

## **When a Saver Marries a Spender, Every Penny Counts**

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If you're a penny pincher but your spouse is penny wise and pound foolish, money arguments may frequently erupt. Couples who have opposite philosophies regarding saving and spending often have trouble finding common ground.

If you're a saver, you love having money in the bank, investing in your future, and saving for a rainy day. You probably hate credit card debt and spend money cautiously. Your spender spouse may seem impulsive, prompting you to think, "Don't you care about our future?" But you may come across as controlling or miserly to your spouse who thinks, "Just for once, can't you loosen up? We really need some things!"

Such different outlooks can lead to mistrust and resentment. Your money habits may have a lot to do with how you were raised and your personal experience. Being a saver or a spender may come naturally; instead of assigning blame, try to see your spouse's side.

Start by discussing your common values. Recognize that spenders may be more focused on short-term goals, while savers may be more focused on long-term goals. Ultimately, whether you're saving for a vacation, a car, college, or retirement, your money will be spent on something. It's simply a matter of deciding together when and how to spend it.

Sometimes couples avoid talking about money because they are afraid to argue. But talking about money may actually help you and your spouse avoid conflict. Scheduling regular money meetings could help you gain a better understanding of your finances.

To help ensure a productive discussion, establish some ground rules. Communication and compromise are key. Don't assume you know what your spouse is thinking, and be willing to negotiate. You can make savings an "expense" and allow some room in the budget for unexpected expenses. Having regular meetings to go over your finances will enable you to celebrate your financial successes or identify areas where you need to improve. Be willing to make adjustments if necessary.

Finally, recognize that getting on the same page is going to take some work. When you got married, you promised to love your spouse for richer or poorer. Maybe it's time to put your money where your mouth is.

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