

Fear of Money

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How's this for a cosmic statement to start a discussion on my favorite subject - money:

"You all hold the sense of money too tightly. If you can release your guilt about money and accept it as part of the divine universe and the physical reality of your earth, you will see it has no more or less power than you give it"

- *Emmanuel*

These days, money seems to be everyone's favorite subject. Question: Do you have a fear of money? That's right, I said fear. I know, most of you think I carry this "money business" a bit too far, but unfortunately, some handle their financial affairs like they are playing Monopoly, and like the game, they usually lose! If you are living in fear of money - either the lack of it or the lack of control of it - don't! Money is truly here to help us, not hurt us. The world of finances may look extremely complex, but it really isn't. With a little homework and planning, you can make the right decisions for yourself and your money.

The good (and bad) news is that there are so many choices to make. Remember, more options bring more opportunities, and the ability to tailor a financial plan to meet your needs. Not long ago, the choices were much simpler - and so were the rewards. The financial world was turned upside down. Interest rates went crazy, and so did the tax laws. Out of this confusion sprung opportunities, for those who were astute enough to look for opportunities amidst the quagmire created by the I.R.S. People had choices to make, but they needed to be informed consumers to make those choices. They learned quickly that you need to look at the whole picture, and not make rash decisions based on isolated situations or bits and pieces of information -- even more so with what is going on in the financial world today.

That is why you are reading this magazine: to become better informed and view the "big picture." Hopefully, it will give you some of the tools, so with a little work on your part, you can view the big picture of your financial future. What picture you draw, and how you color it, will be up to you.

You must remember that you are totally responsible for your financial situation. If you allow others to make bad decisions for you, you made the choice to allow someone else to take control of your future.

Start a new approach to dealing with your finances. Ask for advice and seek information from all sources possible. Once you put the material together, tell your advisors what you want done and how you expect things to be handled. Too many people ask for information, and end up being told what to do. If you follow this losing scenario, later you will be told why you failed.

As kids in school, we all loved it when it was time for show and tell. We learned a lot from one another.

Times have changed, and so have we. We are no longer kids, so it's time to give up that game and learn to play the new financial game I call "ask and tell." It is not only informative, but potentially profitable. As with any game, when the stakes get high, you better make sure you understand the rules and the possible risks and rewards.

Start today by taking control of your financial future. I don't mean you should fly by the seat of your pants or use a crystal ball to plan your investments. Seek out competent advisors and keep an open mind and a closed wallet until you get answers to all of your questions. Make your decisions based on sound, complete advice. Ask lots of questions and get answers. If you are not happy with the answers, ask more questions until you have enough information to make decisions. If you are told you "must" move fast or miss out on a "once in a lifetime" opportunity, just remember there will be more "opportunities" in the future. They haven't stopped making opportunities!

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