

Learn to understand your money patterns

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Certified Money Coach Donna Colfer

Do you know someone who just can't seem to hold on to money? Or someone who habitually squeezes a dollar bill so hard you'll swear you can hear President Washington groan?

Being a spendthrift or a pinchpenny are two examples of money patterns that people can develop, often from childhood.

"We rely on what we learn from our parents," said Certified Money Coach Donna Colfer, who has more than 25 years experience in financial management and coaching.

"But nobody taught them. The whole money conversation in our culture is taboo. There's so much shame and anxiety attached to money. It's never talked about, not even in therapy."

Beginning next Wednesday (1/25), Colfer is teaching a class at Sonoma Valley Adult School, "Understanding Your Relationship With Money," that will help students decipher the money patterns they've developed.

A former accountant, Colfer found that she grew bored with numbers over the years. "I wanted to get more into the psychology of money, and into patterns and behaviors," she said.

She describes her money coaching work as serving a bridge between the financial services industry (planners, CPAs, advisors) and the field of psychology (therapists).

"I bridge those two," she says, "because financial services doesn't have a great deal of knowledge about psychology, and therapists often don't have the money piece—in fact, they often need help themselves with money issues."

The class combines practical financial guidance with sound psychological principles, promising to guide students to a more conscious awareness of their own money beliefs, behaviors, and patterns. Here is Colfer's advice to people trying to figure out their own money patterns:

1. **Look back into your story.** Write your money biography. Start with your first money memory and continue to the present, looking at how patterns and behaviors may have developed.
2. **Look at your role models.** Who were your role models? Examine your parents' behaviors with money, and how that may have affected you. Were they on the same page with regard to money? Were there conflicts? If parents are not on the same page about money when a child is growing up, then often the child grows up to be confused and conflicted about money.
3. **Understand how past behaviors and patterns are active in your current life.** This confusion about money can cause children to have feelings of anxiety, shame, embarrassment, low self-worth and behaviors such as over-spending, over-giving, and being controlling, just to name a few.

"Understanding your Relationship With Money" is taught in 6 Wednesday sessions, 6:30-8:30 p.m., January 25-February 29. Cost: \$96.

For more information, [visit the website of Sonoma Valley Adult School](#) or [download the catalogue](#).
Donna Colfer's website: buildingwealthfromwithin.com