

SAVER OR SPENDER:

Financial Planning for Couples with Different Money Mindsets



5 Common Financial Issues for Couples

Couples often encounter financial issues that can lead to conflict. Here are five of the most prevalent financial problems that couples argue about:

1

Budgeting and Spending Habits

Disagreements may arise when one partner is more frugal and inclined to save while the other tends to spend more freely. According to a survey by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), 73% of couples cited money management and spending as the most common cause of conflict in their relationships.

2

Debt and Financial Obligations

Clashes may occur when partners have different attitudes toward debt repayment or struggle with financial burdens. According to a recent study by Ramsey Solutions, 41% of couples who have debt say they argue about money—and it's what they argue about the most.

3

Financial Goals and Priorities

Disagreements may arise when partners have conflicting visions for short-term and long-term financial objectives, such as retirement savings, purchasing a home, or funding education. In fact, mismatched financial priorities is a leading cause of arguing in relationships.

4

Income Discrepancies & Unequal Financial Contributions

Unequal earning power may create feelings of imbalance or resentment, affecting financial planning and allocation of resources. Disparities in income or financial responsibilities can lead to debates about fairness and the division of financial obligations.

5

Lack of Communication and Financial Infidelity

A lack of open communication about finances and instances of financial infidelity (such as hiding purchases or secret accounts) can erode trust and lead to conflict in a marriage. A poll from the NEFE revealed that two in five Americans admitted to financial infidelity against their partner, with 85% stating that indiscretion affected the relationship in some way.

Your Financial Harmony Checklist

The following checklist is designed to guide you through essential conversations and decisions, helping you and your partner align your financial goals, habits, and strategies.

Identify Your Financial Personality:

- Determine if you are more of a saver or a spender.
- Reflect on how your upbringing influenced your financial habits.

Open Dialogue on Finances:

- Schedule a monthly financial meeting with your partner.
- Share your financial goals, fears, and aspirations.

Set Shared Financial Goals:

- Agree on at least one short-term and one long-term financial goal together.
- Outline steps to achieve these shared goals.

Develop a Joint Budget:

- Track your spending for a month to understand your habits.
- Create a budget that aligns with both partners' spending and saving tendencies.

Plan for Debt Management:

- List all debts and decide on a repayment strategy.
- Consider how to prevent future debt accumulation.

Investment and Savings Strategy:

- Evaluate your risk tolerance levels and investment preferences.
- Decide on a savings rate for retirement goals.

Manage Financial Accounts:

- Decide on having joint, separate, or both types of financial accounts.
- Set rules for how and when to use these accounts.

Continual Financial Education:

- Commit to learning about finances together (e.g., books, courses, workshops).
- Regularly review and adjust your financial plan as your life changes.

Seek Professional Financial Advice:

- Consider consulting a financial advisor to discuss your combined financial strategy.
- Prepare a list of questions and concerns for your financial advisor.

How to Bridge the Gap and Build a Strong Financial Future

- Continually have open and honest communication.
- Identify common financial goals and determine what matters most.
- Compromise as needed and find reasonable middle ground.
- Establish a joint budget to ensure financial transparency and accountability.
- Consider working with a financial advisor to provide objective insight.

Get Your Questions Answered

Remember, aligning your finances is ongoing and evolves with your relationship. We encourage you to revisit these strategies, communicate openly, and seek advice as needed. Together, you can build a financial future reflecting your dreams and realities.

If you have any questions, [contact an experienced financial advisor today](#).