

MORE THAN MONEY

Timeless themes & personal stories | Exploring the impact of money in our lives

Archive Edition

Money Between Friends

More than Money

Exploring the personal, political, and spiritual impact of wealth in our lives

ISSUE #1

MONEY BETWEEN FRIENDS



INSIDE:

*What's been your experience with money between friends?

*Practical tips for loans between friends

*A cross-class friendship

*Dr. Dough

*Resources



Coming in the Next Issue :

WHAT MAKES GIVING SATISFYING?



Welcome to More than Money

Some say money is the last frontier, seven harder to talk about than sex. Yet whether we have \$10 or \$10,000,000, money affects us from early childhood to the day we die, touching nearly every aspect of our lives.

Many years ago, the three of us had inherited wealth drop into our lives. Although we were certainly excited, we also felt isolated and longed for others with whom we could non-judgmentally explore what the money meant to us. Fortunately, each of us stumbled upon conferences organized specifically for people who, like us, were questioning how to use their surplus to benefit the wider world. We were moved to see newcomers in tears at these gatherings. People clearly felt enormous relief, finally talking about wealth with like-minded peers after years of holding private their deepest concerns. Why couldn't these liberating discussions

'Having more than others' is both a blessing and a dilemma

keep going between conferences? Why wasn't there a way to connect with people who didn't attend these conferences? These questions led us to plan the publication you hold today.

Although many of our stories will be from people with inherited wealth, we intend *More than Money* to be for anyone grappling with the practical and ethical issues of having more than others. "Having more than others" is a blessing and dilemma that connects people of various financial means — after all, even working class people in "developed" countries are tremendously wealthy on a global scale. We hope that by reaching beyond the

secrecy that normally shrouds personal money choices, *More than Money* will help build greater understanding between people of different backgrounds.

We were drawn to focus the first issue on money between friends because we've witnessed the emotional charge this subject brings up for many people, no matter how much or how little money they have. Moreover, it's a hot topic for us personally. For years, the three of us have given amply to non-profit organizations and very little to individuals. Sure, it's been a deliberate choice to dedicate our surplus towards creating social change. But in part, we have been afraid.

We have heard so many horror stories about mixing money and friendship: loans never repaid, good friends avoiding each other, relationships destroyed by resentment and shame. Because we three have chosen lifestyles similar to our less-wealthy friends, our wealth is not obvious. Will sharing some of our surplus with them accent our differences and increase our friends' envy and alienation?

At the same time, we watch in pain as friends struggle to pay for child care, to make ends meet through times of unemployment, or to try to buy a home when it would not be a financial hardship

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Issue 1, Summer 1993

A Complimentary Giving Resource
Provided By

**BOLDER
GIVING**
Give more. Risk more. Inspire more.

Welcome to More than Money Journal

More Than Money Journal, published quarterly from 1993-2006, was one of the first public forums where people shared personal stories about the impact of wealth on their lives. Groundbreaking for its time, each issue is filled with examples of ordinary people struggling to align their money and values in their spending, investing, giving, legacy, and relationships. The themes and stories in these journals are timeless and ring as true today as when they were first published.

More than Money Journal was a project of More Than Money Institute, a nonprofit peer educational network that touched thousands of people through its publications, presentations, gatherings, journal discussion groups and individual coaching. When More than Money Institute closed in 2006, its founders Anne and Christopher Ellinger (whom you'll see in More Than Money as Anne Slepian and Christopher Mogil) went on to launch another initiative called Bolder Giving. Individual articles from the journal were archived online with the Project on Civic Reflection.

Today, Bolder Giving is thrilled to be able to offer full back issues of More than Money Journal as a resource for families with wealth, philanthropic advisors, and all those exploring the impact of money in their lives. On the Bolder Giving website you can download issues individually.

Online, you can also order beautiful bound copies where 6-10 issues of the journal are compiled by theme:

- Giving
- Lifestyle, Spending & Investing
- Money and Values
- Children and Inheritance
- Money and Identity

(See full listing on back page of this journal)

We hope that More than Money Journal brings you fresh ideas for aligning your money and values, and that you use the stories to start conversations with your own clients, family members, and friends. (Note: We have removed many last names from the personal stories in the journals, to protect the privacy of those who gave us permission before the days of internet).

About



More Than Money Journal roams the full territory of money and values. Bolder Giving has a more pointed mission: to inspire and support people to give at their full lifetime potential. A national, non-profit educational initiative, Bolder Giving invites you to help create a culture of greater generosity and to take your next step in becoming a bold giver.

At www.boldergiving.org you will find interactive tools and resources to help you explore three ways of being bold:

Give More: explore your lifetime giving capacity.

Risk More: step beyond your giving habits.

Inspire More: spark conversations about bold giving.

Bolder Giving's resources include:

Stories of Inspiration- The Bolder Giving website features stories of over 100 remarkable givers who have given at least 20% of their income, assets, or business profits. We host monthly teleconferences and web chats for informal conversations with these bold givers. Bolder Giving's stories have been featured widely in the press - on CBS and ABC evening news, in People and Inc. Magazines, The Chronicle of Philanthropy and elsewhere - and speakers are available for presentations and media interviews.

Support for Donors- Bolder Giving provides giving tools such as personal coaching, referrals to donor networks, workshops, the Bolder Giving Workbook and other publications, and a content-rich website. Please see the list of publications in the back of this magazine.

Resources for Advisors- Bolder Giving offers presentations, workshops, and publications for fundraisers, financial professionals and philanthropic advisors.

We invite your participation and support.

Thanks to the financial support of a few foundations and many individuals, Bolder Giving is able to offer free downloads of More Than Money Journal on our site. If you receive value from this publication, we invite you to donate online or contact us to explore ways of being involved as a donor, partner, or volunteer. Bolder Giving is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, so all contributions are fully tax-deductible.

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More than Money

is a quarterly publication written for people questioning society's assumptions about money, and particularly for those with inherited or earned wealth seeking a more just and sustainable world.

More than Money is a publication of The Impact Project, a non-profit organization assisting people with financial surplus to take charge of their money and their lives.

For information about The Impact Project, write:

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Subscriptions to More than Money are \$28/yr. for individuals (if you can't afford this, contribute what you can), and \$56/yr. for organizations.

To send letters to the editor or for information about this publication, write:

Mailing lists remain confidential.

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for us to do any of these things. It feels uncaring to withhold assistance.

Although we are cautious after hearing horror stories, we've also heard of and experienced times when money loaned or given made an enormous difference in someone's life and actually deepened the friendship. Was there some essential wisdom we could extract from listening to both the excruciating and the uplifting experiences?

As a humble start to this hefty question, we are sharing some stories and lessons taken from interviews with a wide range of friends and acquaintances. In offering positive examples, we by no means intend to minimize the potential pitfalls of mixing money and friendship. We simply wish to share some rarely-

found encouragement and practical ideas so friends reaching across the gulf of financial differences may have a better chance at success.

Researching this issue has given us courage to start experimenting. For instance, Anne has asked her closest friends, "Could we talk together about how the money I have could make a difference in your life?" She made her most substantial loan (\$5,000) implementing the hints in this publication, and was repaid in timely fashion.

We hope you enjoy the first issue of *More than Money* and help us launch it by showing it to your friends!

Allen, Anne and Christopher

Reader's View:

"What's been your experience of money between friends?"

In each issue of *More than Money*, we will invite readers to respond to specific questions about the theme. (For information on the next issue see page 10.) For the first issue, we asked a few of our friends, "What's an experience concerning money you've had with friends that stands out in your mind, wonderful or awful? Are there any lessons you would pass on to others?" What follows are some of their responses:

Loans: Bitter and Sweet

I often feel guilty and confused about the money I inherited when my mom died. Now that I'm richer than my friends, I too easily feel obligated to bail them out when they're in financial trouble. I want to help the people I care about, but I don't be a walking bank!

Last year when my friend T. couldn't afford health insurance, I tried something new. I called a bunch of her friends, and we all pitched in and bought insurance for her. It worked: different friends contributed different amounts (the person collecting swore confidentiality); no one was obligated to contribute; and a few of us helped T. figure out how to get her finances more together.

T. said accepting money from a group of friends felt like love instead of indebtedness. Six months later, she was able to continue the insurance on her own. It was deeply satisfying to act on my caring impulse, yet not be solely responsible.

— R.M.

I lent a close friend a significant amount of money for him to repurchase artwork we had owned together. When he became unable to repay me, he deliberately and totally disregarded our written agreement, and nothing I tried swayed him. I could have sued him but I preferred to walk away. Of course, then I had to deal with both the economic cost and my sense of total betrayal—we had been so close. I ended up hating his guts. Well, life goes on. A few people turn out deeply dishonest; most are not.

Recently, I lent a few thousand dollars to a friend in New York—a great person. She couldn't pay the rent temporarily. I said, "Look, don't sweat it, just let me do this." When we're rich, we get out of touch with what other people go through just to get the basics, and we forget most people won't ask for help because it feels too humiliating.

I feel good about most of my loans, but the pity of it is, when a friend

breaks my trust in them, the bitter taste stays longer than the sweet. My parents would never loan to friends; they thought it was a terrible mistake. So I've come a long way.

In the best situations, loans have let me have a real, beneficial impact on people's lives and have extended my sense of family to include many more people. They've been one way for me to step out of the rigid boundaries of this economic system we're stuck in, and discover that two people can be helpful to each other, even if one has millions and the other has only what they made last week.

—Josh Mailman

Cleaning Up the Past

I borrowed money from several friends in my twenties and never paid them back. It wasn't that much—between \$50 and \$200 each—but I still feel lousy about it. Looking back, what kept me from paying back was my pride.

To return the money at \$10 or \$20 a week felt too humiliating, an admission of how broke and out of control I felt. So I kept waiting until I could do it in one sum, just put \$200 in their hands and say "thank you very much." But that day never came. I also felt righteous and resentful, like "why should I scrape to pay you back, when you've been given so much and I need it more than you?" I wasn't proud of that attitude, but there it was.

What's useful I could pass on from this experience? Well, if the people I borrowed from had disclosed more about their own needs, either saying "It's a real stretch for me to loan you this" or "It's not that I need the money, but I need you to pay back to feel good about the friendship," then it might have shaken my attitude.

And if instead of avoiding me they had gently suggested we arrange a repayment schedule, maybe I could have done it. I don't mean to imply they were responsible for my behavior! But people loaning money should know that borrowers often feel too ashamed and stuck to turn the situation around without help.

I'm in a different place now financially, fifteen years later. Telling you this story has inspired me to clean up those

debts that still haunt me. I'm going to write to those old friends and pay them back!

— J. P.

Loans Take Work

I've made about \$500,000 of loans over the past ten years—almost all to friends, loved ones, and to projects or organizations that I've been involved with in some way. I consider it an important part of my social change work and my socially responsible investing.

Let's face it, the system isn't fair. Loans from institutions today are available, but almost exclusively for folks who already own property or have established credit and stable lives. Most of the people that ask me for a loan are in life transitions and can't access needed resources on their own.

As a person committed to making loans as part of my investment portfolio, I expect that I'm going to put in time (as I do with any investment) to get information and to problem-solve the process. If the loan is for \$5,000 or more, the loan agreement always states that a small percentage of the loan will go into an escrow account. The money in escrow then becomes almost an insurance policy—an opportunity for the borrower to meet early on in the loan process with a business consultant or professional who can help the loan stay on schedule. My loan success rate has vastly improved since implementing this stipulation and borrowers have come to appreciate it. We also add a mediation or arbitration clause, and these expenses too are the sole responsibility of the borrower.

As a wealthy person, I know I'm the symbol of a system that is hurting a lot of people. Power issues are complicated but real in any loan situation. If I engage with people who have a lot less, they're bound to take some anger (conscious or unconscious) they rightfully feel toward the class system and dump it on me—even if we're friends. The steps for me are to: 1. Take time to consider my motivation for entering the loan. If I am making this loan to "be nice," then the most accountable thing I can do is to make a gift. 2. Take time to

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"People loaning money should know that borrowers often feel too ashamed and stuck to turn the situation around without help"

You Want Me to What?

Practical Tips to Help Make Loans Between Friends Work

After hearing a variety of stories about loans between friends, we have a few thoughts about what helps make loans successful that we'd like to pass on to you. For the purpose of illustration, we use this hypothetical situation:

Your friend Suzanne leans forward at dinner, and says in a low voice, "Could I ask you a big favor? I need emergency dental surgery—it's three thousand dollars!—and I just don't have the money right now. Could I borrow it from you?" What do you do now? Do you automatically say yes or no? Do you feel irritated... delighted...anxious...? How do you pursue it? The following steps can help guide you:

Step 1: Collect Information

Spend some time talking with Suzanne about her request. (Naturally, the information you need at this stage will vary under differing circumstances: a friendly co-worker borrowing fifty bucks until pay day is different from a good friend needing \$100,000 to start a business.) Some things you may want to discuss with her:)

About her request:

- ✓ Details about what she needs it for.
- ✓ Her overall financial situation, including her borrowing history (you might ask to talk with others who have lent her money in the past)
- ✓ How, realistically, she would pay it back, and how she could back up the loan if things go wrong
- ✓ Other possible sources of money, and what will happen if she doesn't get the money
- ✓ Her feelings about borrowing

About you:

- ✓ How you feel making loans
- ✓ Your experience in the past of making loans, and any policies you've developed about loaning to friends
- ✓ What kind of repayment schedule you'd prefer, and why repayment is important to you, financially and/or emotionally
- ✓ What interest, collateral, or other fees you want
- ✓ What communication you want if things go awry

Step 2: Think it Through

After gathering information, tell Suzanne you will think about it and get back to her by a specific time. Don't make a decision on the spot—give yourself time to reflect and make a thoughtful decision.

Does she seem committed to repayment and have a sound plan for it? Does it seem likely she will talk openly with you if she can not meet the loan agreement? If you feel any doubts, discuss your thoughts and feelings with a trusted friend. If the loan is substantial or business-related, seek the advice of a financial professional before making a decision. If needed, gather more information.

Step 3: Negotiate the Loan

If you still feel unsure, consider offering a gift instead of a loan. Many people make "de facto" gifts by making loans unspecific ("Pay me back whenever") or by not following up when the loans are not repaid as agreed. Allowing loans to drift into non-payment is not necessarily a favor for your friend or your relationship. Even if you can shrug off the loan without resentment, your friend may carry the sense of unmet obligation forever. So if you are not committed to being repaid, we recommend that you make it a gift from the start, or just say no.

Is your ability to tell Suzanne “no” clouded by wanting to be liked, or feeling guilty about your money? .In our experience, what hurts relationships is saying “no” in a muddled way, hemming and hawing, being anxious, apologetic or scolding. If you say “no”, do it promptly in a light, warm tone. Confidently explain your reasons and thank your friend for trusting you enough to ask. Turning down the request will no doubt disappoint her, but doing it cleanly may even build trust and respect between you.

If you need to, practice with someone else or in front of the mirror. Trust yourself. Keep breathing. If you like, you can offer to think with your friend about how else she could get money, or other creative ways to meet her need.

Step 4: Make an Agreement

If you decide you feel good about Suzanne’s proposal and want to make the loan, get together again and discuss any issues that still need to be addressed. If your concerns are satisfied and you are both clear what you are agreeing to, write up your agreements with as much specificity as possible and each take a copy. Congratulate each other for your honesty.

For Further Information

Elias, Stephen. *Make Your Own Contract*. Berkeley, CA: Nolo Press, 1986. A workbook for preparing your own contracts—including when borrowing and lending money.

Pritchard, Roger. “How to Make Loans.” 5-article set available for \$4 ppd.: 1514 McGee Ave., Berkeley, CA 94703.

LOAN AGREEMENT

We, Deborah Kerish and Suzanne Wright, agree to the following terms:

- 1) Deborah agrees to loan Suzanne \$3000 on August 4, 1993 for dental surgery.
- 2) Suzanne agrees to pay 10% per annum simple interest.
- 3) Suzanne agrees to pay back the loan on the following schedule:
 - \$1100 (\$1000 plus \$100 interest) on or before December 4, 1993
 - \$1067 (\$1000 plus \$67 interest) on or before April 4, 1994
 - \$1033 (\$1000 plus \$33 interest) on or before August 4, 1994
- 4) Suzanne agrees to contact Deborah at least 7 days before any of the payment dates if she would like to request changing any of the payment dates. If any payments are changed to later dates, a written agreement will be made specifying the new payment date, including interest payment for the additional days.
- 5) Suzanne agrees to pay all reasonable costs incurred in the collection of this note.
- 6) In the event that Deborah and Suzanne have disagreements or difficulties they can not themselves resolve in a reasonable amount of time, they agree to get help mediating their differences from their mutual friends Steve Bush and Yolanda Harris. If Steve and Yolanda are not available, they will get mediation help from the Cambridge Dispute Settlement Center.

Deborah Kerish

date

Suzanne Wright

date

Witness

date

“It is no favor to let an unpaid loan drift.”

Make a Loan and a Gift

Here’s an idea: make a loan to your friend and get a formal note acknowledging the friend’s debt to you and saying what the due date is.

Then endorse the note over to a worthwhile group that both of you believe in. You inform the group by letter that you are assigning this debt to them.

If it’s a tax-exempt group, you may be able to get a deduction for claiming your note as a contribution (double check this with a lawyer).

This method can give you a tax deduction, help a group you both want to support, and put the loan collection in the hands of someone else.

From *Robin Hood Was Right* by the Vanguard Public Foundation, San Francisco, CA: 1977.

More than Money

You Want Me to What?

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Step 5: Follow-up

Witness

date

Even the best laid plans often go awry. If you hold the realistic expectation that most loans need follow-up, then hopefully you won’t be resentful when it takes work, and on those occasions when repayment is effortless you can be delightfully surprised.

People devise different ways to deal with follow-up, depending on their personality and how much they loan. Some try to anticipate problems by having agreements to talk with their borrowers a week or two before each repayment date. Some charge a fee for late payment. Those who make frequent substantial loans sometimes have a general fee to cover some of the work loans take and hire someone else to do the administration.

Whatever you choose, if Suzanne is late on repayment contact her promptly. Even though contacting you “should” be her job, for many reasons (class, power issues, feelings of shame or resentment, etc.) initiating communication about broken agreements appears somewhat easier for most lenders than for most borrowers.

Again, it is no favor to Suzanne or to your relationship to let an unpaid loan drift. Your discussion can be light and friendly, but make sure you clearly and realistically re-negotiate as needed any changes in the payback plan. If at any point you decide to change a portion of the loan into a gift, say so explicitly. And when Suzanne follows her agreements, thank her—so often we are critical of each other about issues of responsibility, and we all need to hear appreciation as well.

In Closing

Occasionally a loan goes badly despite your best efforts. Whether you fight to get your money back (and even go to court) or chalk it up as a learning

experience, chances are that your friendship will be shaken or permanently injured. If this happens, focus on healing your own hurt and angry feelings and taking the useful lessons. This way you are less likely to make sweeping generalizations about loans as evil or friends as untrustworthy.

If you follow all the suggestions above, we envision that the experience with Suzanne (or, at least, the majority of loans you make) will go reasonably well. When repayment is complete, celebrate together. Both of you took risks and worked to honor your agreements.

Hopefully, not only did your surplus make a real difference in your friend’s life, but your relationship grew stronger from how both of you handled the experience.

A Cross-Class Friendship

Clay Pots and Class Issues

For 16 years, Carole Ann Fer and Annie Hoffman have co-owned a pottery studio called Clayground in Cambridge, MA.

Annie: I would describe my background as upper class. Both my mother’s and father’s family made a lot of money by investing early on in communications and in the railroads. I grew up in a large house in the wealthiest part of town, attended a private school, travelled on vacations, and lived in Italy for two years. My class background and the women’s movement instilled me with the feeling that I could do whatever I wanted to do.

Carole: I come from an immigrant, working-class background. My parents are Holocaust survivors who worked for thirty years in a garment factory. When we first started Clayground, Annie and I wanted to “equalize” our working relationship: our initial dollar investment was equal, we took the same salaries, and we put in the same hours.

Annie: It was important for me to feel like I wasn’t supporting Carole and to feel like it wasn’t because of my inherited money that we had the store.

Carole: And from my background, I had to prove that I didn’t need Annie’s

help to get by, that I had been totally self-sufficient before I met her and could continue to be so. For the first few years sharing “equally” really helped the self-esteem of each of us. But after a while we realized that doing everything “equal” was denying our backgrounds and our relative access to money.

I can't fully define myself as working class anymore. My income is very small, yet my sensibility is...I'd call it artist class: hot-dog salary with caviar taste.

Annie: First we started giving Carole a bigger salary than me, so she could stop waitressing and make a living from the store. Then, after having owned the business for seven years, we decided to buy the building it was in. We decided to own the building equally, with both names on the deed even though my inherited money enabled the down payment.

Carole: When Annie said, “I want for us to own this together” it blew my mind.

In effect, ownership of half a building was being handed to me. My first reaction was, “No, that just isn't right.”

I had this kind of working class pride that's as ingrained as a certain upper-class snobbery can be, and that can work against you and isolate you. Now we've been co-owners for 8 years—it's been great to own the building together.

Annie: Deciding how to share my money has been confusing and difficult. I've worried it won't get spent right, or that my mother will get mad at me, or I won't have enough after I give it away, or my other best friend will be mad at me because she'll want it. But I've decided that the various risks are outweighed by the clear benefits of sharing with this important person in my life. I still struggle with feeling that it's my responsibility to take care of Carole, even if she's not asking me to.

Carole: Certainly I expect Annie to take care of me emotionally, on a daily basis. We are family to each other in the best sense of the word. Economically, it gets foggier. I have a perennial sense that at some moment somebody in some corner could completely destroy my life. That feeling comes from being a lesbian and from being a Jewish daughter of Holocaust survivors.

Annie: And I think of myself as being in control of choices in my life.

Carole: Sometimes we joke that if the Depression comes and Annie loses all of her money, I'll show her how to survive without any money to fall back on. I keep in mind that I am as generous with Annie as she is with me—I just have different resources to offer than money.

Annie: We see our financial situations differently. We look at our store's bank account and if we have two thousand dollars, I think, “oh, that's nothing, we have to save more money!” Carole thinks, “Oh, what a big cushion! Let's spend it.”

In my mind, I will always be upper class. I will always have the values I grew up with, my access to inherited money that I can continue to give away, and access to my family's summer home.

Carole: If anyone wants advice on making an inter-class friendship work, I'd say be gentle with each other. That's not to say that if you're angry, squash it. Annie and I both have anger at the class system and the inequality of it. That's why most of Annie's money goes to organizations that are addressing the roots of social injustice and economic inequalities. Annie and I struggle all the time, but we always remember we're not each other's enemy. The more we nurture each other, the more we each can grow and change. •

This interview was adapted from an article by Randy Albelda in Gay Community News Feb. 4-10, 1990. GCN is out of business. Used with interviewees' permission.

“If anyone wants advice on making an inter-class friendship work, I'd say be gentle with each other.”

“What if we built friendships with people we did business with and did business with our friends?”

Mixing Money & Friendship

Why Risk It?

For thousands of years, human beings have exchanged money and goods primarily with people in their village or region—that is, with people they know. Suddenly, in the late 20th century, commerce has become depersonalized. Our cash comes from automated teller machines; financial transactions are electronically blipped around the world. Not only are we disconnected from those who produce our goods, but catalogues and TV shopping let us purchase goods with little or no human interaction.

People talk about money all the time, but usually in a general or impersonal way—complaining about costs, quoting the Dow Jones, dividing the restaurant tab. Friends almost never discuss what they think and feel about the financial differences between them. Talking personally and vulnerably about money can be awkward and uncomfortable even among people with similar means, and downright threatening for people with substantial money differences between them.

What might happen if we all became competent and comfortable—perhaps even adventurous—dealing with money between us and our friends? At the very least, those of us with surplus might use it more often and more successfully to help the people we love. Perhaps it would also become less awkward to form friendships with people who have far more or far less than ourselves. Then our circles of community might widen to include those from whom we are usually separated because of socio-economic class and financial differences.

Building friendships across class lines would bring the injustice of our economic system smack into our lives, perhaps deepening our commitment to working towards a more equitable economics.

What if we even stepped out of the depersonalization of commerce, by building friendships with the people we do business with, and by doing business with our friends? Perhaps we would begin to view money less as a necessary evil, and more as a potentially nurturing

force in relationships—a vehicle to help nourish our community. •

Readers' View

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talk about their previous loan history. 3. Get professional help to draw up the agreement or to help with consulting or mediation the minute we need it. 4. Make reasonable agreements and define what mutual respect will mean throughout the relationship.

Empowering and entrusting someone else with money can be an incredible high. Funding in our backyards—including family members and loved ones—can deepen relationships. No matter how difficult the feelings get, if we create an atmosphere of honesty, we can create amazing changes. I urge you to loan at least a portion of your assets to a friend each year. I have, and my sense of abundance and community only grows.

— Tracy G.

The One Holding the Purse Strings

I have inherited wealth, and my best friend Jan is pretty broke. A few years ago I treated us both to a six-week trip to Europe. We tried to shift the power dynamics between us by taking turns “holding the purse.” Even though it was all my money, in one country Jan paid for everything and in the next country I did. Jan felt respected, and I learned how challenging it is for me to share control!

— P. D.

The Gift Goes On

I’ve made a number of loans over the years. Enough of them turned out awful that now most of the time I’d rather make gifts. I tell people, “What I’m giving you now, pass on to someone else someday, if you can.” Well, a while ago a woman I was becoming friendly with mentioned to me she was about to lose her farm because the bank wouldn’t give her a loan. I thought for

a few minutes, and said quietly to her, "Maybe I can help you." It turned out all she needed was \$6,000—something I could write a check for in a minute, but without it she would have lost all she had.

I offered it to her in my usual way as a gift, but she insisted on paying me back with interest. Now and again she writes me about a new gift or loan she made to someone else—letting me know my gift is still passing on.

— Nettie T.

In the Eye of the Beholder

I feel hurt when friends assume I'm on easy street because my father-in-law has a lot of money. One friend said with a smirk, "I'd sure like to be D.'s son-in-law!" Well, my wealthy relative has other places to put his money, so I'm usually scrambling for ways to support my music work.

On occasion I have asked friends to invest in my multi-media concerts. Of the people who tell me no, most people simply say, "Sorry, we don't have the money" or "We don't want to take the risk of losing it." But a few friends have pulled away from me emotionally; suddenly in their eyes I've become a solicitor instead of a friend. I guess they're scared I'm after their money. A few times I've been able to reach through their withdrawal and initiate an honest talk about what happened and end up closer for it. But I find some people aren't ready to confront their attitudes about money, so sometimes the barrier between us remains.

—A. P.

Slowly but Surely

I loaned my oldest friend \$10,000 (interest-free) to help his family business during a slump. I've just received the final check, after 8 years and 4 months of receiving \$100/month. Somewhere along the line I realized this was costing me perhaps \$3500 to \$7000 in "lost interest," but the regularity of the checks was worth it. That monthly gesture of faithfulness sang to me and buoyed my faith.

I just wrote a note to them (he's married) and enclosed a check for \$1000: a gift. "Spend on yourselves," I said, "on something luxurious and extravagant

you wouldn't otherwise feel you could afford." We're celebrating. A trust has been honorably fulfilled, a promise kept.

— JD R.

Creating Common Security

I've always hated that the only ways to protect against emergencies are to build up a big pot of money or deal with faceless insurance companies who don't give a damn. So fifteen years ago I launched an experiment—a "mutual security fund" with about a dozen friends. We dubbed the fund FIN, for Friend In Need, and it ran successfully for about eight years. It was one of the best experiences I've had with money between friends.

To start the fund we pooled \$6,000, and then each household contributed \$5/month/person (including kids covered). All of us had modest incomes, so pooling our money made a big difference. FIN members could request money from the fund for any emergency. If a person needed more than \$50, we would either call a special meeting or we would discuss it at our next monthly gathering (when we not only made consensus decisions about the fund, but enjoyed food, discussion, and singing together). If someone needed less than \$50, they could just withdraw it from the account and report it at our next meeting.

At first the more prosperous members were concerned they'd be carrying us poorer folk. Ironically, when the highest-income person got laid off, he ended up drawing more from the fund than anyone because his monthly bills were higher! Over the years that humble FIN paid for setting a child's broken arm...for moving expenses...for emergency room visits...for replacing my stolen bike (my only vehicle)... Despite a withdrawal every 2-3 months, the balance generally stayed between \$5,000 and \$8,000.

Sure it took an investment of time, but it brought us all a profound sense of security, not just from having money but from cultivating a caring community. We didn't just throw money at problems—we helped each other think of new solutions, pitched in with child

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For Further Information

Center for Compassionate Communication:

An educational center providing workbooks and tapes on practical communication tools for negotiating in relationships and resolving conflicts.

3468 Meadowbrook Blvd.,
Cleveland Heights, OH
44118 (216) 371-1123

Effectiveness Training:

A national network teaching communication skills. These skills are invaluable when dealing with money or any other emotionally-charged issue.

To obtain a list of classes near you, contact Effectiveness Training at:
531 Stevens Ave., Solano Beach, CA 92075-2093
(619) 481-8121

"Money and the Shape of Things" by Minnie Bruce Pratt in *Rebellion: Essays 1980-1991*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, 1991.

Includes a moving essay about what money means for those who have it and those who don't.

Join the Dialogue!

Our next issue's theme will be "What Makes Giving Satisfying?" Please write us about your experiences, of giving money to individuals and organizations, with details about what made them satisfying or unsatisfying.

We also welcome responses to what you've read here about money between friends, and questions for Dr. Dough.

Don't worry about style or length—just be yourself. Include your name, address, and phone number so we can contact you. If you can't stand writing but have something to share, please give us a call. We want to hear from you! Before printing anything, we'll review our edited version with you and ask if you want to use your name or be anonymous.

If we use your story, ask us and we'll give a free year's subscription to an individual or organization of your choice.

Our deadline for receiving material for the next issue is September 26. We also welcome submissions for the following issue, "Money, Work, and Self-Esteem."

Reader's View

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care when someone had to travel for a funeral, etc.

We closed up FIN when a bunch of us moved away—alas, before we could realize our vision of sowing the seeds for similar funds and federating them to handle larger emergencies.

— Charles G.

Don't Blame Yourself

I loaned \$5,000 to some good friends who were moving, about to have a child, and under enormous stress. We carefully wrote out a 4 year pay-back schedule.

Well, two years later they divorced, and the loan fell to the husband. After a long silence, I called him up about the loan. He apologized and we made a new agreement...but then I never heard from him. I called him again, we recontracted again...and again he broke the agreement. He went to great lengths to avoid me, and eventually I gave up. I could have gotten a lawyer to threaten him with court, but I really didn't want to. The cash itself wasn't that important to me, but being so disrespected by someone I had cared about was deeply painful.

I was determined not to become bitter. I mused a lot about the experience, and came to this way of viewing it: First, I re-affirmed my own generosity in making the loan. It was an expression of love and trust, and nothing can take the human goodness of that away. Second, I remembered that my friend's behavior is merely a symptom of how he leads his life—not a reflection on me. His failure to follow through does not mean I am a fool, or a wimp, or bad for having more money than he does. Certainly, this experience hurt our friendship—the loan uncovered a way that he isn't trustworthy. The loan didn't create this quality in him; it just exposed it, and I probably would have learned it in time anyway. Third, I'm proud I didn't decide from this painful experience that I should never loan money again. In fact, I've had several loan experiences since then that were loving and easy.

— Sara E.

The Birth of a Dream

I wanted more than anything to give birth to my third child at home, where her brother and sister had been born. But of course insurance wouldn't cover the \$1,200 midwife fee, and with my partner recently unemployed, there was no way we could afford it.

One day a letter arrived from my friends Jane and Larry, who are both midwives. It included a \$200 check, with a note "For your home birth fund." I burst into tears—this was a significant amount of money for them.

To accept their generosity, I had to step beyond my encrusted habits of self-reliance and isolation and allow them to help. This was hard for me, but I was so moved by their faith that my home birth would happen, I felt my heart crack open and say "yes."

I started telling everyone I knew how powerful an experience their letter was for me. To my shock, the friends I told about it spontaneously offered to contribute to the fund. (I had fully intended to write a letter asking for donations, but it was never necessary. The money just came in, from about 20 different friends and acquaintances.)

This fall our daughter Anika was born amid singing and candlelight, with her sister grinning and her brother present to cut the cord. The results of Larry and Jane's gift were powerful. Not only did I have a magical birth, but I stopped yearning for my dream community (and feeling depressed that I couldn't have it) and instead let myself experience how much community I have already.

— Dakota B.

Ask Dr. Dough

dollars and non-cents

Dear Dr. Dough,

At work I competently assess deals involving millions of dollars. Yet when a friend approaches me for money, I turn into jelly and say "yes" no matter what the circumstances. Is there any hope for me? —Freaked in Frisco

Dear Freaked,

Millions of savings and loan operators had the same problem. Don't worry—the bigger your assets the more the government will bail you out.

Dear Dr. Dough,

I've been so nervous that my friends will suspect that I'm a lot better off than they are that I don't feel like I can invite any friends to my home. What can I do?

—Lonely

Dear Lonely,

Try moving the Picasso to the upstairs bathroom.

Dear Dr. Dough,

I agonize about whether I can tell my best friend about the trust fund I just got from my grandfather. The times I mentioned it to a couple of other friends the smart alecks said to me, "I wish I had your problem." —Perturbed

Dear Perturbed,

Gee, I wish I had your problem...Send your problem to me at PO Box 009, Santa Monica, CA.

Dear Dr. Dough,

I'm embarrassed to confess that I've been lusting after my friend J's mother's jewelry. She has an awful lot of it and it's much more expensive than anything I could afford. I've even fantasized about stealing a couple of pieces. Can you help me? —Envious

Dear Envious,

Sorry. The one time, years ago, when I tried slipping a toy bat-mobile under my jacket, the store owner caught me. You need professional help.

Disclaimer: The opinions of Dr. Dough do not represent those of More than Money. In fact the editors are trying to uncover how this column got into this publication.

Impact Project Membership

Benefits

More than Money is a publication of The Impact Project, a non-profit organization offering counseling, support groups, workshops, and literature. We assist people with financial surplus (earned or inherited) who are seeking satisfying, effective ways to use their resources both for themselves and for the wider world.

Your subscription entitles you to other membership benefits if you want them:

1. A free copy of the 30+ page annotated bibliography and resource list, *Taking Charge of Our Money, Our Values and Our Lives*. Tell us if you want a copy (if you didn't already indicate it on the subscription response form.) We'll send you one as soon as enough requests come to send them bulk mail. Let us know if you would like it right away and we'll rush it to you first class.

2. A free half-hour Impact Project consultation. Topics people focus on in-

clude: understanding what money you have, spend and need; resolving inner conflicts about money; dealing better with money in relationships; creating fulfilling work; realizing a dream; tax-wise and satisfying giving. Contact The Impact Project at (617) 648-0776 to set it up.

3. Networking with other members. In a future issue of *More than Money*, we will describe our plans for connecting members with one another. The only people who are on the networking list currently are those who clearly specified that they are interested in networking opportunities on the membership response form. If you would like your name placed on removed from the networking list, send your request to:

More than Money
2244 Alder Street
Eugene, OR 97405

If you received a second copy of More than Money... you were one of our charter subscribers. We sent you an extra copy on purpose so that you could pass one on to a friend or group. If you like, just pull off the address label and send it off with new address and postage. We felt that getting our readers' help would be an effective way for us to get the word out about our new publication (rather than spending big money on advertising). Thanks for your help.

Why a Publication by and for the Rich?

The Aims of More than Money

People with wealth supposedly have it all. Targets of envy and resentment, we rarely have a safe forum for addressing the unique challenges that come with having surplus while deeply caring about others who have too little.

More than Money creates a network of kindred spirits across North America (and overseas) who don't always share the same views, but grapple with some of the same essential questions. By sharing a wide range of personal experiences, the publication explores how money is linked to virtually every other aspect of our lives—from how we get along in our closest relationships, to how we feel about work, to how we define and pursue our purpose in life.

More than Money informs its readers about inspirational models for people and organizations to use their financial resources with unusual integrity and power. It encourages all of us to pursue our dreams and to contribute our money, time, and talents towards creating a more just and sustainable world. •

Questions for Reflection

To spark discussion in study groups, workshops, and amongst friends.

1. Which of the stories and articles most closely reflect your own views? Did any inspire you? Annoy you? Why?
2. Among your friends, with whom have you discussed your financial situation and with whom not? Why? How has being open (or not open) about money affected each relationship?
3. Have you made loans to friends? What worked well and what was hard? Are there any ideas you would adopt from the newsletter?
4. To what extent would you like your resources to help the lives of friends go better? Where do you want there to be boundaries? Why?

Ways to use

More than Money

- * discuss it with your spouse or a friend
- * read it in the bathroom
- * hold a "salon" with friends
- * give it to your clients/financial advisors
- * think over the reflection questions

Subscription Information

More than Money is a benefit of membership in the Impact Project, a non-profit, member-supported educational organization helping people with wealth to contribute significantly their money, talents, influence, and creativity towards creating a more sustainable and just world. Our programs include counseling, workshops, literature, and special outreach to inheritors in their 20's. Members will receive information about benefits with their first issue (or you can write for further information.)

BolderGiving Resources

Available at www.boldergiving.org

Story and Video Library

Over 100 brief vignettes of extraordinary givers from across the economic spectrum. These Bold Givers have committed at least 20% of their net worth, income, or business profits toward making a better world.

Bold Conversation Series

Monthly teleconferences and online chats offer an informal chance to interact and learn from Bold Givers.

Explore Your Giving Potential

An invitation to explore in the coming year ways to become more bold in your own giving, and to take the next step that's right for you.

Give Half Pledge

Bold Givers, be counted! This pledge is for people of all financial levels who commit to giving 50% -- of income for three years or more, of business profits, or of net worth.

Bolder Giving Workbook

Through articles, exercises, and stories from outstanding givers, this workbook offers step-by-step guidance for people exploring their lifetime giving potential.

We Gave Away a Fortune

This award-winning book features stories of sixteen people who gave 20% or more of their wealth and highlights common themes among them.

More Than Money Journals

Explorations of the impact of money in our lives. Each 16-32 page issue includes personal stories, articles, and resources. Available in three different formats: free pdfs of each issue, print-on-demand books that compile 5-7 issues by theme, or separate articles you can browse online. (*See list of 40 back issues in right column.*)

More Than Money Journals

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- # 2 What Makes Giving Satisfying?
- #12 Creative Giving
- #16 Family Foundations
- #20 How Much to Give?
- #23 Partners in Community Change
- #26 Effective Giving
- #34 The Art of Giving

Lifestyle, Spending & Investing

- # 4 How Much is Enough?
- # 8 To Spend or Not to Spend
- #15 The Human Side of Investing
- #25 Working with Financial Professionals
- #27 Lifestyles of the Rich and Simple

Children and Inheritance

- # 9 Money and Children
- #24 What Are We Teaching our Children?
- #32 The Great Wealth Transfer
- #33 Embracing the Gift
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Relationships

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- #17 Cross-Class Relationships
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- # 7 Money and Spirit
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- #19 Women, Money, and Power
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- #36 Money and Work

Money and Values

- # 6 Outrageous Acts with Money
- #11 Embracing our Power
- #28 Who Knows You're Rich?
- #29 Money Changes Everything
- #31 The Everyday Ethics of Wealth
- #35 Money and Leadership
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