

Exercise 2. Take stock of your financial habits and patterns

This is a list of common destructive money habits and patterns. It will help you begin to see where you've put on the blinders and gone into hiding. Open your journal or your computer/tablet. Now, read over the statements below, and copy down any that feel true for you. When you finish, you'll have a list of your particular money patterns. For now, just hold on to the list. You don't have to do anything specific about it... yet.

1. I often run out of money before my bills are paid.
2. I maintain credit card debt.
3. I don't look at or reconcile my bank statements.
4. I don't look at my credit card statements.
5. I don't know how much interest I'm being charged.
6. I don't have a savings account.
7. I don't have a retirement account.
8. I have a retirement account, but I don't contribute to it regularly.
9. I don't know how much money I spend regularly.
10. I haven't created a budget, or I've created one and don't stick to it.
11. I often pay late fees.
12. I put off paying my bills.
13. I maintain an overdraft at my bank.
14. I rarely, if ever, look at my credit report.
15. I don't know my credit score.

16. I owe back taxes.
17. I don't have any money of my own.
18. I haven't been in the workforce for a long time.
19. I don't have any marketable skills.
20. I don't know anything about our finances.
21. My spouse takes care of all of our money matters.
22. I don't know how much I'm worth financially.
23. I don't have a will or other estate documents.
24. If anything happened to my spouse, I don't know if I'd be okay financially.
25. I shop compulsively.
26. I'm afraid if I spend any money, I'll end up destitute.
27. No matter how hard I try, I never seem to have enough money.
28. Since I don't earn the money myself, I feel guilty when I spend it.
29. I tend to give away my products or services.
30. I don't charge as much as I should for my products or services.
31. I'm afraid to ask for a raise or a promotion.
32. I work in a job I hate.
33. I would like to have a different career.
34. I don't know what I really want to do for a living.

35. I have always relied on others to take care of me financially.

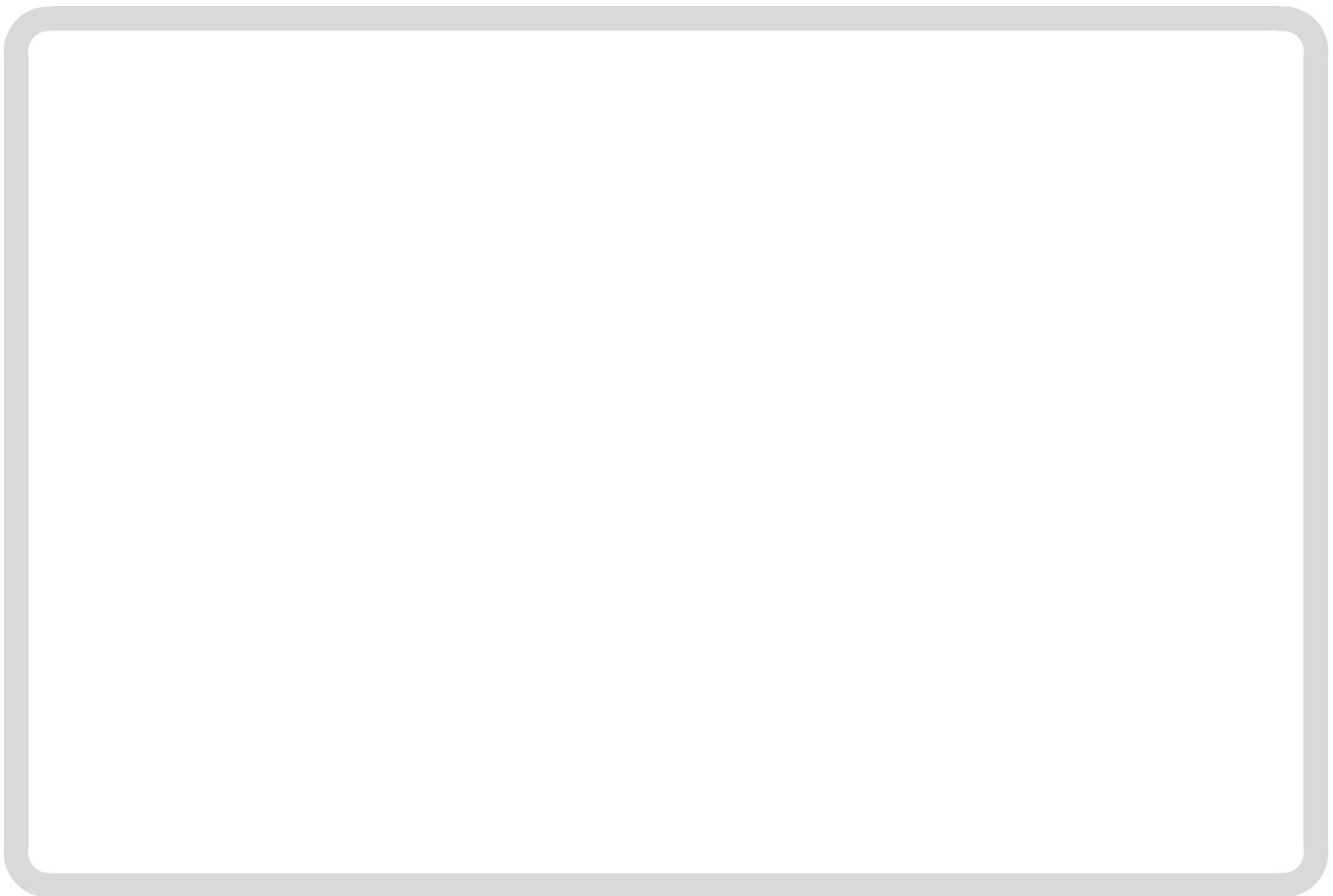
36. I don't know how to take care of myself financially.

37. Money seems to burn a hole in my pocket.

38. I spend money on other people but rarely on myself.

39. I like to treat myself with things I can't really afford.

Add your own statements:



If you find that you've copied down more of these than you hoped, don't use it as an excuse to beat up on yourself. Remember that you're taking action by working this process, so you're already on your way to changing your financial habits and patterns. It's only a matter of time!