

MONEY

Is A Debt-Free Life Possible?

NewsUSA

(NU) - Leslie Balfaqih couldn't believe how much money she and her husband wasted every month. "Our financial life was a mess," Leslie says from her home in Florida.

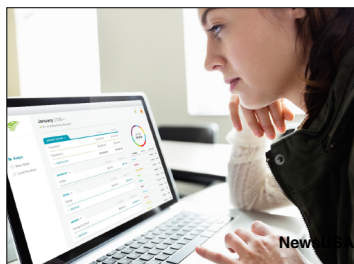
"To say we were disorganized is putting it mildly."

Like so many Americans, they didn't have a plan for their money.

The problem is often not how much money a family makes, but that they have no idea what they're spending it on. Seventy-eight percent of full-time workers say they live paycheck to paycheck, according to a recent report from CareerBuilder. Worse, most feel it will always be that way. But it doesn't have to be.

Financial experts agree that the best way to break the vicious cycle of scrambling to make ends meet is by having a written budget and sticking to it. Leslie heard about a website, EveryDollar.com and the EveryDollar budgeting app that makes it simple to create a budget, manage money, and track spending. They signed up, set up their budget, and they've stuck to it for years. "We paid off \$165,000 in debt since we got started. Now we're in a position to be completely debt-free, including our house and rental property, in the next three years."

The "B" word has gotten a bad rap. Budgeting sounds hard. It sounds restricting. Frankly, it sounds boring. But people who've made budgeting the center of their financial behavior have discovered quite the opposite. The technology behind apps like EveryDollar make budgeting easy. Rather than feeling restricted, they say it feels as if they have permission to spend



- just not permission to waste.

Sierra Schmidt was surprised by how much having a budget changed her attitude. She's a single mother in Spokane, Washington, whose bills include daycare, rent, and student loans. "I felt so far behind every month, and things seemed hopeless," she says.

"Now, I keep track of every dollar, and the numbers are right in front of me. I'm getting ahead instead of falling behind. Every month I feel more confident that I can wipe out the debt that's been so stressful."

Sierra and Leslie empowered themselves to take control of their money. You can too. Creating a budget and sticking to it could change your life and help you take control of your money in the new year.

EveryDollar is a free budget app that allows users to create customized monthly budgets, and seamlessly track expenses, income and savings from the convenience of their computer and phone. It's available for both iOS and Android devices. EveryDollar launched in March 2015 and now has more than three million users.

Learn more by visiting www.everydollar.com.