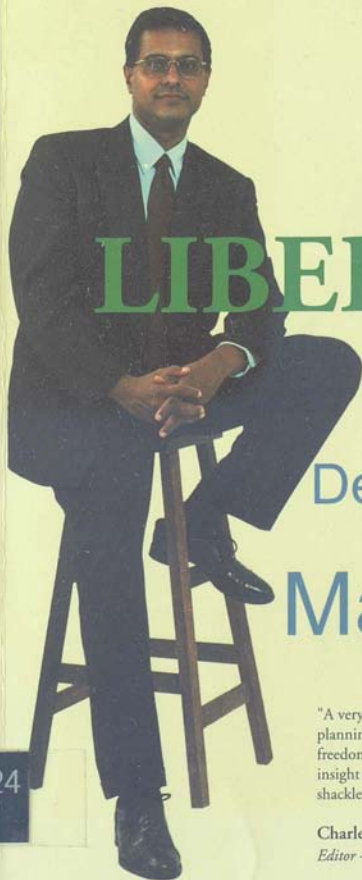


RAJEN DEVADASON



LIBERTY!

From
Debt-Slave
to Money
Master

"A very useful and practical book on planning and achieving your financial freedom. Rajen has provided an interesting insight on how to save yourself from the shackles of debt."

Charles Raj

Editor - Malaysian Business magazine

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April 5th 2002

Dear Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir,

I do hope you
enjoy reading my
latest book.

Best wishes and
warm regards,

Riza Deraban

P.S. My father was most
insistent that I
send this to you!
hope you like it!

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“Truly a book for Malaysians by a Malaysian. *Liberty!* is simple to read and yet packed with a substantial amount of practical advice to get you out of debt and back in the control seat of your finances!”

– **Wong Boon Choy**, Senior General Manager,
Kuala Lumpur Mutual Fund Bhd

“Sound advice and well-written. Rajen’s book is for everybody. Read it and prosper.”

– **Chris Boyd**, Executive Chairman,
Regroup Associates (Property Consultants)

“It is a fun to read book that will assist every individual to plan and manage his debts and financial affairs in an effective manner.”

– **Bhupinder Singh**, Executive Director,
Arthur Andersen & Co.

“In *Liberty!* Rajen has successfully identified the key issues facing Malaysians trapped in a pit of debt. In simple language, Rajen makes it clear that while there is no quick fix, it is possible to gain wise counsel. His book extends a lifesaving rope of great hope to those eager to get out from under the weight of stifling debt. So, to all who for one reason or another are lugging a mountain of IOUs on their too-frail shoulders, get a copy. I think no Malaysian home should be without one. And if you’re an employer who truly cares for his staff, tell them about *Liberty!* The ensuing calm (from extricating themselves from debt) will yield happier workers and vastly increased productivity!”

– **Iszudin Mohd Amin**, Editor,
Akauntan Nasional

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Other books by Rajen Devadason

***Your A-Z Guide to the Stock Market
And All You Need to Know About Capital Terms***

Financial Freedom -

Your Guide to Lifetime Financial Planning
(Co-authored with Edmond Cheah, Wong Boon Choy
and Alex Sito)

Financial Freedom 2 -

Through Malaysian Equities and Unit Trusts
(Co-authored with Edmond Cheah and Wong Boon Choy)

The Sabahan -

The Life and Death of Tun Fuad Stephens
(Co-authored with P J Granville-Edge)



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LIBERTY!

FROM DEBT-SLAVE TO MONEY MASTER



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LIBERTY!

From Debt-Slave to Money Master

By Rajen Devadason

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MALAYSIA



Living with out of control debt is not something anyone should take lightly. That's why this book's been written. Its sole purpose for existence is helping people. Therefore, every effort has been made to ensure the veracity of the principles and strategies taught through these stories.

But each reader – be he a genuine buyer, a bookstore browser or a library borrower – must realise that the contents serve ONLY as a general guide to those who hunger after a debt-free life. Because every person's specific situation is different, you would be wise to seek the counsel of experts in applying these principles to formulate concrete strategies to achieve your objectives. You wouldn't use a kitchen knife to perform brain surgery any more than you would try to cross the South China Sea in a bathtub. Similarly, please remember that this is meant to be a fun-to-read educational book. It is NOT a customised vehicle of direct debt management. Use it well.

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First Edition, March 2002

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From the Author

*To Janaki Devadason and Rachel Devadason,
who love me unconditionally, and keep me functional.*

*And to Jesus Christ, who wipes away
all debts more critical than mere
financial ones.*

From the Publisher

*To Tan Peck Yean,
whose entire existence epitomises
a debt-free lifestyle.*

*To Beh Choon Poh and Ryan M Y Poh,
whom I love with all my heart.*

Joint Dedication

*To M P Ranganathan,
a dedicated teacher of the
highest calibre.*



Foreword

Our destinies started to intertwine almost a quarter of a century ago. Rajen Devadason and I studied at Malacca High School, which celebrated its 175th anniversary recently. For our tertiary education, our paths diverged. He went to England and I went to Southeast Missouri and Southern Illinois, both deep in America's heartland. Years later, our paths converged again as colleagues in Berita Publishing, then a subsidiary of The New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd. From then on, we have been working together, in one way or another.

When Rajen suggested to me that i2Media publish this book some months back, I told him it had been on my mind as well. After all, the Media Division of i2Media is also about content development (and publishing this book would definitely add to its repertoire) even though a good chunk of its business is currently in communications management. And Rajen is an accomplished author (this is his fifth book). Hence, publishing his latest book sounded like a good idea, but a scary one no doubt, especially in Malaysia. But, that's another story.

Why a book on personal debt restructuring? I personally believe debt management is a critical asset for the modern man. Even so, this knowledge is a discipline that is little understood in our day and age, especially with the proliferation of credit cards.

Many believe in the theory but few have come to grips with how to actually live a debt-free life. Others simply lack the willpower. Successful individuals build a lifestyle that fosters a mindset and a desire to keep debt at bay and to ensure it is efficiently managed and retired. So if you want to be successful at living a debt-free or close to debt-free life, you must do three simple things, as the subsequent pages of this book will reveal:

- 1. Change your mindset. Perpetual debt is not OK*
- 2. Don't spend money simply because you have it*
- 3. Always save money if you have it*

Now this is not a book that tells you how to be a millionaire. It is, however, a book that outlines for you the strategies for achieving a debt-free lifestyle. By living debt-free, the possibility of becoming a true millionaire is real. And even if you don't become a millionaire, you will live a richer and fuller life because you won't have debts plaguing your mind and your balance sheet. Learn well from the experiences of Shankar, Iskandar and Weng Yang. It's much cheaper that way. This is an important book for anyone who is resolute about gaining financial freedom and leading a debt-free life. In short, it's for anyone craving after genuine financial LIBERTY!

Steven K C Poh

February 2002

Acknowledgements

I am indebted (but, thankfully, not financially!) to Steven Poh, Daniel Tsen and Jonathan Ng of i2Media for trusting me enough to write the book earmarked to launch their company into the exciting, scary world of publishing. (Steven and I hope to work together on a much larger book within a year.)

My heartfelt gratitude goes out to Wong Boon Choy, my co-author of two earlier books, Financial Freedom – Your Guide to Lifetime Financial Planning and Financial Freedom 2 – Through Malaysian Equities and Unit Trusts, both published by Kuala Lumpur Mutual Fund Bhd, for his insights into the book production process and for being a mentor in more ways than he can know.

A shorter version of each of the stories you'll read within these pages was first published online by Malaysian financial portal zoomFinance (www.zoomfinance.com) in my erstwhile column Net Worth. Many people at zoomFinance contributed to getting those columns out into cyberspace; they all thus should share in the afterglow of heart-warming reader responses I've consistently received. I thank all zoomFinance staff, past and present, but would like to single out Foong Weng Keat, Por Yong Liang, Killian Tan and Ivy Chua for specific thanks. Please do know that what you did, you did well!

Moving from the professional arena to my private sphere, I'd like to thank Cherry and Godwin Tan, my in-laws, for regular weekend meals and, more importantly, for the life of my loving and breathtakingly lovely wife Rachel Devadason. And, Rachel, thank you for putting up with my insane work schedule, and for always being there to pick up the pieces when I worked myself sick. I don't know what I'd do without you, and I don't ever want to find out.

My mother Janaki Devadason has been a consistent supporter and my biggest fan all my life – (Mummy, I may not be much good at verbalising this, so let me write this down: Whatever accomplishments I have enjoyed have been God-given. But they have also, just as truly, been earned at the altar of the sacrifices you made; I thank you and I love you very, very, very much!)

I must thank my sister Viji Devadason for her consistent example of a prudent and patient life. I also thank my father D.A. Devadason for conveying lessons (as clear as the waters of an alpine lake) on what to do and what not to do in many areas of life, including the subject matter of this book. Finally, thanks to my aunt Ahilia Fernandez for providing me with a quiet corner in her Singapore home to get the final draft of this book done in tranquil separation from my frenetic Malaysian schedule.

Rajen Devadason

February 2002

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