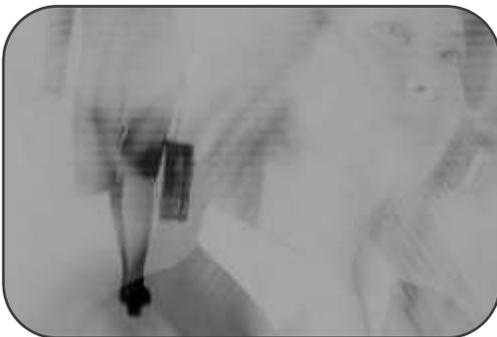


## ARE YOU A FULLY PAID -UP MEMBER OF THE CONSUMER SOCIETY?

The hardest thing about living in a consumer society is to be satisfied with enough. Or maybe enough plus a bit more so that our families can live comfortably. When the army of advertisers and sales people try to circumvent our rationale and target our emotions, to get us to buy things we do not need and did not previously want, it is easy to fall to the temptation.

Marketing, advertising and sales talk exploit our basic emotional needs, so that we begin to doubt our appearance, competence, self-worth and significance. That makes us pliable — liable to buy what we think will make us feel better.

When we surf the supermarket aisles, looking for what we need, we are vulnerable to sophisticated tactics that lure us into buying a lot of other stuff as well. That is why it is reported that most families end up throwing away a third of their groceries unused!



### CLUBHOUSE MONEY ED

All Souls Clubhouse produce leaflets and run courses to help people handle money well. It can also help you find free expert help if you have a money problem or are in debt.

#### WHERE TO GET FREE ADVICE

If you have a money problem or debt, get immediate help. You will find local advice agencies listed in the front of telephone directories or on display in local libraries. Or you can call National Debtline on **0808 808 4000**: the call is free from landlines and most mobile networks. You can get free help on-line at these websites:

[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

#### THIS LEAFLET DOES NOT SAY IT ALL

This is only an introductory guide to personal financial issues and the issues have been simplified. Resolving debt can be complicated. You cannot hold Clubhouse, the author, or anyone else involved in the production of this leaflet responsible for any action you take, or fail to take, based on what is written here. You should get expert help if you are worried about your financial situation or if you think you could benefit from help with money problems and debt.

Copyright © All Souls Clubhouse Community  
Centre & Church and Philip Evans 2011

### Christian Living in a Consumer Society

A Sunday afternoon course for Christians to consider the Bible's teaching on money and the basic money handling skills to put it into practice.

To find out when and where the next course will be held, look on the Money Ed page on the Clubhouse website or send an e-mail.

Website: [www.clubhousew1.org](http://www.clubhousew1.org)

E-mail: [money-ed@clubhousew1.org](mailto:money-ed@clubhousew1.org)



CLUBHOUSE MONEY ED PROJECT

All Souls Clubhouse Community Centre & Church

## FINANCIAL HEALTHCHECK



are you as  
financially  
secure as  
you hope?

ALL SOULS CLUBHOUSE  
COMMUNITY CENTRE & CHURCH

141 CLEVELAND STREET  
LONDON W1T 6QG

[www.clubhousew1.org](http://www.clubhousew1.org)

## THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT DEBT

Most money problems do not just happen. Even when the cause appears to be entirely beyond a person's control, like an accident or redundancy, often it is the 'final straw' that collapses a financial situation that has been shaky for a long time.

This should not worry you unduly. But, having said that, hoping that 'what you don't know can't hurt you' isn't true of either your health or your money!

Although there is no certain way to know whether your financial situation is sound without conducting a comprehensive audit, there are some tell tale signs you should not ignore.

In the next column are some questions to ask yourself. The more you answer 'Yes', the more likely you are to have a money problem waiting to happen. The more 'Yes' answers, the more likely the problem might precipitate a major life change, like eviction or bankruptcy. And the more likely that could threaten your relationships.

Research has shown that people with money problems are less able to work and study well. It is not the time needed to sort out the situation but the worry that blunts their ability.

## BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

- ◆ Have you been overdrawn in the past six months?
- ◆ Have you failed to pay a bill on time and in full during the past six months?
- ◆ Do you rely on your credit card or borrow from family or friends to get through each month?
- ◆ Do you borrow (that is, use your credit card, take a loan, go into overdraft or begin a payment plan) to buy things that you do **not** need?
- ◆ Are you prone to buying things just because you see them advertised or in a tv programme?
- ◆ Do you buy things that catch your eye but quickly realise you do not like?
- ◆ Are you repaying credit for something you have stopped using?
- ◆ Does your mobile usually cost more than you expect?
- ◆ Do you lose sleep worrying about money?

It is reported that over 80% of adults in the UK frequently lose sleep worrying about their finances. Often it is a result of not knowing — so check out the real situation.

## DO SOME BASIC CALCULATIONS

There may not be simple answers to the following questions but think carefully about your situation.

- ◆ Are you getting good deals on your electricity, gas and phone tariffs?
- ◆ Could you reduce your credit repayments by switching to another bank or credit provider?
- ◆ How would you manage with a pay cut or an increase in your mortgage or rent?
- ◆ Are the insurance policies you have of *real* benefit to you, covering eventualities that would otherwise tip you into financial catastrophe?
- ◆ Do you have enough savings to pay for expensive purchases, like a car, television, fridge or holiday?
- ◆ Do you know what you should do if you were suddenly told you were to be made redundant?
- ◆ If your income dried up **today**, could you keep paying your bills on time and in full for at least three months?
- ◆ Would you manage financially if your spouse died suddenly?