

INCENTIVE SAVER NEWSLETTER



February/ March 2026

Roll on 2026 for Saving!

It's great to be starting another year with you all on the saving journey. To kick start us here's a (slightly adapted) quote from Moneywise Manawatu

Budgeting. It's not about cutting everything back — it's about creating confidence, clarity, and a pathway toward the life you actually want to live.

We had a big group finish just before Xmas. This isn't surprising as often people make Christmas their saving goal.



A NOTE ON IRREGUAR EXPENSES

As one client said – “*You know Christmas is coming. It happens every year*” and the same applies to birthdays, car rego/WOF, school camps, term lessons i.e. swimming etc. Irregular expenses pop up occasionally during the year yet when they do they normally require a lump sum. When people are setting up a money plan the question often is – how do I allow for this? It's not emergency money and it doesn't quite fit under weekly/fortnight bills.

How do people deal with it?

People tackle these slightly irregular expenses in different ways. Some set up a separate account for each i.e. Xmas, birthdays, car cost, school camp and put away a small amount into each account. Others have one account labelled “Irregular Expenses”, “Back Up”, etc. Some folk do include the costing into their Bills account whilst others find it simpler to combine it with their Emergency account.

There is no right way – but irregular expenses do need to be allowed for in any budget.

Best Saving Trends of 2025

I say the easiest way to save is to set up an auto payment of a small amount of money into a separate account *however* if you want to shake it up a little here are 3 of the most popular ways in 2025 to save money.



1. No Spend Challenge

In this challenge you choose to stop spending on a certain thing i.e. takeaways, clothing (coffee gulp) for a week or month.

2. Loud Budgeting

This method encourages savers to talk openly about their money boundaries instead of opting out or making excuses i.e. friends are going to an expensive restaurant. Instead of saying "I'm busy" or "Maybe next time" you would be open and say "That's not in my budget right now" or "I'm prioritizing saving so I'm skipping expensive outings".

3. Side Hustle

Not new but evidently became quite trendy in 2025. Having a job or hobby that brings in additional income. Often its just 5 -10 hours a week.

Our Savers features in the December RNZ Thrift podcast with Katy Gossett.

Sharon and Terrie were two members of a savings group that ran last year. They kindly agreed to be interviewed for the podcast by Katy Gossett.



In their honest accounts both talk about changes they wanted to make. What struck me the most from this interview was how emotionally hard it can be to put money boundaries in place especially within one's own family/whanau.

It's well worth a listen <https://www.rnz.co.nz/podcast/thrift>

2025 Finishers

Mahana: *"I'm excited! I've never done anything like that before!"*
Those were the words from our latest finisher (in picture).

I wanted to give myself the chance to be able to have some sort of financial head-start. When I first started I checked it all the time. As it grew I didn't so much because it became a habit and I knew it was growing".



Hine – I remember the concept *"What's important to you"* and each time I start to dip into savings for non-necessities I speak out loud that concept to help refocus and carry on.

Sherine – Keep Your end goal in mind

Sharon – shop to a list Needs before wants.

Aroha – Be kind to yourself. Often when we face a difficult time it's hard to see our capabilities or anything positive. Try shifting the focus to what's important and that starts with being kind to yourself.

Erin – Remove the account from the internet banking. Its easier if you can't see it.

Harry – Add the cost of savings to your regular budget and find ways to predict behaviour

Ixchel – be consistent, get into the routine and don't miss payments.

Rosco – Having a goal and resisting temptation and - you can't be half hearted about it.

Debt Collecting Company Name Change



From October 2025 **Debtworks** will be operating under the name **Indebted**
(they often collect on behalf of telco companies, Waka Kotahi etc)

Resources

1. **Netsafe Spot a Scam** is great option to check a suspicious link. Simply copy the suspicious link and paste into the Netsafe Spot a Scam web page and it will tell you if it is a scam or not: <https://checknetsafe.nz>



2. **No Stupid Questions** - RNZ podcast with Money Correspondent Susan Edmunds
<https://www.rnz.co.nz/podcast/no-stupid-questions>

FYI: Work day change: My days of work are now Mon, Tues and Thurs

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

Linda Smith Financial Mentor 027 818 7116 lindas@mmsi.org.nz

Mike King Financial Mentor 027 2604403 mike.king@mmsi.org.nz

If you no longer wish to receive newsletters from me please reply with “unsubscribe” in the subject line.

NEWSLETTER LINK

There is now a link to all newsletters on CMM website <https://www.mmsi.org.nz/What-We-Do/Work-with-Adults-Parents-Whanau/>