

## WRITING A MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Writing a money autobiography is a powerful tool for understanding the background of your choices about money. Don't worry about the writing itself – this is for you. There are no right or wrong answers. The following questions are simply guidelines to help you think. Focus primarily on feelings rather than stressing factual information. Paying attention to your own money story holds the potential of revealing patterns of how you have related, and still relating, to money. Understanding the messages you grew up with can open up new ways of dealing with money.

For the next few weeks, we will pose a few questions to consider. In the end, you should have a better understanding of your relationship to money.

1. What is your first memory of money? What messages did your father give you? What were your mother's messages? Whose values shaped yours?
2. What was your first earning experience? Do remember disagreeing with your parents' values as a teenager? Would you say that scarcity or abundance was the tone of your household?
3. Are you generous or stingy with your money? Do you spend money easily on yourself? Do you feel guilty, or grateful, about your money? What situations make you feel angry or resentful about money? How Come?
4. Think of someone whom you admire as a generous person. Reflect on what it is that you admire. How would you describe what it means to be a generous giver?
5. Do you feel rich? Do you feel poor. Do you have any friends in a significantly different economic situation? Do you tend to be on the giving end of things or the receiving end of things in general?
6. Do you know what percentage of your income you give away? How does giving money away make you feel? Is there a difference in your feelings about spending or giving away money, depending on whether you earned it outside the home or acquired it through an inheritance or spouse's income?
7. If a friend went through your checkbook (or bank statement), what would the entries say about your values? what do you spend your money on when you want comfort or solace?
8. If you have children, how open are you with them about your income and your assets? Giving money away? Your will? Do you have any special concerns about your children's relationship to money? Is the culture you are creating with your children different from how you grew up?
9. How has your gender affected your relationship with money?

**10.** If you were five times more bold, what would you do with your life?

**11.** If you could change one thing about your relationship to money, what would that be?

Courtesy of Mally Cox-Chapman, Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, CT  
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Did you know that Jesus talked in the Bible about money and how we use it,  
the most, only after the Kingdom of God?