

Moving on from Old Ideas about Money

A positive attitude towards and relationship with money is a crucial component of a balanced and fulfilled life. It's not about how much or how little money you have, but about your attitude towards and perceptions of money. Money itself does not make you happy or unhappy, but the way you think about money will greatly impact your happiness.

Money, and the things it can buy, can be a significant source of stress if not managed positively. When we start comparing our material wealth with others we set ourselves up for unhappiness. It doesn't matter whether we have more or less than those we compare ourselves to and so whether or not the comparison initially seems favourable, using relative material wealth as a measure for success or happiness is unhelpful and unhealthy.

Have you ever stopped to examine the underlying beliefs you have about money and consider whether they are serving you or not? Many of us will have grown up having various unhelpful ideas about money drummed into us by family, friends or wider society. How many times have you heard messages demonising money and the rich such as "Money is the root of all evil", "People only get rich at other people's expense" or "It's selfish to have so much when others have so little"? Or on the flip side been exposed to messages telling you that happiness only comes with a large bank balance, big house and nice cars and it doesn't matter what you do to get there? A lot of us will also have been exposed to messages that create a scarcity mentality such as "Money doesn't grow on trees".

In reality money is neither good nor evil. People do good and bad things with money and in the pursuit of money, but money itself is not inherently positive or negative, it just is. We should neither deify nor vilify it. There is nothing wrong with wanting to have money and the things it can buy, but we shouldn't allow a pursuit of money to become all encompassing. We should never hurt others to help ourselves in relation to money any more than we should do it in relation to anything else!

Release your fears that there is not enough to go around, that you have to compete with others to try and claim your share of scarce resources including money. Don't seek to accumulate money for the sake of having it, welcome it to flow abundantly through your life.

Think about the messages that you are giving your children about money and make sure that you are setting them up with a positive attitude and the right skills to help them prosper. Be aware that many of the messages they will receive about money will be negative and unhelpful and you need to balance those. So many children's stories portray the poor as good and the rich as bad - they are filled with characters working their fingers to the bone in terrible conditions and being paid a pittance for it, exploited by rich, greedy, lazy and uncaring bosses. Are those the sort of ideas you want your children to have about money? While there are undoubtedly real life situations like this it is not the way things should be or have to be, but as long as we keep portraying the world in that way it is a reality that will perpetuate.

When used positively money enables us to create safety and security for ourselves. It enables us to support and help others. It gives us freedom and choice.

As with all of life our financial success and achievement is mostly about the attitude we bring to it. We all need to take responsibility for changing our own perceptions and beliefs about life, including money, to more positive and empowering ones. Make a choice to learn more about how to manage your money wisely and take responsibility for managing your spending. Ask for help if you need it. Let go of feelings of shame, guilt or anger in all areas of your life, including your financial situation.

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