



Ideas for Living Well: Improving our Emotional and Financial Health During COVID-19

Across the country an unprecedented number of people are suddenly spending every waking and sleeping hour of the day at home. Some are working remotely, some are faking it and others are just trying to get through the day. We've lost our social networks, our work connections, our gym buddies, our walking groups and the human interaction that we so crave.

Therapists are warning that one of the least-talked about, but most significant consequence, from COVID-19 will be our deteriorating mental health as anxiety, depression and substance abuse grow exponentially.

But therapists will also tell us that the challenges from this pandemic can bring out the very best in us. Let's examine how we can magnify our best qualities, so we can live well.

What Good is Wealth Without Health?

Too many people don't realize that taking care of themselves physically leads to better financial tomorrows. Think about your goals and aspirations. Now ask yourself: why the risky behaviors during this pandemic?

- At the global level, it is estimated that the total volume of alcohol consumed per year increased by as much as 70% between 1990 and 2017. It gets worse. The University of Utah reports that sales of alcohol in the United States has increased 55% compared to this time last year. And women are especially more likely to use alcohol to cope.
- According to analytics firm Headset, marijuana sales in the U.S. spiked in mid-March, with sales growth peaking at 64% in the week ending March 16, the highest growth rate in over a year.

Your future depends on good health, for you, and the people you love and care for. "Healthy at 75" should be your new retirement goal.

Good health means you can both accumulate wealth and enjoy it. The risky behaviors do not help.



Seek Money Mindfulness

Money matters are complex and even scary. How you choose to approach finances mentally is key to mastering them and it's a mentality that can be worked on while we're following the current stay-at-home orders of our local and federal government.

Our most difficult money problems stem from our behavior. Some people are compulsive shoppers who spend every dime they have and then run up credit card debt when the checking account is empty. Then there are others who hoard money or lecture family members about spending too much. Both can be so extreme that they resemble devastating addictions. Often these people are in denial, thus not even aware of what is going on, which is a common phenomenon among addicts.

People with these bad habits need to adopt money mindfulness. This is an idea based on the concept that the path to happiness is more about wanting what we have than getting what we want. Money mindfulness is a concept that stresses awareness without obsession, circumspection without distrust and a cultured disposition to use money effectively to enhance your life and the lives of those around you. You will notice emotional, intellectual and spiritual assets in people who have matured to this level.

There is also a spiritual element to money mindfulness. It teaches us that the winner in life is not the one with the most toys at death. Real winners know how much is enough.

As the entire country grapples with the emotional challenges of the current stay-at-home orders, consider developing your own money mindfulness. You and your family will be glad you did.

Spending Time with OneAnother

Across the country an unprecedented number of couples are suddenly spending every waking and sleeping hour of the day with one another. So much so, that some are worrying that the divorce rate will spike in the coming months.



During such times, it's worth turning toward older retired couples and learning from their experiences, because studies find that marriages among older retired couples are the happiest.

In short, here is how happiness over a marriage evolves: early marriage features a lot of positive moments rife with conflict – new jobs, new house, new kids and more. Older couples on the other hand, enjoy the highest level of

companionship with relative lower levels of strife. Couples in the middle tend to fare the worst: they are raising kids, enjoying less of one another and disagreeing much more often.

Older couples primarily focus on supporting one another. And with COVID-19, the need for depending on others has increased dramatically. But, are you willing to be vulnerable? How often are you willing to ask your spouse or partner for support? With older people, the answer is yes and often.

Now is a good time to practice. You don't have to wait for old age to have a stronger relationship.

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