

I've been married four times and I was averaging a marriage a decade. I always thought I had something to say, but usually it turned out to be: "I DO"! I find myself doing some marriage counseling and, as per usual, with a little slant on it. I cannot tell you what WILL work, but sure as heck can tell you what WON'T work. I do enjoy sharing my world, much to the chagrin of my ex-husbands who have asked me not to talk about them in my seminars or writings. Ha! "Like now that we are NO longer together, I am going to grant any requests that they might have!" (More on them later – and I mean a lot more) Anyway, this does lead somewhere: I think that secretly I kept getting married thinking that the other person in the marriage would save my financial soul and I would never have to worry about money again...WRONG...ok - - I admit it: THAT is what I was thinking. We hear it all the time, but find that the only person that we can fix is US, not THEM. No matter how bad "THEIR" spending habits are to you, if you don't have a black balance in **your** checkbook, money in **your** savings, and money in **your** Individual Retirement Fund, don't blame "THEM", **get** busy on yourself! You are the Financial CEO of Me, Inc. You need to invest some time and energy into developing your personal business so that you will be better prepared to handle your public business.

People say to me all the time: "I really want to have my own business." I think that is *so great!* Go for it, but if you do not have control of your personal finances, do not open a business. I ought to know, I bought a business in 1985 that was making \$12,000 a year and took it to \$100,000 a year - Only to end up losing it in the course of about six years. And you know, the biggest reason that I lost the business was because of MY poor financial skills. Oh, and by the way, you are already in charge of one business: Your personal Finances. You happen to be the CEO of Me, Inc., **The Financial CEO!** How are you running that business? Do you need to get a better grasp on it?

There is this thing called the teeter totter effect of owning a business without having financial control. The first three months of owning a business are going to be pretty good. You see, your family and friends want you to be successful and they will support you to help you get going, but they can only do that for so long. One day your business has to stand on its own financial legs. Let's say that one month you are having trouble paying a supply bill in your business and you reach over into your personal account and pull money into your business account – there problem solved. But a couple of months

down the road, because you have robbed from Peter to pay Paul, you are having trouble paying your electric bill on the personal side, so you borrow from the business to pay the personal bill. This back and forth teeter totter of your money cannot keep up forever – eventually the whole thing implodes and there is no money left in either account to float back and forth. I'll say it again, don't open a business if you don't have control of your personal money, and so many people don't realize that they already have their own business – their personal finances are their very first business. If you do well with your personal finances, your chances of success with a public business increase dramatically.

If I said to you: “At the beginning of the year I am going to give you \$20,000. It has to last you all year long. No borrowing from Aunt Jenny, no borrowing from the credit cards (including NO charging), and no borrowing from the bank (no outside money whatsoever) - any money that you have left over you get to keep. Put it in your own pocket, it's yours!” Betcha a dime to a dollar that the first thing you are going to do is sit down and make a plan for your needs for the year. You will figure rent, utilities, groceries, etc. You don't want to get to December and not have any money - Well, that is what your employer is saying to you: I am going to give you this money each year and any money you have left over is yours!” The only difference is that your employer is giving you the entire sum in increments of a paycheck. How are you handling your money?

When you finally discover the financial world that you have created is not working, you can cry about it or do something about it. And it ain't gonna change if all you do is cry. You have to take that first step. You are the only one that really gives a darn about getting your financial future into shape, as a matter of fact; you are the only one that can put the numbers together...YOU and only YOU.

The words “debt free” are so foreign to many of us. Debt is smothering our everyday lives. Debt is stealing money from the future to pay for the present. We need to learn to live without those credit cards, second mortgages, personal loans, consolidations, etc. We, as individuals, need to learn the difference between a **want** and a **need**. Here is my definition of wants and needs: Go to the grocery store with a list and you will get everything that you **need**, and if you have any money left, you will get some **wants**. Go to the grocery store without a list and you will get everything that you **want** and get home and still not have things that you **need**. Understanding the

concept of **Wants** vs. **Needs** is a very powerful lesson that you have to master if you are ever going to be successful with money. And you have to be successful with your money in order to have the great financial future you always hoped you could provide for yourself. We all know that the federal retirement system (Social Security) as we know it, is getting ready to make some big changes and most of those changes seem to be leaning toward making us more responsible for our own retirement fund. I am going to show you how your daily spending habits are costing you your financial future and show you how to correct that spending on a daily basis. No stocks, no bonds, no investment tips, just some hints on how to make the money that you have go just a little farther.

Remember the Life Hours Equation?

Pay Per hour	Government –Taxes	For every hour You work – You give one hour of your life to make:
\$10	\$3.00	\$7.00
\$ 8	\$2.40	\$5.60
\$ 6	\$1.80	\$4.20

I am going to begin by asking you to track your daily spending. I call it a Fritter Finder. You don't have to make a big production out of it, but anything other than regular bills, be it cash or credit card charges; you need to be writing it down. Put a notebook in each car, one in your purse, one at work. . . .Whatever works for you, and once a week consolidate those things (this is one time when consolidation is a good thing) Most people can tell me how much their car, rent or mortgage payment are, but they cannot tell me how much they are actually spending on their pop, alcohol, gifts, groceries, credit card payments, etc. If you are spending it, you need to know exactly where it is going.

“I think I spend this much money.” is not what the Board of Me, Inc. wants to hear. I want to hear a report that states: I spend this much money in this category and I spend this much money in this other category. You don't have to do it forever, but I guarantee you that if you do this for 3 or 4 months, you will be shocked at what your hard earned money is being spent on.

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Expenses	1	2	3	4	Total for month	Life Hours Spent?
Meals out						WAS IT WORTH IT?
Gas						
Cappuccinos						
If you are spending the money - you need to be tracking it.						

This was amazing to me when I did it. I used the \$7 Life Hours equation in all my examples:

My daily spending habits	Total for one year	Life Hours I worked to pay for some of the worthless <i>Crap</i> I was buying (Wants)
One Medium Soda from Drive thru at \$1.49 a day	\$544	78 Life Hours 2 working weeks
Cigarettes: Pack a day @ \$2.60	\$949	136 Life Hours 3 ½ working weeks
Eating a lot of meals out: \$8 a meal	\$2920	417 Life Hours 10 ½ working weeks

It isn't going to happen overnight, and it isn't going to be a smooth journey, but you do have to begin somewhere, and this is the very foundation you need to do in order to BEGIN the "Get Control Process." Begin by working on just figuring out exactly where your daily spending is going and I will take you on another financial road that will help you begin your own journey back to financial health. Begin to do the math using your life hours' equation and see if what you are buying is really worth all the time you have invested in each purchase.

You can go my website www.motorcyclemary.com and download any of these forms for free. I am just a financial organizer, but I can help you to organize your money in order for you to make logistical decisions about what you need to do in order to have a healthier financial future.

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Take care,

Motorcycle Mary