

Writing a Money Autobiography

Writing a personal money autobiography is a crucial step in understanding our behavior and the powerful feelings evoked by money. How does one go about writing a money autobiography? In this activity it is important to focus on feelings and relationships at different points in your life (childhood, adolescence, young adult, etc.). Take two or three blank sheets of paper and write out some of your memories and feelings about money. Reflect on these experiences and how specific feelings developed. After reflection you may want to write this in chronological or topical sequence. Here are some questions to start your thinking.

1. What attitudes and behaviors about money did you learn from your mother, father, grandparents?
2. As a child growing up, did you feel rich or poor? Why?
3. What was your attitude toward money as a teenager? How was this influenced by your siblings and peers?
4. What role did money play in your life as a young adult? How was this influenced by your spouse or friends?
5. If you are a parent, how did your relationship with money change when you became a parent?
6. How does money relate to your faith and your spiritual life? How has this changed throughout your lifetime?
7. What is your happiest memory in connection with money?
8. What is your unhappiest such memory?
9. What are the personal assets (experiences, feelings, practices) you can build on?
10. How will these assets help you later in life?
11. How do you feel about your present financial status compared to the past?
12. Do you worry about money? If so, when did you first start and why?
13. Are you generous or stingy with your money? In what ways?
14. What kinds of risks are you willing to take with your money?
15. What will you do with your money as you approach the end of this life?