

Weathering the Recession

Tips on How to Cope



The negative news about the economy coupled with our own financial situation is sometimes enough to drive some of us crazy. Promise yourself each day to identify a few things for which you can be grateful and give God thanks; a merry heart doeth good like medicine.

- Make a shopping list and stick to it.
- Demand better goods and services for your money.
- Practise better care of your clothes, furniture and other household items.
- Adopt a more communal approach to shopping. Pool with neighbours to benefit from discount on items bought in bulk.
- Walk more and drive less.
- Eat at home more. Reduce take out and lunch at the restaurant.
- Reduce or eliminate the luxury items on your shopping list – buy local. Exotic items tend to cost more.



Consumer Affairs Commission

Head Office

2 Seaview Avenue
Kingston 6
Tel: 978-4998, 927-4518, 927-8358,
978-5309
Digicel: 619-4222 Fax: 946-9214
E-mail: cacjam@infochan.com

Montego Bay Branch

A.G.I. Building, 2nd Floor
30 Market Street
Montego Bay, St. James
Tel: 940-6154 Fax: 979-1036
E-mail:
western@consumeraffairsjamaica.gov.jm

Mandeville Branch

23 Caledonia Road
Mandeville
Open on Tuesdays & Thursdays
Tel: 625-0487
E-mail:
mdvl@consumeraffairsjamaica.gov.jm

OR

Visit us on the web at: www.cac.gov.jm

The global economic recession has hit hard and many of us are at our wit's end trying to determine just how to get by. Don't despair; there is some good to be derived from this experience. For one, you may just realize that you can get by on far less than you thought you could. We may be forced to use some very unorthodox methods, but consistent effort must be made to contain our expenditure so that we do not spend more than we earn. The Consumer Affairs Commission offers the following ideas.

- Shop in bulk
- Mix and match old clothes
- Conserve
- Try car pooling
- Avoid impulsive shopping
- Focus on needs, not wants



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- Change your consumption pattern. Eating out, going shopping, going to the movies and other entertainment should be cut down to a level with which you can live comfortably.
- Ensure that your bills are paid before you decide to splurge. Prioritize.
- Reduce unnecessary travel to save on petrol. Walk whenever possible. Since most of lead sedentary lifestyles, our bodies will welcome the exercise.
- Use more unprocessed foods. Meal preparation time may be longer but it is worth it.

- Save. This is the best weapon against hard times. Start small and watch your funds grow.



- Budget. Get a CAC monthly budgeting notepad and list all your income. List your expenditure then check if your income can still support your expenses. If not, CUT EXPENSES.

- Substitute items. Try substituting expensive items with cheaper ones.
- Focus on your needs not wants.
- Avoid impulsive shopping. Try to avoid trips to the supermarket for one or two items. Invariably, you always end up spending more.
- Conserve on water, gas, and electricity. Wash less, recycle your wash water and avoid lighting your oven for one dish.

Mix and match old clothes. Add a belt or scarf to bring a new feel to an old dress. Men, change the tie.

Do backyard gardening. Plant vegetables and decorate your yard with fruit trees instead of ornamental ones.

Try to recession-proof your job by maintaining a trend of consistently good performance. If you have been doing a stellar job, it will be harder for your boss to get rid of you.

Adopt a frugal lifestyle. Find ways to prepare a cost effective nutritious meal.