

Surviving Debt: A Step-by-Step Guide for Everyday People

Mohammed Hamed Ahmed Soliman

Published by personal-lean.org, 2025.

Publisher: Personal Lean Publications
For inquiries: info@personal-lean.org

No AI-generated text, translation or images were used in the production of this work.

All trademarks and brand names belong to their respective owners and are used for identification and educational purposes only.

While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book, the publisher assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions, or for damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein.

**SURVIVING DEBT: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR
EVERYDAY PEOPLE**

First edition. August 23, 2025.

Copyright © 2025 Mohammed Hamed Ahmed Soliman.

Written by Mohammed Hamed Ahmed Soliman.

Table of Contents

.....	1
Preface	2
Author's Note	4
Chapter 1: Understanding Your Debt and Financial Situation.....	5
1.1 Why Understanding Debt Matters	6
1.2 Listing All Your Debts	7
1.3 Assessing Your Financial Situation	8
1.4 Understanding Debt Priorities.....	9
1.5 Identifying Problem Areas	10
1.6 Key Takeaways	11
Chapter 1 Summary Checklist.....	12
Chapter 2: Emergency Budget – Staying Afloat	13
2.1 The Purpose of an Emergency Budget.....	14
2.2 Step 1: List Your Essential Expenses.....	15
2.3 Step 2: Calculate Your Total Monthly Income	16
2.4 Step 3: Compare Income vs. Essential Expenses.....	17
2.5 Step 4: Cut Non-Essential Spending.....	18

2.6 Step 5: Build a Mini Emergency Fund.....	19
2.7 Step 6: Create a Simple Budget Template	20
2.8 Key Takeaways	21
Chapter 2 Summary Checklist.....	22
Chapter 3: Negotiating with Banks and Creditors.....	23
3.1 Why Negotiation Matters	24
3.2 Preparing for Negotiation	25
3.3 Choosing the Right Communication Method.....	27
3.4 What to Say: Key Phrases.....	28
3.5 Negotiation Strategies	29
3.6 Handling Difficult Creditors.....	30
3.7 Templates for Negotiation.....	31
3.8 Key Takeaways	33
Chapter 3 Summary Checklist.....	34
Chapter 4: Cutting Daily Expenses Immediately	35
4.1 Why Cutting Expenses Matters	36
4.2 Step 1: Review Your Monthly Spending	37
4.3 Step 2: Cut Food and Grocery Costs.....	38
4.4 Step 3: Reduce Utility Bills	39

4.5 Step 4: Cut Transportation Costs.....	40
4.6 Step 5: Eliminate Non-Essential Subscriptions and Purchases.....	41
4.7 Step 6: Track and Adjust.....	42
4.8 Key Takeaways	43
Chapter 4 Summary Checklist.....	44
Chapter 5: Ways to Increase Income Quickly.....	45
5.1 Why Increasing Income Matters.....	46
5.2 Step 1: Assess Your Skills and Resources	47
5.3 Step 2: Explore Side Hustle Opportunities	48
5.4 Step 3: Use Online Marketplaces and Apps	50
5.5 Step 4: Temporary or Short-Term Jobs.....	51
5.6 Step 5: Create a Personal “Income Action Plan”	52
5.7 Step 6: Avoid Income Pitfalls	53
5.8 Key Takeaways	54
Chapter 5 Summary Checklist.....	55
Chapter 6: A Step-by-Step Debt Repayment Plan	56
6.1 Why a Repayment Plan is Critical.....	57
6.2 Step 1: List All Debts and Prioritize Them.....	58
6.3 Step 2: Determine Your Payment Capacity.....	60

6.4 Step 3: Create a Monthly Payment Schedule	61
6.5 Step 4: Track Your Progress.....	62
6.6 Step 5: Adjust Your Plan When Necessary	63
6.7 Step 6: Avoid Pitfalls During Repayment	64
6.8 Key Takeaways	65
Chapter 6 Summary Checklist.....	66
Chapter 7: Protecting Yourself from Future Debt.....	67
7.1 Why Protecting Against Future Debt Matters	68
7.2 Step 1: Build a Solid Emergency Fund	69
7.3 Step 2: Maintain a Realistic Budget	70
7.4 Step 3: Practice Smart Credit Habits.....	71
7.5 Step 4: Plan for Major Expenses.....	72
7.6 Step 5: Build Long-Term Financial Habits	73
7.7 Step 6: Protect Against Emergencies Beyond Money	74
7.8 Key Takeaways	75
Chapter 7 Summary Checklist.....	76
Chapter 8: Dealing with Unexpected Financial Crises	77
8.1 Why Planning for Crises Matters	78
8.2 Step 1: Assess the Situation Quickly	79

8.3 Step 2: Prioritize Your Payments.....	80
8.4 Step 3: Communicate with Creditors Early	81
8.5 Step 4: Utilize Your Emergency Fund Wisely	82
8.6 Step 5: Cut Non-Essential Spending Temporarily	83
8.7 Step 6: Explore Additional Short-Term Income.....	84
8.8 Step 7: Create a Recovery Plan.....	85
8.9 Key Takeaways	86
Chapter 8 Summary Checklist.....	87
Chapter 9: Long-Term Financial Growth and Safe Investing.....	88
9.1 Why Long-Term Growth Matters	89
9.2 Step 1: Set Clear Financial Goals.....	90
9.3 Step 2: Build a Strong Savings Foundation.....	91
9.4 Step 3: Learn the Basics of Safe Investing.....	92
9.5 Step 4: Choose Investment Vehicles.....	93
9.6 Step 5: Automate and Track Growth.....	95
9.7 Step 6: Continue Learning and Adapting.....	96
9.8 Key Takeaways	97
Chapter 9 Summary Checklist.....	98
Chapter 10: Maintaining Financial Discipline for Life.....	99

10.1 Why Long-Term Discipline Matters	100
10.2 Step 1: Stick to a Budget Forever.....	101
10.3 Step 2: Automate Savings and Payments	102
10.4 Step 3: Monitor and Review Financial Goals	103
10.5 Step 4: Maintain a Debt-Free Mindset.....	104
10.6 Step 5: Continue Financial Education	105
10.7 Step 6: Build Healthy Financial Habits.....	106
10.8 Step 7: Plan for Life Events and Emergencies.....	107
10.9 Key Takeaways.....	108
Chapter 10 Summary Checklist	109
Conclusion: Your Path to Financial Freedom	110
Actionable Appendices.....	111
Appendix A: Monthly Budget Template.....	112
Appendix B: Debt Tracker Template.....	113
Appendix C: Emergency Fund Planner	114
Appendix D: Income & Side Hustle Tracker.....	115
Appendix E: Financial Goals Planner	116
Appendix F: Crisis Action Plan.....	117
Appendix G: Weekly Financial Review Checklist.....	118

Appendix H: Monthly Financial Reflection.....	119
---	-----

Surviving Debt
A Step-by-Step Guide for Everyday People

Preface

LIFE DOESN'T COME WITH a financial manual. Most of us never learned in school how to handle debt, pay bills, or survive a sudden financial crisis. Yet, for millions of everyday people, debt is a reality—a source of stress, sleepless nights, and constant worry.

This book is not another long-winded finance guide filled with complicated jargon or “theoretical” advice. Instead, it is a **practical survival manual**. Every page is designed to give you clear, actionable steps to **take control of your money, manage your debts, and survive—no matter how tight things get**.

Inside, you will find:

- **Checklists:** Step-by-step actions you can follow immediately.
- **Templates:** Ready-to-use forms for budgeting, tracking debt, and negotiating with banks.
- **Practical examples:** Real-life scenarios showing how ordinary people overcame financial stress.

Whether your goal is to pay off credit cards, handle overdue bills, or simply stop living paycheck to paycheck, this book will guide you through the process in a way that is **easy to understand and simple to apply**.

Think of this as your **financial first-aid kit**. Open it in a crisis, follow the steps, and regain control. You don't need to be a financial expert—you just need a clear plan and the willingness to take action.

By the end of this book, you will not only have the tools to **survive debt**, but also a roadmap to **protect yourself from future financial emergencies**.

Let's get started. Your financial survival journey begins now.

Author's Note

THIS BOOK IS THE RESULT of a lifetime of experience dealing with financial challenges, debt management, and the search for stability in uncertain times. As a Lean expert with an extensive background in academia, consulting, and practical problem-solving, I have witnessed firsthand how financial pressures can affect not only organizations but also the everyday lives of individuals and families.

My professional journey spans decades of teaching, advising, and writing. I have authored over one hundred publications in the fields of Lean management, business excellence, quality improvement, and leadership. These works reflect my continuous pursuit of practical solutions to complex problems, combining theory with real-world application.

In this book, I apply the same principles—clarity, structure, and efficiency—that guide my work in Lean and business systems to personal finance and debt management. The strategies and tools presented here are not abstract concepts; they are practical, actionable steps designed for everyday people.

My hope is that this guide empowers you to take control of your financial journey, overcome challenges, and build a more secure future.

— *Mohammed Hamed Ahmed Soliman*

Chapter 1: Understanding Your Debt and Financial Situation

BEFORE YOU CAN TACKLE debt, you must first **understand it completely**. It's impossible to create a plan if you don't know exactly what you owe, to whom, and under what conditions. This chapter will guide you through **taking a full inventory of your financial situation**, assessing your debts, and prioritizing what needs attention first.