

Understanding Your Money Story

A JOURNAL EXERCISE



EXAMINING YOUR MONEY STORY

Sources: Suze Orman and Jean Chatzky

1. What was the feeling about money like in the home where you grew up? (spending, saving, giving)
2. What's your earliest money memory?
3. What messages did your parents pass down to you about money?
Note: Keep in mind that messages (ideas about money as a whole and how it functions in your life) are different than lessons (skills, like how to balance a checkbook).
4. What memories do you have of your parents discussing money?
5. Growing up, did you have more than/less than/about the same as your peers?
6. Did your family experience a defining moment around money?

APPLYING YOUR MONEY STORY TO TODAY

1. How is this affecting me in my life today? (positive and negative)
2. Journal your thoughts about money and identify any that automatically come to mind (e.g., "I am bad with money").
3. Separate thought from feeling (e.g., "I feel ashamed about my money habits").
4. Provide specific positive and negative truth statements about each of the automatic thoughts without involving feelings or generalizations.

Fact: "I overspend on comfort items and haven't been keeping a budget."

Fact: "I have a financial plan and paid off my credit card debt"