



2010

2009 was marked with record unemployment, financial problems and it looks like we are starting the year on a rough beginning. The state of Oklahoma predicts record short falls in funding yet people still have to work and feed their families. What should we be doing to make it during a recession? Even if you think you will be fine -- and especially if you aren't quite sure -- there are some smart **personal finance** moves that you can make during a recession. These are things that can help you extend your money supply and improve your cash flow. And you can continue practicing these personal finance principles even after the recession ends. It never hurts to start preparing for the next down turn. Miranda Mirquit from *All Business* gives the following advice:

1. **Track your spending.** Know what you are spending your money on. Be aware that some of the little things, added up and compounded, can take a big bite out of your finances. Also, make a note of *where* you do your spending and *what* you use to pay. Paying with credit card (and carrying the balance) means that even more of your money is going elsewhere.
2. **Identify your problem areas.** Do you buy more when something is on discount? Do you look for deals and then buy just to buy? Do you have a weakness for certain products? Figure out what you are spending the most on, and why. And then consciously make an effort to improve.
3. **Prioritize your spending, cutting out most of the unnecessary.** Decide what is really important to you. Now that you've tracked your spending and found your weak spots, you can create a spending plan that addresses these issues and makes sure that you cover the important things first. (Hint: some sort of savings is one of the most important spending priorities.)
4. **Save a little.** During a recession, you may not be able to save as much as you would like. However, you should do what you can to set as much as you can aside. Work toward building up your emergency fund.
5. **Stop adding to your debt.** Even if you don't have money to spare for aggressive debt reduction, you can still stop digging the hole deeper. Arrange your spending plan so that you cut out the waste and the excess so that you don't "need" to turn to credit cards. And, of course, if you have a little bit that you can use to pay down your debt, that's even better.

A solid financial future is based on **taking responsibility for your personal finance situation** and responding with appropriate action. Even during a recession, there are things that you can do to position yourself for a better future.

FREE DENTAL CARE

The Oklahoma Mission of Mercy (OkMOM) is offering a free, two-day dental clinic open to people of all ages and backgrounds. It is specifically designed for people that are uninsured, underinsured, or would otherwise not be able to seek dental care.

Location: Tulsa Convention Center

Dates: February 5 & 6, 2010

State Time: Doors will open each day at 5AM.

End Time: Doors will close each day when we reach capacity

(Capacity is estimated at 1,000 patients per day)

What services will be available?

The team of volunteer dentists will determine your OkMOM treatment plan when you arrive. Your plan may include:

1. Restorations (Fillings)
2. Extractions
3. Cleanings
4. Root Canals

How Do I Qualify/Registration?

The first 1,000 people through the doors each day qualify. It's that easy.

1. No Pre-registration
2. No Prequalification
3. No Payments or Insurance Required



TRIVIA TIME

This past Monday the United States observed **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** marking the birth date of Rev. King. Martin Luther King Jr. Day is observed on the third Monday of January each year, around the time of King's birthday, January 15. It is one of four United States federal holidays to commemorate an individual person; who do the other three holidays honor?