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Cartoon: Exchange Rate



**Exchange Rate:** The price of one country's currency expressed in another country's currency.



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### Book Review The Recovering Spender By Lauren Greutman

For far too many people, being rudely awakened from the American Dream is synonymous with being mired in debt.

But it doesn't have to be like that.

In "The Recovering Spender," Lauren Greutman draws on her own life experience to teach invaluable lessons about living within your means.

To outsiders, Lauren and her husband, Mark, appeared as though they were living a charmed life. As she says, "On the surface, we had it all. Custom home, luxury cars, beautiful babies, and all the bells and whistles..." But disaster lurked beneath the surface.

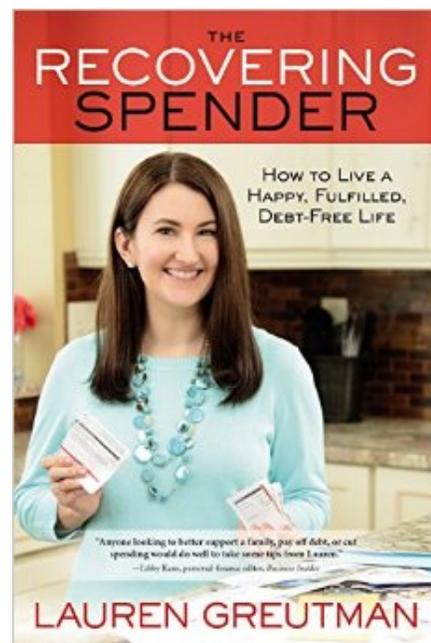
Though the Greutmans seemed like they had more than enough for all their necessities and many luxuries, they were living way beyond their means simply to keep up with the neighbors. Too soon, they found themselves with a mortgage that had not been paid in months, their car seized and sky-high debt that reached \$40,000.

Their dream had become an awful nightmare.

Through a long journey of recreating their relationship with money and spending, the Greutmans arrived at where they are today: back in the black and fully committed to spending less while living within their budget.

In "The Recovering Spender," Greutman details the steps she and her family took to pull it off. She shares her hard-earned tips and practical advice to help others who find themselves ending each month with a deficit that keeps growing.

Lauren also shares many of her personal struggles in ways relatable to readers to help them learn from her mistakes. It's easier for an over-stressed mom who never feels like she can stretch the dollar far enough to take tips from another mom who's been there, than it is to heed advice from a financial



expert who's never experienced anxiety about being able to pay for groceries.

The book also takes readers through the process of going from being in the red to living completely debt-free, offering a step-by-step guide with actions readers can take immediately as they work their way through the book.

Some of the actionable chapters in the book include:

1. Take an Inventory of Your Spending.
2. Declutter Your Finances.
3. Do an Expense Audit.
4. Curb Your Spending and Define Your Values.

Most importantly, "The Recovering Spender" is a guide for getting off the path of debt, and living happily within your means.



**DTI**

The Debt-to-Income Ratio (DTI) is the **most important factor lenders use to measure** an individual's ability to make monthly payments. It is calculated by dividing total monthly debt payments by monthly income. It is expressed as a percentage.

## College Credit: Summer Semester Fun

Here's a real brainteaser for you: Flip-flops, sunscreen, iced coffees and textbooks - which of these is not like the others?



If you're one of the thousands of college students staying on for the summer semester, this assortment may accurately describe your summer plans.

It's great that you're choosing the summer months to catch up with or get ahead of your schoolwork. But is there a way to keep on top of your studies while still making time for some much-needed fun in the sun?

You bet there is! Here's how:

### 1.) Study outdoors

Yes, you'll need to spend lots of time buried in your textbooks this summer. No, that doesn't mean you need to be cooped up indoors while the rest of the world is enjoying the sunshine. Grab your books and some friends to initiate a study session at an outdoor cafe, a grassy park, a scenic waterfront or even the beach. Bring sunglasses, cold drinks, a good set of notes and your best highlighter. Then, get your work done while still enjoying summer!

## 2.) Hike and learn

Hiking is a fantastic way to stay in shape and have some outdoor fun. But, did you know it can also be a great time to study? It's true - all you need is a pair of earbuds! Plug into a recorded lecture you'd love to review or even an online video that offers more information on a subject you're studying and hit the trails. You'll absorb information while giving yourself a physical challenge and getting lots of fresh air.

## 3.) Make the most of weekends

Even the busiest student has some free time. Instead of crashing, plan those spare hours well. Use them for a full-day's trip to a nearby amusement park, beach or another local getaway. One day of pure fun will give you the boost you need for another week of hard work! Maybe even two!

## 4.) Take a road trip

With stacks of papers to write and exams to cram for, you might think that endless road trips are an impossible summer dream. Think again!

While you can't take off for a cross-country drive when you need to be in class early the next morning, you can still pack into the car with a bunch of friends and hit the road without neglecting your schoolwork. Just turn the trip into a study session! You can have one friend serve as "lecturer" by reading their notes aloud. You and your friends can audibly hear and absorb as you wind around impossible bends and past mountains or meadows. Alternatively, pop a recorded lecture into your car's MP3 player and let the words sink in as you cruise.

## 5.) Take time to chill

To avoid total burnout, squeeze some downtime into your daily schedule. Grab an early morning bike ride, take a quick jog after your classes or indulge in a stop at the local ice cream shop before tackling your homework. You'll be glad you did. Even if it's just a 10-minute break at the neighborhood park, those few minutes of airing out will give you the fuel you need to hit the books and keep going.



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