

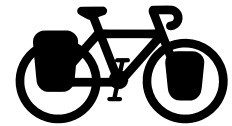
INCENTIVE SAVER NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER 2025

Welcome to this newsletter. I'm so glad spring is virtually here. I know frosty mornings give us fine, clear days but I'm really over frozen fingers and toes biking to work! In this issue we meet Shar, a client I have worked with (on and off) for over 2 years. I think Shar's money journey is inspiring and I hope you do too. I also continue with Atomic Habits (part 2).

I was going to say I'm away 18th Sept – 20 Oct for some biking adventures in Western Australia. However, Dad fell at the weekend and broke his hip (he's 98) so our plans are a bit up in the air. I'll keep you posted.



Nicole (saver) shared their whanau's plan for dealing with Christmas expenses. Each Christmas they camp together as one large group. Nicole has just organised each family to start putting \$5 a week into a shared fund. This will pay for everyone's Christmas kai.

Nicole said the plan would be to keep this \$5 payment going so the following Christmas the money could cover petrol as well as food costs for everyone. As Nicole said, "*we know Christmas comes each year so why not plan ahead*".

Our Latest Finisher

Tina's tip – form a weekly habit, however, do it differently to yield more results i.e. look into term deposits.

Challenge yourself to do more with any additional income.



Newsletter Topic - Meet Shar

People we work with are often much more than clients. Completing the Incentive Saver was only part of Shar's journey and it was achieved towards the end. I recently enticed Shar out for a coffee and asked her to share her story. She did so with openness and honesty. I thank her for that. In this newsletter we share her journey together.

Shar explained that she and her (then) partner were often in the red. *"We made poor choices. We didn't have the money but bought goods on Afterpay, Laybuy, HP etc. It felt good to be buying these things"*. Unfortunately, this meant a lot of bills to be paid and life was a desperate money juggle. Shar said her children never went hungry but she often struggled to buy food for them. It wasn't a nice feeling. In the end, this feeling is what led her to change.



Linda: One of our first sessions involved sitting down and ringing all the debt companies to find out exactly what was owed, interest rates etc. This took courage (and time) but without that knowledge we couldn't make a plan.

The Plan

Due to the high number of secured debts a NAP was out of the question plus Shar was determined to be responsible for her debts. She chose a debt snowball solution. This proved very effective. Months would go by and then I'd hear from Shar again to tackle the next bit of work.



Two things really worked in Shar's favour. '

1. She was always a good payer of bills (sometimes too good I thought!)
2. Shar was determined. She stuck to the plan.

I asked Shar what helped during this time.

- *"Words of encouragement was important and thinking Yes I can do it"*
- During this time Shar separated from her partner which was hard however *"I'm more headstrong when I'm by myself. I'm more in control"*.
- *"Having confidence in myself. People telling me I'm doing good. This keeps me strong and able to say No"*.



Now?

Shar has knocked off a lot of her debts. There are some big ones remaining but she is slowly paying these off. Her credit score isn't where she like it to be but that will change with time. She very rarely uses Afterpay and if she does she pays it off quickly. *"It looks so good when Afterpay is at zero"*.

This year with reduced debt plus getting a part time job Shar felt ready to start the Incentive Saver. *“I was shocked that I had saved so much and kept it!”*

Her advice: *Don't think about it. Just do it. I thought I was going to miss that money but I didn't. It gives people an extra bounce in their step. They can do it and there is light at the end of the tunnel – and its sparkling!*

Shar's long term goal is a holiday in Rarotonga and, like her money situation, she is slowly but surely ticking away at it.

I'll leave Shar with the final word: *“I'm living my life. I'm excited for the future now”.*

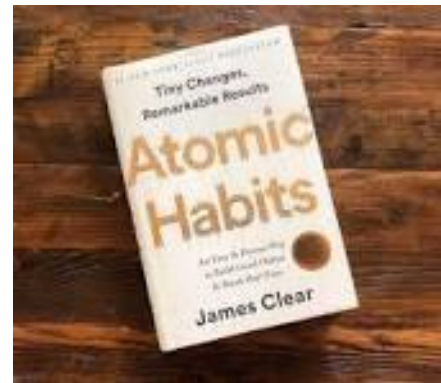


Atomic Habits - Part 2

Missing once is an accident. Missing twice is the start of a new habit.

The first mistake is never the one that ruins you as long as you get back on track.

Last month's key message was about the power of one simple change.



This month: **3 Things Needed to Change a Habit**

Here they are – from least to most important.

1. **Goals** – great for setting a direction. What do you want to achieve? **The boat**

2. **Systems** – How will you do it?

Oars – how you move towards your goal

Bad habits repeat themselves not because you don't want to change but because you have the wrong system for change. If you want better results, then forget about setting goals. Focus on your systems instead.

3. **Identity** – what you believe about yourself/who you wish to become
You can row the boat!



By having small wins with you goals and systems you build up your identity.

Identity examples

a) Let's say you recently stopped smoking. Someone offers you a cigarette. You could say:

“No thanks I'm trying to quit” or (a stronger identity), “No thanks I'm not a smoker”

b) You and a friend go to K Mart. They are encouraging you to buy an item. You could say “I’m trying to save money” or “No thanks - I’m a saver.”

Lastly using our wonderful Shar above. She had :

1. A goal (to get control of her debts)
2. A system (debt snowball)
3. Identity - as Shar’s control over her money increased her belief in her ability to manage money also grew.

How does the Incentive Saver fit in?

It provides a goal, a system, but the real aim of the Incentive Saver scheme is that people identify as long-term savers, and the results show its working!

67 people have finished. 51 have been asked the 6-month follow up questions.

Still saving	42
Saves sometimes	2
Stopped saving	2
No response	5



That’s a whopping 82% still saving 6 months after they have finished the scheme!

Aratupu Preschool Money Chats – Around 9am

- Tuesday 2 September **Children, Chores and Pocket Money**

This is the last Aratupu group money chat for 2025



Resources

Sharenanigans - a fun and competitive Kiwi board game, built with the basic principles of investing in shares at its heart. Thanks Tania (our awesome team lead for CMM Youth Housing) for bringing it to our attention.

<https://www.sharenanigans.co.nz/>



Happy Saving!

Thank you also to those of you who spread the word about Incentive Saver amongst family, friends and clients.

If you are interested to know more about the Incentive Saver scheme or want your name added to the newsletter list just send us an email

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