

When Bird & Budgets Collide

Learn how to save without sacrificing your bird's well-being

By Dr. Barbara Nefer

Finances can be fragile even in the best of times. When the economy is weak, it adds another layer of pressure. If you're facing financial hardship, you're probably struggling to make lifestyle changes and cutbacks. You might even be draining your bank account or maxing out the charge cards to pay basic living expenses. As your stress level skyrockets, the side effects are no doubt spilling over onto the rest of the family.

Lack of money impacts your avian family members, too. When you are under stress, the emotional turmoil can color your interactions with your birds. You might be more abrupt with them as worries weigh down your mind. You might not be able to give them as much attention as usual because you're struggling to work more hours.

Most birds are comforted by routine and consistency. They don't understand a financial crisis. They only know that the mood in their household has changed and that they're not getting as much human interaction. Some birds are resilient, especially if the situation is temporary. Others are more sensitive, and they might respond to the tense atmosphere by screaming, biting or becoming territorial. In the worst case, they could develop neurotic behaviors, like plucking.

****For the full article, pick up the February 2009 issue of BIRD TALK****

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