The 3 Bucket Budgeting Method

1. Essentials

These are non-negotiables:

- Housing & utilities
- Groceries
- School/childcare
- Elder-care support
- Transport
- Debt payments

These costs show you your **true baseline**—what you *must* cover before anything else.



2. Future Security

This includes:

- Workplace pension contributions
- Personal savings
- Emergency fund
- Insurance

Even small, consistent contributions matter. The goal is:

Pay yourself like a bill. Even £10–£25 /week builds long-term security.



3. Life & Family

This is everything that makes life *workable* and *joyful*:

- Kids' activities
- Days out
- Hobbies
- Self-care
- Family support gifts
- Convenience spending (takeaways, taxis, after-school care).

Tracking this area—even loosely—can unlock meaningful savings.



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