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# The Little Book of Big Savings: 351 Practical Ways to Save Money Now

Ellie Kay

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Ellie Kay : The Little Book of Big Savings: 351 Practical Ways to Save Money Now before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Little Book of Big Savings: 351 Practical Ways

to Save Money Now:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. B I T E -- S I Z E.....N U G G E T S.....O F.....H O P E.....A N D....W I S D O M... : )By PatriciaTHE LITTLE BOOK OF BIG SAVINGS: 351 pRACTICAL WAYS TO SAVE MONEY NOW, by Ellie Kay, is an excellent little primer that one can easily hold in one hand. Larger than most mass-market paperbacks, yet smaller than the average trade paperback, it has nice large print, and all 351 tips arranged under logical chapter headings, and in a paragraph or so each -- which is great for people like me, whose attention-span has been blasted to smithereens by decades of watching TV with commercials interrupting the programs every 15 minutes! This book is fast, easy, and very informative reading! The main reason I bought this book was that a preview of it was offered here on . I not only saw the nice little bite-size "bits" into which this book was organized, but I actually found TWO toll-free information numbers! That's right -- no more paying for "Directory Assistance" when using these 800 numbers. (Or, that is, one of them. Sadly, one of the 800 numbers is no longer active. But the thought comes to me that maybe new ones have sprung up? At any rate, an update, and/or a volume 2 would be very welcome, although 90% of the hints in this volume are timeless! In the back of this book, is an ad for another of Ms. Kay's books, this one entitled "Living Rich For Less", and featuring a picture of a smiling, "glammed-up" Ms. Kay. It's definitely worth a look, and I'm going to see what others say about it on . If it's as good as this book is, I definitely will get it. And I think that a set of both books might make a wonderful present -- especially a wedding present! \_\_\_\_\_ There are only two things with which I find fault in this book. 1) There is NO INDEX, so it's harder to get to EXACTLY what you want to read, as the Chapter Headings are only very general in nature, and 2) The paper-type used for this book seems to be only medium-quality sulphite paper. And sulphite paper of ANY kind, has a "built-in destruction" factor -- it will slowly disintegrate over the years. (See the PBS DVD "Slow Fires", which explains the process, and/or look up "sulphite paper" on the internet.) The sad thing is that archival paper -- the white, white paper seen in some books, is no more expensive to produce than sulphite paper! It is only the EQUIPMENT to produce it that must be all new, because the same equipment will not produce both sulphite and archival paper. It's a ONE-TIME expense! But too few publishers are buying the new equipment. : ( In the meantime, I use the stop-gap method of coating the edges of my sulphite paper books with "Magic" and other markers...which, like the amber-coloured, transparent plastic that is put protectively inside some store windows, keeps the damaging rays of the sun off my books....a bit, anyway. Books are precious. Money-saving books like this are perhaps more precious than most. PLEASE, publishers -- buy that archival-paper making equipment! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Amy I LOVE this book! Definitely worth the purchase! Already have ideas to save a lot of money! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. great for savings tips By denise sparks VERY HELPFUL. ENOUGH SAID

Be richer by this time tomorrow Every month you spend money in twelve major categories. And at the end of each month, you scratch your head and wonder, Where did it all go? In The Little Book of Big Savings, America's Financial Expert, reg; Ellie Kay, will help you uncover the extra cash just waiting to be found in every area of your life. Not only will you never again wonder where your cash went, you will have extra to savendash; and even to share. Don't mindlessly let hundreds of dollars slip out of your ATM every month. Ellie's practical advice will show you: bull; How one phone call could save you \$500 a year or more bull; How your kids can get a great education without breaking the bank bull; Three ways your water heater can save you money bull; Why giving away money is one of the best ways to save it bull; How to save up to 50% on your online purchases Plus hundreds of other tips that will loosen your budget without sacrificing your lifestyle. Soon yours; I'll find what you want the most when it comes to your finances: peace of mind. From the Trade Paperback edition.

About the Author Ellie Kay is the best-selling author of Half-Priced Living and eleven other titles, including A Tip A Day with Ellie Kay and The Debt Diet, with more than 350,000 books sold. She's a regular television guest on CNBC's Power Lunch, Fox News, and CNN; and has been the featured family finance expert in numerous magazines and newspapers, including Family Circle, Women's World, and USA Today. Her financial help columns appear in a dozen periodicals and online, including CBN.com. A popular speaker, she's Wal-Mart's official financial help expert, and has served as a consumer educator and official spokesperson for Proctor Gamble, VisaProvidian, MasterCard, and more. Ellie and her husband, Bob, are the parents of seven children and live in Palmdale, California. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Surprise! You Have More Money Than You Thought You Had! Some of my most exciting moments are when I find unexpected "surprise" money. You know the kind. While cleaning out the pockets before you throw your jeans in the washing machine, you pull out a five dollar bill you forgot you had. Or when you're walking down the street and you discover a dollar bill just lying there. It's the best feeling, isn't it? Well, what if I were to tell you that you have surprise money all around you. In every room of your house or apartment. Money just sitting there, waiting for you to notice it. Yes, you read that right! You just have to know where and how to look. Extra cash. Even if you've lost your job.

Even if you are so far in debt that you see everything in red. Even if your family is eating you out of house and home. How do I know you can find money right under your nose? Because when my husband, Bob, and I were first married, we were \$40,000 in consumer debt—and yet everywhere I looked, I realized that I could find money. I felt so empowered! And within two and a half years, living on just my husband's military salary, we used all that surprise money to pay off our debts. Fifteen years and seven children later, we were able to pay cash for our cars (we even gave away three cars!), buy and nicely furnish two five-bedroom houses (moving from one to the other), take wonderful vacations, dress our family in style, build a nest egg for retirement, become debt free, and send three children (so far) to college without college loans. And the best part? My family and I have been able to share our money (more than \$100,000) with people and causes that desperately need help. If a military husband, a stay-at-home mom, and seven kids can do it, believe me, so can you!

I'm passionate about saving money, and I'm really good at it (if I do say so!). I can find the smartest and least expensive way to do or have just about anything. And I'm excited about being able to share all my tips with you so that you can save money too. Yeah, right, I can hear you thinking. I get it. My surprise money is me reusing aluminum foil over and over. Um, no. One time I had a woman approach me, shaking her head. She said, "Ellie, are you going to tell me I have to wash out and reuse plastic baggies?" I'll tell you what I told her. "No! No! No! Unless you really want to." Hello? You don't have to live like an obsessive Scrooge in order to save money! Why do we put all these downers on saving money? Sometimes pinching pennies can get old. Real old. Way old. Big-time old. Stinkin' old. Big, fat, double-dog-ugly old. Which brings me to an important point: too many people think that to save money, you have to live like a monk, taking a vow of poverty, or you have to do extreme, crazy things. Seriously. I have better ways to spend my time! And I assume you do too. Let me put your mind at ease. Here is a list of things I am not going to suggest you do in order to save money:

- Ask your grandmother to start saving foil in little balls for you.
- To save water, keep your fish in the toilet bowl and train it to cling to the sides at the first sound of rushing water.
- When at a pizza shop, and the couple next to you leaves half a pizza untouched and uneaten, ask the waitress for a carry-out box.
- When you are driving down the road, pull over your Mercedes wannabe to pick up a piece of fruit you see lying by the side of the road.
- Search the Internet for creative ways to use those bits of soap that are too little to use but too big to throw away.
- Recycle the cotton balls that you take from the top of your vitamin bottles.
- When your friend asks you to meet her for lunch, try to talk her into a restaurant she doesn't like because it offers "buy one/get one free" and you can get the free lunch.
- Wear the same clothes three days in a row in order to "get your money's worth" out of the wash.
- Wash and reuse plastic Ziploc bags. I'm proud of the ways my family and I—and you can!—save money. In fact, in my book *Living Rich for Less* (the companion to this book), I tell you not only how to save more than \$30,000 a year by using my *Cha-Ching Factor* tips, I give you great, practical, and easy-to-implement financial principles to live a rich lifestyle. Now, does that sound like living a life filled with trained fish and aluminum foil balls? **WHAT YOU MAKE AND WHAT YOU (DON'T) SAVED**

Did you know that the average American family makes \$48,000 per year, and an amazing 85 percent of the population makes \$100,000 or less? Most of the average folks are living paycheck to paycheck. And in many families, ATM withdrawals account for as much as 20 percent of the month's spending, but they cannot account for a majority of those dollars! They save -0.5 percent. That means most Americans are spending more than they are making. If you're like the average person, you don't pay attention to how much you're spending. Your spending plan is actually, well, not a plan at all. Take a look at the typical family, whom I'll call the Bensons. They are married with children—two, to be exact.

- They live in a modest three-bedroom, two bath home with a yard and a lazy dog.
- They don't have a household budget.
- They have an annual income of \$48,000.
- They owe about \$8,500 in credit card debt.
- They have two car payments.
- They have a thirty-year mortgage.
- Their savings account has less than \$500 in it.
- They have no long-term retirement account.
- They love their kids and want them to go to college.
- They are wondering, Where did all the dough go?

But the really amazing thing about the Bensons is where they think they will be one day. The Bensons believe that one day they are going to earn more money through raises or a better job. They hope they will receive an inheritance or a financial windfall. They figure that someday they will no longer have student loan payments and that childcare costs will go away when the kids are in school—thus cutting down on their monthly expenses. Then they'll finally have some breathing room. They also believe:

- One day they'll have their credit cards paid off.
- One day they'll have a nice savings account.
- One day they'll get a couple of IRAs.
- One day they will be able to send their kids to college and still have a retirement fund for their golden years.

But they have no plan! They think it will "just work out." One day, that is. One fine day. Hello? The hard fact about the Bensons is that if they continue the way they are now, with no real plan, they will:

- Pay five times as much on their house as it is worth (possibly more with the drop in real estate prices and the economy).
- Increase their credit card debt.
- Never get out of consumer debt.
- Get a second mortgage on their home to pay for their kids' college expenses.
- Never acquire enough savings to retire comfortably.
- Always have car payments.
- Never realize their financial goals.

So much for living the American dream, right? You may identify with the Bensons—a little too much! Or maybe you don't quite fit their profile—maybe you're not married, or married

without children, or don't own a house; but you still feel their pain a little too closely. Now may be a good time to take a good, hard, honest look at your spending habits. Ask yourself these questions—and be honest!

- Do my family and I currently live by a clear cut, focused spending plan?
- Do I consistently stick to that plan?
- Do I buy something only because I really need it (not just because I want it)?
- Do I give a portion of my income to my church or a charitable cause?
- Do I have a total consumer debt load of less than 10 percent of my annual income? (For example, if you earn \$50,000 per year, you have a non-mortgage debt load of \$5,000 or less.)
- Do I save at least 10 percent of my income?
- Do I have a savings account with at least two months' worth of income in it?
- Do I own a retirement account or mutual fund of any kind?
- Do I buy something because a commercial convinces me to buy it?

As you answer those questions, you may feel, well, ill. It can be a rude awakening when someone (me!) reminds you of your situation and where you should be. That's okay. The good news is that whatever your marital, housing, or debt situation, you can do something positive. You can change your financial future. The key is to really pay attention to how you spend your money each month. Every month you spend your hard-earned cash on the following things: mortgage/rent and utilities, transportation, food (including dining out), clothing/dry cleaning/other shopping, recreation/entertainment, vacation, gifts, medical/dental/insurance, big ticket items (furniture/appliances), education, pets, credit cards, savings (hopefully!), charitable giving, and other incidentals I didn't include in this list. And every month, if you're like the Bensons, you make the payments without much thought or planning. By picking up this book (along with my other book, *Living Rich for Less*), you've taken the first real steps to changing your future, to taking back control of where your money goes every month. You're going to be amazed by how much surprise money you're about to find. In *Living Rich for Less* I go into detail about what I call a life-changing financial principle, the 10/10/80 Rule; . Wi...