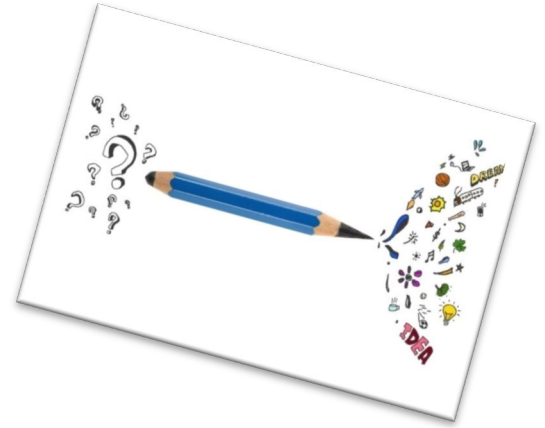# *When Your Income Drops*

## Sharpen Your Survival Skills

Challenging times can wear us down. There are so many decisions to make and the answers are often not clear.

Pause and take time to write out some simple possibilities that allow you to **economize** - *using what you have for the most good* in terms of meeting your needs and wants.

Recognize that you may have a wide variety of resources beyond finances to work with: knowledge, skills, energy, personal property, personal connections, community resources, home, special interests or hobbies, collections, time, tools, and/or technology devises.

To economize, think of ways to:

- **_Substitute_** less costly resources for more costly ones: walk instead of drive, play board games instead of watching costly cable-on-demand movies, plan purchases instead of items bought on impulse. Use creativity with the ingredients you have when preparing a meal.
- **_Conserve_** your resources and avoid waste: repair clothing rather than replace, control thermostat settings, use older food first, and protect what you have through proper care.
- **_Use_** resources in new ways: plant a garden in containers, learn a new skill through the internet, and identify new ways to use items as on Pinterest, create a compost pile.
- **_Cooperate_** with others to multiply your resources, even if it needs to be done in nontraditional ways via phone or computer: swap items or services, check out community resources, and work together as a family to divide tasks.

If there are multiple people in the household, be sure to talk about options by brainstorming ideas, evaluating which are best alternatives to try, and developing a plan for implementation. This encourages greater cooperation in reaching your goals to economize.

Yes, you may need to make changes from how you have done things in the past to economize. That is part of the sharpening process.

Your survival skills work best when they are sharpened by thinking matters through and developing a plan which you can work on together!