

IMPROVE EDUCATION  
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT  
ADDRESS INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES  
ADOPT SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC STRATEGIES  
MEET HUMAN NEEDS & PRESERVE LOCAL CULTURE

FOCUS OUR  
MAUI ISLANDS  
NUI OUR FUTURE

Own it!

## Consumer ADDICTION



**Personal savings rates in the U.S. have fallen** from 10% in 1985, to 5% in 1990, to 2.5% in 2000, to below 0% today. Personal savings rates are now the same as they were from 1929 through 1931, after the stock market crash that led to the great depression.

As savings rates have receded, personal consumption has climbed. In inflation adjusted dollars, consumption per capita has climbed 25% from 1985 to today.

Credit cards, interest-only mortgages, home equity loans and car loans helped transform us into a society of debtors instead of savers.

Media refers to us as "consumers." When was the last time you saw Americans portrayed as a nation of "savers?"



### **We are addicted to consuming.**

Our rampant consumerism played a role in the current financial crisis. While we need a national conversation to discuss what kind of consumption we should protect, and what really isn't worth the debt, we can take two steps right now to break the addiction:

1. Before buying ask yourself, honestly — **Is this purchase a need or a want?**
2. **Start saving by paying at least 10% of your take home pay to yourself first.**

"The evidence is overwhelming that people who are characterized by materialistic attitudes and values actually experience lower well-being, lower happiness, more depression, anxiety, and anger, than people who aren't materialistic."

~ Richard Eckersley  
*Public Health Researcher*



FOCUS MAUI NUI is a community-driven vision for the future of our islands, spearheaded by Maui Economic Development Board, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the economic well-being of Maui County. VISIT [www.focusmauinui.com](http://www.focusmauinui.com) or CALL 808.270.6801