

**Ep #19: The Money You See vs.
The Money You Can't See**



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FUN MONEY

with Jessica McKinley Uyeno

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Ep #19: The Money You See vs. The Money You Can't See

If you're listening to this episode live, happy Thanksgiving. And if you're not, let's just get into it, because this episode, I'm talking about something that is quite a problem if we're trying to stack that cash, which is that there is a huge difference between the money that you can see and the money that you can't. And unfortunately, the money that you can't see is the way you actually want to model your money habits after. So, let's get into it. Let's talk about it.

You are listening to *Fun Money*. This is your host, Jess McKinley Uyeno, and this is episode number 19.

I want to talk about something that your brain loves: the money that it can see, the kind that gleams, the kind that parks itself in the driveway. Currently, in my driveway is a Tesla and a Lexus. And those are the things that people see. When I walk around in my very affluent neighborhood, I see women with designer logos. I can see other people don't see that I'm wearing designer logos. So if we're meeting at the grocery store, maybe people would assume that the woman with a designer logo is richer than me, right? Because look at her clothes, look at her bag, look at her shoes. And I just don't spend my money in that way usually. If I do, it's not usually a well-known designer, and so people don't know that it was expensive because maybe it's a really nice set, like sweatpants set. I'm really into those. Like anything that feels like pajamas but is actually the highest quality thread count, I'm into it.

It is so easy to admire richness because richness is on display. We see the big house, the VIP travel, the handbags, the cars, the upgrades, the Labubu or Lafufu or whatever version of, "Oh damn, she's doing well." Because we can see it, right? Our brains naturally assume she must be wealthy, she must be doing it right. That's what success looks like. But here's the problem. Richness is visible. Wealth is visible. Why is that a problem? Because when you equate money to success, you subconsciously want to emulate people who have money. But since you

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don't actually know how much money the women showing a screenshot of her \$50,000 month and driving a Tesla actually has, you think, "Okay, she must be rich. My goal is the Tesla," or "I admire her," and we start to model what she's doing. But what can you see about what she's doing with her money? You can only see what she is spending.

That's a huge problem because the spending habits don't equate to wealth. True wealth is the money that you don't spend, the number that's quietly stacking in the background, compounding while everyone else is performing for each other. Now, listen, this episode is called *Fun Money*, and I have no shade for any one of the 6 money games, including spending or earning. I made that joke about the \$50,000 screenshots on the Tesla because I have a Tesla, because I sometimes celebrate my clients' earning wins or my own earning wins with screenshots.

Anyone who hates on that is because they're hating on people who are doing it in like a predatory way, who don't have transparency. And that's a problem, right? Any one action on its own is usually not problematic unless it's coupled with some sort of secret, some sort of opposite part of their business or their life that they're not showing. And that's why on here, I'm always talking about how the best thing we can do for our society and for other women and for ourselves is to have more money conversations, is to be transparent about it, is to not worry about sounding dumb. It's to not worry about asking a dumb questions, to not worry about like, "Oh, this is embarrassing. I have a question about credit cards or debt, and I have debt." And it's like, "Okay, if you have debt, we want to be aggressive about it, so we have to talk about it. Let's just go, let's talk about it so we can get through it."

Your money situation right now is temporary. Like there is a time where I was broke as a joke, and you know what got me out of it? Talking about it, asking for help, reading books, being like, "Okay, let's go." Like asking everyone I knew who I thought was rich, "Hey, how can I be more rich like

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you?" But what I didn't understand was I could only see the people who were having rich behaviors, but I didn't know who was wealthy until I started having conversations about this.

So you can live in a rich area, as I do now, and didn't a couple of years ago. You can work with high-earning women, as I do, and still be shocked at the wildly different net worths of people who appear equally successful because net worth just doesn't show up on Instagram. It doesn't drive past you in the Whole Foods parking lot. It doesn't take tropical vacations, or if it does, certainly all of these tropical vacation goers were not created equal. You don't see net worth, fortunately and unfortunately, right? Because it's not relevant. However, if we could see one money thing about each other, net worth would be a good one because it's something that you want to strive for.

Money is not evil. Money is not a problem. If we're being honest, we all want to have enough. We all want to be able to live the life that we want to live, and that will absolutely require money. But the other thing we want, we want to be able to have the life we want now, to live the life we want today, and we want safety for our future. And your net worth is what allows you to have the safety for when the unexpected happens, which it will, because life be life-ing. You don't see investment accounts, you don't see savings rates, and because we don't see it, it's really hard to aspire to. Like, how do you model yourself after the wealthy women when you don't know who she is? Who is the wealthy woman?

Your brain thinks it's more fun to be rich than wealthy. And honestly, it is fun to be rich. I enjoy buying things. I plan to spend money shopping women-owned businesses tomorrow on Black Friday, and I'm going to go cray. I mostly like to spend on travel though, things that make my life more convenient, or I like to spend on other people. I just love to give gifts. But you know what's actually fun? Spending money that you have, investing

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money and then watching it grow, watching your future get bigger instead of your bills.

The problem is that your brain gets dopamine not just from the stuff, but from the social payoff of looking successful: the acknowledgment and the admiration and the status and the respect. It is real, right? It's real. It's real in your brain. It's a real temptation. But it's also this money game that we're playing. Is it real, or is it imagined? Richness gets applause maybe, but wealth, what does that get? Silence, mostly for a long time. It's like such a boring process. And what is this show called *Fun Money*? And I'm telling you, "Oh, okay. In order to have a fun money life, you need to have a boring process." It's so counterintuitive.

So how can we make it more fun? Well, first of all, I think it's really fun to play from a level of calm and maturity. It is so fun for me to be like, "Okay, cool. I'm going to just take this week off after Christmas," because I don't have my son for Christmas. It's so sad, and I always get sad every other year. I don't have my son. He's with his dad for Christmas. So the week after, I'm like, "Ah, I want to do something so fun with our family." So we're just trying to plan something, and it wasn't it's a last-minute plan, and I'm thinking, "You know what? This is really fun," because I don't do this on the regular.

And so because I have been able to lean into the boring process of automating my savings and my investing and not spending on things that I easily could, not upgrading my lifestyle every single time that I make more money. And when I make more money, I pay myself a salary. Do you know that? Most entrepreneurs take owner draws. They don't even pay themselves a salary. They just spend from their business account and they pay off their credit card. No, I pay myself a set salary, and that feels so powerful, because when you do that, and this is an episode for another day, right?

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But when you pay yourself a salary, it is impossible to have that lifestyle creep up, because when I have a month like I had in September of making \$82,000, what did I do? Did I spend exorbitantly more? In fact, I spent \$0 more. I really did not spend anything more. I kept saying, "Oh, I'm going to do something. I'm going to do something fun." But my life is fun. My life is already so fun that I didn't even feel the need to spend a single dollar more. That is wealth.

So we want to find ways to flip the script and to tell our brain, "No, actually, what I really want is this boring process and what does it allow?" and you want to visualize that. So I'm talking about this. I'm talking about my own experience with it because I hope that this is something that will resonate and it will stick. It'll be sticky in your brain and you'll be like, "Ooh, that actually sounds nice," because I wish more people talked about this, this level of calm, of just like, not of like, "Oh yeah, and when you make this money, you could fly on a private jet and you could do this." But listen, I have never flown on a private jet, and I will. Like, one day we're going to do it.

But really for me, this is the feeling that I think everyone should be chasing, this feeling of just like, I feel so powerful because I don't have to spend a single dollar to feel powerful. Most people think it feels powerful to be able to like spend whatever I want. Actually, you arrive at this certain place and you're like, "Actually, it feels powerful to have the money and not spend it. I feel powerful over myself, over my brain." And I just feel like, "Oh my gosh, I'm in such control." You have to train your brain, literally, to find fun, pride, and identity in saving and investing, in the money nobody sees, because at the end of the day, savings is the gap between your income and your ego.

Your income is what comes in. Your ego is what goes out. Your savings, that's where your growth happens. That's where your freedom is created. That's the score that actually matters in the Fun Money game. And when you start playing that game, you start winning long before anyone can see

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it. And so you get to clap for yourself. And if you want some sort of social recognition, talk to the people that you trust about it. This is why I love my mastermind, because we celebrate all sorts of money celebrations. And this is the type of conversations that we have on the regular.

So this conversation feels like, "Ooh, this is edgy." Like, this is no one talks about this, about their they just hit inside The Most Interesting Woman in the World mastermind. One of my clients was like, "Yeah, I just paid off 30% of the business loan," like in one chunk that I took to buy this business that she bought a year ago. And we're all like, "Yeah, hell yeah." I'm like, "Who is there like talking about their like business debt, sexy wins?" What a flex. Okay, so what do you do?

Fortunately, I am fortunate to know people's numbers, and so I have an idea of what is normal, where no one else really knows. Like I see who is spending within their means. I see who's carrying credit card debt, which is 48% of US citizens, by the way. So it's about half people carry over credit card debt from month to month. That is a huge problem. And again, it doesn't mean like this is not to shame you of like, "Oh my God, if you've done it." Listen, most of us have done it. And so, but it's a problem if you don't know how to get out of it, if you're not doing anything about it, if you don't think it's a problem, it's like, let's go. We don't want to aspire to this. We don't want to normalize it.

The biggest issue is that it's all happening in the dark. We don't talk about it. We don't even know what normal is. So here are some admirable habits of my dimes, my level 10 players in the money game. Here's what they're doing when no one is looking. Are you ready?

Write this down. 6 things. Number one: she's living below her means. That means she's just spending less than she's making. It's crazy, but that is rule number one. Just spend less than you make. And one of the biggest problems here is most people don't even know what they can afford to be

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spending, and most entrepreneurs don't they want to say, "Well, I don't really know how much I make because it varies." It's not an excuse. Then you need to have a tighter budget, tighter process. You need to pay more attention to your numbers, right?

Okay. She's living below her means. The second thing she's doing is she's automating some kind of investment monthly, whether it's \$50 a month or \$1,000 a month or whatever, she is automating investments into the market or into some sort of way that her money is compounding. Okay?

Number three: if she wants something she can't afford, wait for it, she makes more money, or she waits until she can. She doesn't just buy it. If she wants something she can't afford, she's motivated by that in a good way. She's turned on. She's like, "Okay, cool. A goal. Let's go. I just got to make more money." She does the math, or she just waits and she saves up until she can, and then she does it. So simple, but yet it's really profound. That is a big difference between my level 10 players in the money game and the ones who just can't control themselves.

Number four: she's clear about what spending is really, like her love language. So she knows what she loves and what feels good to spend on, and then she doesn't spend a lot on anything that isn't. So for example, for me, my house, I've never been someone who really cared that much about where they lived. It's so weird, but I like to be out of the house. I'm not a homebody at all. I moved a ton as a kid. I moved a ton as a young adult. I was always in apartment living. I just like don't care that much. Now that I own a house, which is the decision of my husband, which was perfectly fabulous for my kids and for him, and I love living here. I do.

But now that we can afford a bigger house than we have, I don't need one. We're not going to get one, because I am not tempted. I know that will not make me happier to have a bigger house, a different house, a nicer house. It's like, I like the house that I have. It's perfectly great, and I would rather

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that money go towards my future or towards other things that I enjoy spending on. You know what makes me happy? The fact that at least once a week, probably more like two or three times a week if I'm being real, I go out to dinner or lunch or breakfast with my family, and we like sit and we eat around food. I'm Italian. This is how I feel love. Okay, so she knows. She's clear, like, what is her love language of spending and what isn't. And she spends on those things and then she saves where other people are saying like, "Oh, most people love" - cars are also not the thing for me, even though I know I just got a Tesla, and maybe now I do love cars because I do love this car. But otherwise, I've never I've never spent on cars.

Next is number five. If and when she takes on debt, she's aggressive and clear about her plan to get rid of it. So she just doesn't really take on debt. Although that's not true. A lot of my dimes, they'll take on business debt or for short-term things that they're very clear about. They're like, "Okay, I'm willing to take on debt for this short-term scenario. It's a rare thing. It's a one-time thing, and then I'm going to make it up." But it's not a habit at all, and she's aggressive and clear about the plan to get rid of it.

And number six, she is generous, but never at the expense of her well-being. She's not over-giving. She's not just saying, "Oh my gosh, it's Christmas. I have to get everybody everything they want." It's like, what? No, it's not going to make them love you more. No. But she's generous, and because she knows that she likes to be generous, she doesn't overspend in other ways so she can be generous in the ways that she wants to be. And generous is really more just a quality thing, not a quantity thing, and it's not a dollar amount, right? It's the thought that counts.

So if you're already a dime, do me a favor and talk about one of these habits with your girlfriends. It is fun to celebrate a rich move, like a dream bag. I don't know about this life. I'm not like a bag girl. But the world needs more wealthy role models. And the way, unfortunately, to have this happen,

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this shift in the dynamic is that we just need to open up about it. We need to have more conversations about what wealth really looks like.

And if you're an aspiring dime, start getting transparent. Pay a non-predatory financial advisor. I recommend using Hello Nectarine because they only charge hourly. Take a look at your numbers. Get a plan in place. Read the money books from the list I recommended in one of the first 3 episodes. I'm not sure which one. And ask someone you think is wealthy if they do one of these 6 things. Just get the conversation started. Join the mission or you know, most interesting woman in the world, if you are looking to have wealth be your core.

Our money habits are often inherited, too, as I talked about in the episode with my dad last week. So if you're with extended family today this holiday, or if you're watching it a little later and you just were, take note. What happened? Look around if you're there right now, or think back to this dinner table experience. I want you to notice what money patterns were handed to you, not through lectures but through osmosis. Ask yourself, like, who in my family, who models richness? Who models wealth? Who models fear? Who models generosity? Who models performative spending? Who's the like, you owe me \$7.13 transferred in Venmo because you purchased a movie on Fandango? Who is the avoidant person when it comes to money? Who's the person that's always trying to pay for the whole thing and maybe they shouldn't be, right? And then here's the real magic. Ask yourself the question that really matters, which is which pieces am I still carrying? And do I actually want them? We inherit more than recipes from our family. We inherit money beliefs and money behaviors and money identities. And as you listen to this, you get to choose, like, what do I keep? What do I release? And what do I reinvent for future me?

Your wealth is going to explode when you flex the courage to put down the beliefs you never consciously picked up, the ones that are unhealthy when it comes to richness and short-term money play. Since it is Thanksgiving, I

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just want to take a minute to say that I'm so grateful that you're choosing to be here, having this conversation with me. Life is so much better when women can feel playful and powerful with money, and that was not always my experience with it. It just wasn't.

This show is my way of paying forward every lesson that I learned after I got divorced and was just at absolute zero in my 30s and felt like, "Okay, I don't want to just appear rich. I don't want to pretend. I want to be unequivocally financially free." And this is absolutely possible for any woman who wants it. This is not one of those scenarios where you look around and you think, "Ah, must be nice for her." No, it is nice. And you know when it's nice? When you decide that you are no different from anyone that is wealthy. You are no different. We all have our circumstances. We all have disadvantages. We all have only the cards that we were dealt. But you absolutely can create wealth with any cards that you are dealt. And if you need help, keep listening to the show and reach out to me. See you next week babes. Love you mucho.

That's it for today's episode of *Fun Money*. But if your brain is buzzing and you want more, come hang out with me over on Instagram, @JessMcKinleyUyeno or visit us at FunMoneyPod.com because that's where the real magic happens. Until next time, stay bold, stay interesting, and for the love of God, go do something fun with your money!