



# FOCUS Institute

*Leading Individuals, Families and Organizations in Continuous Improvement*

## Typical Success Stories

### Financial Freedom Plan

#### **Just in Time**

A family came to us because they had a lot of credit card debt and were having trouble making their monthly payments. We negotiated with their creditors to get interest rates reduced and past due charges stopped. Fortunately we were able to help them get some debts paid in full within the first 6 months because the wife lost her job and took a new job that paid less. Because some debts were paid off, they were still able to pay all of their financial obligations even with the reduced income.

#### **Getting Her Children Back**

We have licensed counselors offering all types of counseling for individuals and families as well as employee assistance programs for businesses. Sometimes people come to us for other problems but it becomes obvious that personal finances are contributing factors. Recently a lady came in for help with a drinking problem that had contributed to her losing custody of her children. The alcohol problem had also resulted in a lot of debt for fines and legal fees and made it financially impossible to rent her own house in order to get the children back. While one counselor worked with her on the addiction, one of our financial coaches helped her get her personal finances in order so she could rent a house and provide a standard of living acceptable for getting her children back. She now has custody of her children, is completely out of debt and continues to let us help her stay current on all of her bills and contribute to a savings program each month.

#### **California or Bust**

A family who had used our Financial Freedom Plan for several months came in to pick up money we had been saving each month for them in an escrow account for their vacation. The next morning they called to say they started to California when the car broke down and needed repairs totaling about \$500. They borrowed a car and were going to continue on their vacation, but it was obvious they were very worried about how they were going to pay for the repairs when they got back. I reminded them we were saving money each month for them in the escrow account for a variety of expenses like out of pocket medical and car repairs. They were thrilled to learn that there was enough money in the escrow to cover the car repairs. They could now continue the vacation without worrying about the repair bill when they returned.

#### **Debt Free!**

For the last 2 years Focus Institute has had the privilege of working with a wonderful couple who came to us very distressed by financial problems. They both had good jobs but their above average income was off set by a lot of debt. They owed almost as much in high interest credit card debt as they owed on their home. They had managed to stay current on their payments but instead of getting out of debt, they were going deeper in debt. This was especially worrisome to them because they were in their mid 50's, both had some pretty significant health problems and they were looking forward to the reduced income of retirement with a lot of anxiety. They could not imagine how they could start getting out of debt or how they would survive financially in retirement. We explained the personal financial coaching we offer and our Financial Freedom Plan. We were able to help them develop a plan for continuing to pay their financial obligations on time each month but also start getting out of debt rather than increasing debt each month. The plan also included saving money each month for such things as car repairs, out of pocket medical expenses, Christmas gifts and anything else that was not a regular monthly expense but was sure to occur over time. They were surprised to see that in their case this could all be done without any significant sacrifice in the area of such variable expenses as food, recreation, car gas, charitable giving and the broad category of miscellaneous expenses. To help insure the successful implementation of this plan, they chose to pay a small monthly fee to have us payroll deduct some money each month from their checks and pay all their debt payments, utilities, insurances and other regular obligations as well as save the calculated amount in an escrow account discussed above for those things that have unpredictable timing and usually come at the worst possible moment. We stayed in close contact to see that the amount they still received in their pay checks adequately covered what I referred to above as the variable expenses of food, car gas, recreation and miscellaneous expenditures.

It is now 2 years later and some wonderful things have happened; things this couple never dreamed possible when they first sought our help. In six months the last credit card will be paid off and nearly \$700 a month that in the past was used to make payments on the credit card debt can be applied to their house payment, saved for retirement, used to increase their standard of living or more likely, a combination of all three. Thinking about retirement is now a happy and exciting thought.

***Give Focus Institute a call to find out how we can help you and your family accomplish similar things with your personal finances. See how our Financial Freedom Plan can not only produce financial relief but also have an important positive effect on your emotional health and the joy of your marriage and family.***