



Investments: What Is Emotional Spending and Saving?

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What Is Emotional Spending and Saving?

How you use your money is a reflection of your thoughts and emotions. Another way to say this is that you handle your money according to how you think and how you feel. When your thoughts and emotions are unbalanced or unhealthy, this will show up as unbalanced spending, addictive behaviour or irrational decision making.

How Does This Work?

If you have an emotional issue or a negative thoughtform, and you don't know how to resolve it, money will be used to "paper over" the issue until it goes into your subconscious mind – or you are not thinking or feeling it any more. An example is if you believe you are unworthy of having a good job, you will struggle along in your present job. You may be technically making enough money to make ends meet and to enjoy some of your time, but this thinking makes you feel off. You want to feel better at a given moment in time, so you buy yourself a "treat". There is nothing wrong with doing this as long as the intentions are clear. If you buy yourself a treat all of the time instead of "fixing" the negative emotion, you will get into the habit of buying things all of the time. It may get to the point that you are not even enjoying the things you are buying – you are simply using the shopping as pain relief. If this happens often, you will start to run out of money and this will cause other issues.

What Is this Addictive Behaviour?

I use the word "addictive" to describe this situation because the pattern is similar to a drug or alcohol addiction. A trauma happens resulting in a negative emotion that cannot be resolved. The emotion stays in the body and resurfaces later on, causing negative feelings. Alcohol is consumed to soothe anger. Since the alcohol makes you feel better, it is consumed whenever the negative emotion comes up. This becomes a habit, and the alcohol is consumed regularly – and it becomes an association like "I am angry and I want to feel better." The alcohol starts to make you ill because too much alcohol stresses your body and you become "an alcoholic" when you don't have another way to feel better. Meanwhile, the original trauma and anger are still residing in the body.

For the alcoholic, the booze is the "hit" that makes you feel better. For money, buying things that gratify represents the "hit". You will know it is a hit because the euphoria wears off quickly and the problem is still there the next day. It may even look worse because you feel guilty at having gotten drunk, stoned or broke, and still the bad feelings persist.

How Do I Resolve this?

Money is often spent unconsciously – this means that money is spent in reaction to a feeling or thought rather than a conscious decision. The solution involves bringing the unconscious into the conscious so you can change the reaction. How do you do this?

When you buy things, write down what you purchase so you can see it. For frequent and small purchases, as well as for infrequent purchases, recording the transactions will allow you to see how much you spend over a period of time and whether it is reasonable or not. You will likely forget how many times you made frequent or rare purchases.

Pay in cash. The act of taking cash out of your bank account, counting it at that time, holding the money in your hand and counting it when you buy something forces you to ask yourself why you are doing a transaction. Since it is now conscious, the cold light of reason or observation may change your decision. Paying with a debit card, credit card or other electronic means does not register in your conscious mind the same way and the “check and balance” of your mind is typically bypassed.

Ask yourself how you are feeling when you decide to buy something. If you are craving something, are moody, irritated, frustrated or angry, you are likely to buy more. I speculate that you are forced to line up and wait for purchases or are put on hold when buying on the telephone to get you frustrated for this reason.

Don't shop hungry, thirsty, distracted or emotional. If you are not happy or satisfied when you enter a store or web site, you are bound to want to feel good instantly, and this means buying things you really don't need.

Man Versus Society

Unfortunately, handling money wisely and shopping because it is the best decision to make is discouraged. Consuming at all costs and for all reasons is encouraged. You are never asked if you need the item you are buying, whether you can afford it, whether you have better things to do with your money, whether you should maybe not shop at all or whether you should buy at a later time. The siren call of shopping as much as you can right now with debt if necessary is what you will constantly face from society. Since nobody will ask the questions, you will have to ask them yourself and provide your own balance to the insanity of spending blindly.

Emotional Saving

Is spending money bad? No, spending and saving are decisions that can be made for good or bad reasons. Can someone save too much money? The answer is a resounding yes. The frugal person may have their own demons to deal with which are: I don't have enough money, I may need the money tomorrow, I want to make sure I survive etc. This person may never spend when they should be buying things. This person can also be hungry, thirsty, distracted or emotional and can make decisions to never shop because that keeping their money makes them feel better.

Balance

The key is all about balance. If you can balance your thought patterns and emotional states, your bank account will also be balanced. If you are buying things because they are valuable to you and you are getting a lot of joy from them, than these things are likely worthwhile. You will also have to dig deeply

into where the feelings of lack, guilt, shame, rage and frustration come from. Once you realize that you are loveable, adequate, powerful and worthy, many of these addictions simply will not exist.