BRENTHURST GLOBAL WEALTH

INVEST BETTER with BRENTHURST
BUILDING WEALTH SINCE 2004

IN THIS ISSUE

Coping with rising household costs starts with understanding exactly where your money goes and making deliberate choices to stretch every rand - from cutting avoidable expenses to reducing costly debt and building a buffer. At the same time, increasing your earning power through new skills or additional income can create breathing room despite inflation.

JHB (HQ)	+27 (0) 11 799 8100
JHB (SANDTON)	+27 (0) 10 035 1391
PTA	+27 (0) 12 347 8240
CAPE TOWN	+27 (0) 21 418 1236
BELLVILLE	+27 (0) 21 914 9646
CLAREMONT	+27 (0) 21 100 3901
STELLENBOSCH	+27 (0) 21 882 8706
PAARL (VAL DE VIE)	+27 (0) 21 100 3901
GEORGE	+27 (0) 44 050 6057
MAURITIUS	+ 230 5843 5215

7 WAYS TO FIGHT THE RISING COST OF LIVING

LESLIE GREYLING | REGISTERED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, BRENTHURST FOURWAYS

The finance minister may have given households some breathing space in the budget, but if your debit orders still weigh you down and your grocery bill keeps surprising you, you're not alone. Because the cost of living is not just about the inflation rate, it's about what it costs to run your life – electricity prices that climb sharply every year, rates and taxes that never seem to shrink, medical aid increases and school fees that only move in one direction.

So how do you respond without feeling defeated? Here are seven practical ways to take back control.

1. KNOW YOUR REAL MONTHLY NUMBER

Many South Africans live with a constant sense of pressure because they don't know what it truly costs to run their household.

So, I suggest that you sit down and work out your essential monthly spend. Once you know that number, you can stop guessing. And when you stop guessing, you can start making decisions with greater confidence.

2. TAKE A HARD LOOK AT YOUR GROCERY STRATEGY

Food prices, especially meat and staples, have been volatile, which means that walking into the supermarket without a plan can quickly become expensive.

My suggestion is to plan your meals for the week because this helps you shop with a list and stick to it. Other ways to stay financially disciplined is to swop premium brands for house brands, where it makes sense, and bulk cook so that you can use leftovers more creatively, while reducing waste.

3. MANAGE ELECTRICITY LIKE IT IS PART OF YOUR INVESTMENT PLAN

We all know the pain brought on by electricity and municipal rates and taxes that have increased well above inflation over the years. You might not be able to control the tariff, but you can control consumption.

Tips that help my clients cut their bills include smarter use of their geyser, which is the biggest consumer of power every day. Also, use common-sense steps, such as switching off appliances at the wall, using energy-efficient light bulbs and tracking your usage instead of waiting for an account shock.

Small behavioural shifts can really soften the impact of rising tariffs.

4. GET SERIOUS ABOUT EXPENSIVE DEBT

Interest rates may be decreasing, but debt still carries a high cost which quickly eats into your disposable income, if you're not careful. Credit cards, short-term loans and high-end vehicle financing are the biggest culprits in many households.

If you're carrying debt, I suggest looking to pay off the highest interest-bearing debt balance first. And for your long-term sanity, try avoiding debt to fund everyday expenses, such as groceries or clothing.

5. REVIEW EVERY DEBIT ORDER

Subscriptions and service fees have a way of quietly slipping into your life. A streaming service here, a gym contract there or a bank account you no longer really use.

Individually, they don't feel dramatic, but together they can quietly eat away at your cash.

I recommend sitting down once a year to go through your bank statement line by line. Ask yourself whether each debit order still serves a purpose in your life. If it doesn't, cancel it. If it does, consider whether you're paying a competitive rate.

And remember this: saving R500 a month might not feel life changing, but that's R6 000 a year. Invested consistently, that money does not just lie there, it grows over time. Small, reclaimed amounts can become meaningful capital.

6. PROTECT YOUR EMERGENCY FUND

When the cost of living rises, there's less room to absorb surprises. And life, as you know, does not stop delivering them.

That's why an emergency fund is not something you build only when times are good. It's something you protect, especially when times are tight.

Ideally, you'd want to set aside three to six months of essential expenses in an accessible account.

They key is to remember that an emergency fund isn't idle money, it's protection against future surprises. It not only buys you time, but protects your long-term investments from being raided when something unexpected happens.

Most importantly, it protects your sense of control.

7. LOOK FOR WAYS TO GROW YOUR INCOME

There's a practical limit to how much you can cut from your expenses. Income growth, on the other hand, offers you far more leverage.

Ask yourself honestly: is there a skill, qualification or experience you have that could generate additional income? Could you consult after hours? Tutor? Take on project-based remote work? Monetise a hobby?

An extra R2 000 per month may not sound spectacular, but over a year that totals R24 000. That amount can offset school fee increases, absorb rising municipal fees, or accelerate debt repayments.

Hopefully these pointers help to give you a greater sense of control over your household budget and how you manage expenses. If you're still unsure where to begin, it helps to speak to a qualified financial adviser who is able to prioritise and build a plan that reflects your specific circumstances and long-term goals.

My advice is that your financial progress doesn't have to stall just because the cost of living is rising. With clarity, structure and deliberate action, you can continue moving forward, steadily and confidently.

LESLIE GREYLING | FINANCIAL ADVISOR, BWM FOURWAYS

LESLIE joined Brenthurst Wealth Management in 2018 as a risk and investment adviser. Leslie obtained her National Certificate in Financial Services, Wealth Management, in 2014 and she has been in the financial services industry since 1998. She is a REGISTERED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and a member of the Financial Planning Institute of SA and is fully qualified to give advice on all aspects of investments, retirement planning and life cover, which includes personal and business assurance.

PHONE: +27 (0) 11 799 8100 | **EMAIL:** leslie@brenthurstwealth.co.za

CONTACT ANY OF OUR HIGHLY QUALIFIED FINANCIAL ADVISORS AT OUR NINE OFFICES COUNTRYWIDE TO DISCUSS YOUR INVESTMENT STRATEGY.

EMAIL US: invest@brenthurstwealth.co.za

Johannesburg	+27 (0) 11 799 8100	**Claremont**	+27 (0) 21 100 3901	**SATELLITE OFFICES:**	
Sandton	+27 (0) 10 035 1391	**Bellville**	+27 (0) 21 914 9646	**KZN: Arin Ruttenberg**	+27 84 582 8581
Pretoria	+27 (0) 12 347 8240	**Stellenbosch**	+27 (0) 21 882 8706	**FREE STATE: Iniel Van Zyl**	+27 72 298 3212
CPT Waterfront	+27 (0) 21 418 1236	**Val de Vie Estate**	+27 (0) 21 100 3901	**NORTH WEST: Maria Smit**	+27 79 696 6860
George	+27 (0) 44 050 6057	**Mauritius**	+230 5843 5215	**MPUMALANGA: Marise Reinach**	+27 72 795 3604