21 MILLION PUBLISHING HOUSE

The Bitcoin Savings Guide

7 lessons pulled from The Boy Who Cried Bitcoin. One page each. No charts, no price targets — just the ideas that hold the story up.

FROM THE MEMOIR BY TERRENCE THOMAS · SATOSHI NEGROMOTO

BEFORE YOU READ

You don't **buy** Bitcoin. You **save** in Bitcoin.

That's the whole reframe. Every lesson in this guide comes back to that one idea. Not speculation. Not trading. Saving — the way your grandparents saved in dollars except the dollars kept losing value and Bitcoin has a fixed supply of 21 million and that supply never changes.

These seven lessons are pulled straight from the book. They're the ideas Tae had to figure out himself, in real time, while the table laughed. You can learn them in twenty minutes. That's twenty minutes faster than he did.

This guide is not financial advice. It is a set of ideas. What you do with them is yours.

SEVEN LESSONS

LESSON 01 OF 07

The **21 Million** Cap

There will never be more than 21 million Bitcoin. That number is written into the protocol. No one can change it.

Not the government. Not the company that made it — there is no company. Not a vote, not a board meeting, not an executive order. 21 million is the number Satoshi Nakamoto wrote into the code in 2008, and it has not changed in the eighteen years since, and it will not change.

Compare that to the dollar. In 2020 alone, the United States printed roughly 20% of all dollars that had ever existed, in a single year. The number of dollars is not fixed. It has never been fixed. It is whatever the people in charge of it decide it should be.

Scarcity is not a feature Bitcoin was given. It is the feature. Everything else follows from it. The reason people save in it, the reason institutions buy it, the reason it is the hardest money that has ever existed — it all comes back to the number that never changes.

Adrienne's rent went up every year. Her salary did not. That gap — between what she earned and what things cost — is inflation. Bitcoin is the first savings tool in human history where the supply cannot be inflated by anyone.

> *"The 21 million cap isn't arbitrary. It's the entire argument. A dollar is a promise. Bitcoin is math. Promises get broken. Math doesn't."*

LESSON 02 OF 07

Built for Everyone

You don't need a bank account, a broker, a credit score, or anyone's permission to hold Bitcoin. That's not an accident.

The traditional financial system has a door. You have to qualify to walk through it. You need ID, an address, a credit history, a minimum balance. Hundreds of millions of people on earth don't have those things. The door isn't open to them.

Bitcoin has no door. A phone, an internet connection, and a wallet address is all it takes. There is no application. No approval. No committee deciding whether you're worth serving. The protocol doesn't ask where you're from.

This is what "permissionless" actually means. Not a product feature. A structural fact. The same Bitcoin that sits in a hedge fund in Manhattan can be held by a woman in Lagos who has never had a checking account. The network processes both transactions with identical indifference.

When Tae's family was budgeting on a schedule that would have broken a stronger-looking person, they didn't have financial advisors. They had Adrienne's discipline and whatever the banks would give them. Bitcoin is the first asset that doesn't require asking the bank.

> *"No application. No approval. No committee. The network doesn't know your credit score. It doesn't have to. The ledger is the only thing it trusts."*

LESSON 03 OF 07

Inflation — the **Quiet Tax**

Nobody votes for inflation. Nobody announces it. It just arrives every year, making last year's savings worth a little less than they were.

In 1990 a dollar bought roughly what $2.30 buys today. That's not a dramatic collapse — it's a slow, quiet erosion that compounds over decades and hits hardest on people who can least afford it. The people with savings accounts, not portfolios. The people whose wages don't keep pace with rising costs.

Adrienne's rent went up. The grocery bill went up. The MetroCard went up. Her paycheck went up slower, or sometimes didn't. That gap — lived quietly, every month, for years — is what inflation actually feels like from inside it.

The dollar is a leaking bucket. Every year it holds a little less. That's not opinion — it's Federal Reserve policy. A 2% annual inflation target means the dollar is designed to lose value. Slowly. Consistently. Forever.

Bitcoin has no inflation target. After the final halving, no new Bitcoin will ever be created. You can't print it. You can't dilute it. What you hold is what you hold.

> *"Adrienne's rent went up every year. Her savings didn't. That gap — felt quietly for decades — is what this is all about."*

LESSON 04 OF 07

The **Halving** Clock

Every four years, the rate at which new Bitcoin is created gets cut in half. This is not a policy decision. It is a scheduled event written into the code.

When Bitcoin launched in 2009, miners received 50 Bitcoin per block. In 2012 that became 25. In 2016, 12.5. In 2020, 6.25. In 2024, 3.125. The halvings continue until around 2140, when the last fraction of a Bitcoin is mined and the supply is complete.

You can see the next halving coming years in advance. Not the price — nobody can call that — but the supply event itself, sitting there in the protocol like a court date nobody can reschedule. Every four years, less new Bitcoin enters circulation. Demand doesn't have that schedule.

The halving is the built-in counterforce to inflation. While central banks can expand the money supply on a Tuesday because the economy needs it, Bitcoin's supply schedule has never been adjusted, delayed, or overridden. It runs on math, not meetings.

Kenny's train ran on a schedule. Same stops, same order, every eleven minutes. You could set your life to it. The halving is the only financial schedule in history with that kind of reliability.

> *"You can't call the price. You can call the halving. It's the only economic event in history that runs on schedule regardless of who's in charge."*

LESSON 05 OF 07

What Money **Actually Is**

Money is not valuable because the government says it is. Money is valuable because people agree it is, and that agreement is backed by something.

For most of human history, that something was gold. Gold is scarce, durable, divisible, portable, fungible, and hard to fake. It was the closest thing to a universally trusted store of value. In 1971 the United States officially ended the dollar's link to gold. Since then the dollar has been backed by — trust. The full faith and credit of the United States government. A promise.

Bitcoin is the first digital money with a credible scarcity guarantee that doesn't require trusting anyone. Not a government, not a bank, not a company. The rules are written in public code that anyone can read. The ledger is maintained by thousands of nodes across the world. No single party controls it.

When Gerri called it "computer money," she wasn't wrong about the form. She was wrong about the function. The dollar is also computer money — most dollars exist only as numbers in a database. The difference is who controls the database. The Fed controls the dollar database. Nobody controls Bitcoin's.

> *"The dollar is a promise. Gold is a rock. Bitcoin is math. Promises get renegotiated. Rocks get found. Math doesn't change."*

LESSON 06 OF 07

Low **Time Preference**

High time preference means you want it now. Low time preference means you're willing to wait — because you believe the future is worth building toward.

Inflation punishes low time preference. If your savings are going to be worth less next year anyway, why wait? The incentive structure of inflationary money pushes people toward spending now, borrowing now, consuming now. The future is devalued by design.

Sound money — money that holds its value — does the opposite. It rewards patience. It makes saving rational again. If what you hold today is worth more tomorrow, you have a structural incentive to think long term, build long term, sacrifice short term.

This is not a new idea. It is the oldest idea in personal finance, stripped of the tools that made it possible. Your grandparents saved because saving worked — the dollar held its value long enough for patience to pay off. That relationship broke down. Bitcoin is an attempt to restore it.

Adrienne taught her sons this without naming it. She carried what she carried and didn't complain about it and kept going. That is low time preference in practice. The discipline to hold through the hard part because you believe in what's on the other side.

> *"She raised two kids on a schedule that would have broken a stronger-looking person. That's not just strength. That's someone who believes the future is worth getting to."*

LESSON 07 OF 07

Not Your Keys, Not Your Coins

If your Bitcoin is on an exchange, you don't own Bitcoin. You own a promise from the exchange that they'll give you Bitcoin if you ask. FTX is what happens when they can't.

In November 2022, FTX — one of the largest cryptocurrency exchanges in the world — collapsed in seventy-two hours. Billions of dollars in customer funds were gone. Not because Bitcoin failed. Because the company holding customer funds had quietly lent those funds to a trading arm that lost them.

Bitcoin processed every block that week on schedule. The protocol didn't fail. The company failed. The people who held their own keys lost nothing. The people who trusted the exchange lost everything.

Self-custody means holding your own private keys — the cryptographic proof that the Bitcoin is yours. It requires a hardware wallet and about thirty minutes to set up. It is the only way to actually own Bitcoin rather than a claim on someone else's promise to give you Bitcoin.

This is the lesson the table laughed at hardest. It's also the most important one. The whole point of a decentralized network with no trusted third party is that you don't have to trust a third party. The moment you put your coins on an exchange, you've added back exactly the trusted third party the system was designed to remove.

> *"FTX proved it in a single week. Not that Bitcoin was broken. That you have to hold your own keys. The lesson was always in the protocol. Now it's in the news."*

WHERE TO GO NEXT

The book goes **deeper.**

These seven lessons are pulled from The Boy Who Cried Bitcoin — a memoir about being right before anyone was listening, and the family that watched it happen from a table in Co-op City. The book ships December 24, 2026.

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