WOMEN'S FINANCIAL LITERACY CAFÉ

9-week Journal

Adult Literacy is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union

Contents

Welcome

Welcome to the Waterford Financial Literacy Café – a space to improve your knowledge and skills in managing your finances, and to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

Over the next 8-9 weeks, we will cover topics that we hope are relevant and helpful. We hope that you will enjoy the programme and we will all get to know one another a little better.

This program is co-hosted by Waterford City & County Libraries and Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board. Funding has been provided by the Irish Government and the European Union under the Adult Literacy for Life scheme, delivered on behalf of the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission.

The programme is structured so that, if you miss one session, it's possible to pickup the next session. While we would love to see you every week, we know that there are times when you may need to miss a session.

There are several pages in this journal where you can keep notes for each week. You might like to make notes on what's been covered, and to keep a journal for that week, maybe tracking your spending day by day – it's always useful to write this down.

- What did I spend today?
- How did I feel about it?
- What did I learn?

Week 1: Introduction - Introduction to Financial Literacy

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: What is financial literacy
- Objective 2: Understand personal goals and money attitudes
- Objective 3: My why

Recap of lesson – Week 1

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 1

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 1

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 2: Spending and Budgeting

Theme Description – Mastering your money flow

Effective spending management is crucial for achieving your financial goals. We explored:

- **Tracking and Analyzing Expenses:** Simple methods to monitor where your money goes, identify spending patterns, and find areas for optimization.
- **Budgeting for Real Life:** Creating a realistic budget that aligns with your values and lifestyle, without feeling restrictive.
- **Mindful Spending:** Developing habits that promote conscious spending and help you differentiate between needs and wants.
- **Cost-Saving Strategies:** Practical tips for reducing household expenses, managing utilities, and finding value in everyday purchases.

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: How to create a budget
- Objective 2: Fixed vs variable expenses
- Objective 3: Emergency Funds
- Objective 4: Avoiding overspending
- Objective 5: Shopping around, tools for switching

Weekly Exercises

Keep a hand-written spending journal

Draw up a budget

What are the 'big spends' in your budget? (house insurance, car insurance, NCT, car tax, electricity, gas, broadband, mobile,….).

Some may be outside your control, e.g. might not be possible to change electricity supplier if using a pre-pay meter.

Could you get a better price by shopping around?

Recap of lesson – Week 2

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week2

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 2

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 3: Banking and Smart Spending

Theme Description – Banks account, digital banking

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: Types of bank accounts (current, savings, credit union)
- Objective 2: Debit vs Credit Cards
- Objective 3: Online banking and mobile apps
- Objective 4: Savings accounts and compound interest

Being aware of spending – the value of cash! Avoiding the triggers which encourage you to part with your money

Weekly Exercises

Recap of lesson – Week 3

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week3

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 3

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 4: Borrowing Wisely – Credit and Loans

Theme Description

Write a short description about this week's focus.

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: What is credit
- Objective 2: Types of loans (personal, student, car, mortgage, buy now, pay later BNPL)
- Objective 3: How to find the best loan online
- Objective 4: Responsible borrowing

Recap of lesson – Week 4

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 4

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 4

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 5: Saving, Investing and Pensions

Theme Description

Building a secure financial future requires smart saving and investing. We discussed:

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: Understanding the importance of saving
- Objective 2: Identifying your financial goals
- Objective 3: Creating a realistic monthly savings plan
- Objective 4: Savings options – banks, credit unions, budgeting tools

The role of pensions, and how to check your pensions contribution history

- **Setting Financial Goals:** Defining short-term, medium-term, and long-term financial objectives (e.g., emergency fund, homeownership, retirement).
- **What are your savings and pensions needs?:** What will be your retirement age? How will you fund your retirement? Will you keep working? Will you have passive income (income which doesn't require you to exchange your time for money)?
- **Saving Strategies:** Practical approaches to build savings, including automated savings, sinking funds, and finding extra money to save.
- **Pensions in Ireland:** Checking your PRSI record, will you be eligible for state pension? Contributory? Non-contributory?

Recap of lesson – Week 5

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 5

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 5

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 6: Consumer Rights – Avoiding Frauds and Scams

Theme Description

Write a short description about this week's focus.

Learning Objectives

- Objective 1: Consumer Protection Laws
- Objective 2: Avoiding Scams and Fraud
- Objective 3: Digital Wallets and contactless payments

Recap of lesson – Week 6

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 6

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 6

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 7: Bringing It All Together

Theme Description

A chance to recap on the programme weeks so far, answer any outstanding questions, and talk about your follow-on steps.

Think about questions you might want to ask our guest speaker next week. MABS will be giving a talk in the final week so there may even be questions for them!

Recap of lesson – week 7

What did we cover?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 7

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 7

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**
8	

Week 8: Guest Speaker

Theme Description

The guest speaker, Melissa Boyle, has extensive qualifications and experience in personal finance, and hosts a podcast 'Master My Balance'. This focusses on real-life issues and interviews experts who help with overcoming financial challenges.

Recap of lesson – Week 8

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 8

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 8

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Week 9: Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)

Theme Description

Recap of lesson – Week 9

What did we cover this week?	What will I focus on?

Daily Journal Prompts – Week 9

Mon			
Tues			
Weds			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Weekly Reflection – Week 9

- What was the most important insight I had this week?
- What will I do differently next week?
- What questions do I still have?

What did we cover this week?	What questions do I have?
Reflections and Thoughts	**One Thing I'm proud of**

Resources

Topic / Support	Organisation	Contact / Website
Debt Advice & Budgeting	MABS – Money Advice & Budgeting Service	📞 0818 07 2000 🌐 www.mabs.ie
	Waterford MABS	📞 0818 07 2510 📍 1st Floor, 111 The Quay, Waterford
General Information & Welfare Rights	Citizens Information	📞 0818 07 4000 🌐 www.citizensinformation.ie
Credit Ratings & Reports	Central Credit Register	🌐 www.centralcreditregister.ie
State Pensions Contributions	MyWelfare – PRSI Contribution Statement	Mywelfare.ie
Pensions Guidance & Regulation	The Pensions Authority	🌐 www.pensionsauthority.ie
Domestic Violence & Support Services	Women's Aid (National Helpline)	📞 1800 341 900 (24/7) 🌐 www.womensaid.ie

Topic / Support	Organisation	Contact / Website
	Safe Ireland (find local refuge)	www.safeireland.ie
Local Community Supports	Waterford Area Partnership	051 841740 www.wap.ie
Local Financial Support	Waterford Credit Union	051 861 600 www.waterfordcu.ie
Social Protection & Entitlements	Deptartment of Social Protection	www.gov.ie/dsp
Podcasts	Master My Balance (Melissa Boyle)	

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