

Money and The Fog of Recovery

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Money is like water: too little and you die of thirst; too much and you drown. Finding the right balance between having too much and too little money can be a life-long struggle, with most of us never feeling like we have the right amount. Yet, for all its benefits, our never-ending pursuit of money can become a curse, with financial stress being one of the most common causes of depression, divorce, suicide, and relapse. So, given it's dramatic impact on our lives, what is money?

Money is nothing more than future opportunity. It represents your capacity to do things you have yet to do: a bill, go on a vacation, eat a meal, etcetera. We live our lives according to our finances, with money being the most objective measure of what opportunities are available to us. So, it is of no surprise that we put so much time, energy and effort into the pursuit of money. However, when that pursuit becomes over-consuming, or its results are insufficient to meet our needs, then money can become a disruptive and destructive force in our lives.

The world is undergoing dramatic financial shifts as we adjust to globalization. The United States is no longer the sole consumer-superpower on the planet, and its economy is readjusting downward as the rest of the world's populations rise in wealth. For those caught in this vicious cycle of closed factories, lost jobs, and financially ruined neighborhoods, this is a challenging time that often offers little opportunity or financial reward. And for those who are still hanging on, it is often by a thread where yesterday's employment can suddenly evaporate with the morning's news.

Given how critical money is to our functioning in the world, it is little wonder how stressful our lives become when we have real, or perceived, limited funds. Many people today simply can't earn what they did before, while others earn plenty but still feel like they do not have enough. In the end, either scenario can become an opening to the fog of recovery, with relapse offering short-term emotional relief, but long-term devastation.

Whatever your situation, if you are not financially balanced, the best way to

regain your footing and avoid the fog of recovery is to differentiate between what you really need and what you merely want. Just because you want something does not mean that you really need it. But if you really need something, then its absence can have a dire impact upon your life and your future.

Generally, adults have four basic needs: food, clothing, shelter and employment. If you're not going hungry, you have things to wear, a place to sleep, and a way to earn enough money to support all four of these needs for yourself and anyone you support, then you have secured the foundation necessary to survive in today's world. Everything else is just icing on the cake. Unfortunately, many of us get lost in that icing, confusing wants with needs, thus creating impossibly tall cliffs for us to climb and, when overwhelmed, to fall off of.

Earning money is self-consuming in our society that it can become a substitute for our identity and self-esteem. How often when meeting someone for the first time do you ask them, "What do you do for a living?" Thus, lose of a job or career can leave us in a tailspin, wondering who we really are and what is our actual worth. As the world continues down the path of global revaluation, more and more people are being confronted with these questions each and every day. Yet, in the end, it all comes down to needs and wants. For those without money, focusing on needs can be a pathway to regaining a secure financial footing. For those with money, letting go of some wants can help to reduce their daily stress.

It is never easy to balance one's life and finances. However, regardless of whether you really do not have enough, or you have but feel like you will never have enough, the one thing that can destroy poor and rich alike is relapse. In times like these of hyper stress when the fog is closing in, a reality check of both needs and wants can go a long ways to maintaining one's stability and recovery.

Also in this series:

The Fog of Recovery (June, 2016)
<http://trafn.com/fogofrecovery.pdf>

One Offs and The Fog of Recovery (July, 2016)
http://trafn.com/fogofrecovery_oneoffs.pdf

Cravings and The Fog of Recovery (August, 2016)
http://trafn.com/fogofrecovery_cravings.pdf

Childhood Abuse and The Fog of Recovery (September, 2016)
http://trafn.com/fogofrecovery_childhoodabuse.pdf

Loneliness Abuse and The Fog of Recovery (October, 2016)
http://trafn.com/fogofrecovery_loneliness.pdf

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Robert offers anonymous and confidential substance abuse recovery telephone coaching to help those who wish to stabilize and maintain their recovery from substance abuse. Recovery coaching with Robert is available worldwide to anyone fluent in English who can reach him at **786-262-5750** (USA). For more information, please visit **<http://trafn.com/coach.html>**