

00:01 Megan: Improving your sense of financial well-being can feel challenging, overwhelming at times, but with a bit of discipline and some good advice, you can get there. At Golden 1 Credit Union, we're here to help, with unbiased financial advice and education. As a not-for-profit, member-owned credit union, our main goal is to help you reach your goals, whether you're making a major purchase, starting an investment fund, or just seeking peace of mind. Together we can be golden!

Hello and welcome to The Golden One Financial Wellness podcast. I'm Megan.

00:37 Daniela: And I'm Daniella, thank you so much for joining us.

00:44 Megan: This time of year often finds us reflecting on what we are grateful for. We consciously take the time to slow down and think about being thankful. Some of us grew up going around the dinner table and sharing something we're thankful for. But thankfulness is only the first step. It's much more fulfilling if we can elevate our thankfulness to gratitude, a state of being that makes us more aware of the sources of joy and hope in our lives...

01:16 Daniela: Your right Megan, and many people don't realize this; there is an interesting connection between gratitude and finances: The more grateful you are for what you have- a job roof over your head, food in the fridge- the more thankful you become about making decisions that align with your values. Our financial, physical and mental well-being are all interconnected. So gratitude can create a virtuous cycle that can lead to happiness, contentment, and even a feeling of enhanced financial well-being.

01:48 Megan: That's true, but these days, people might find it challenging to feel grateful when so many aspects of our financial lives feel stretched thin by the pandemic, inflation, and other more common factors- like paying our monthly bills. Afterall, these things chip away at our budget and can dampen our feelings of gratitude. That's why learning to practice being grateful is so important. When we practice being grateful, we began to feel greater fulfillment. This state of mind can help reduce our feelings of impatience and help us resist the temptation to spend and pursue instant gratification.

02:29 Daniela: You know, a lot of Americans say that they're being stretched thin. But an interesting study was recently published by Slickdeals that paints a different picture. The study showed that- this year- shoppers are spending an average of \$314 a month on impulse buys. That's more than \$3700 a year. This average monthly impulse spending metric is up from \$276, 2021 and \$183 in 2020. Of course, for many of us, the pandemic changed the way we shop. These impulse buys go far beyond magazines and candy bars scooped up from the grocery store checkout lines.

Every day we're faced with social media sites and influencers urging us to spend... We all know the saying, "Instagram made me buy it", right? That says a lot about how social media can affect our impulse buys. But by mindfully practicing gratitude, we can reduce impulse buying and hopefully, learn to better understand the emotional reasoning that drives our purchases. So how can we resist instant gratification? Figuring out if a purchase is a need or a want can really help us cultivate financial patients. If we can shift our perspectives and resist the temptations of today will begin to recognize the benefits of delayed rewards. In other words, reducing our splurge purchases, we can

re-allocate those funds towards bigger goals; like furthering our education, taking a vacation, or saving for retirement.

04:02 Megan: Even if we tend to appreciate purchases more when we take our time and save up for them, than we do for those impulse buys, it can be tough to fight the urge for instant rewards. Often it can come down to weighing out wants versus needs. Telling yourself: I already have shoes and clothes; so do I really need more clothes? Can I be thankful for what I already have and wear it a little longer to maximize the value from those purchases?

Asking yourself these poignant questions takes work and a conscious effort. It's not always an easy or desirable way to approach want-based purchases- or any purchases for that matter. But practicing gratitude helps because it forces us to look at things from a more sensible perspective. When we look back at impulse purchases, it might be hard to find meaningful items. But if we practice saving for things that are more meaningful to us, it can help us feel more fulfilled and happier with our financial choices.

For example, the average cup of coffee in the US is \$3.28, but the coffee I buy from my local coffee shop runs \$5 a CUP without the whip cream! I buy that cup of coffee almost everyday. That adds up to about \$1800 a year... Wait a second! I could have taken that girls trip to Napa Valley with that money...

05:41 Daniela: Yeah! You could have saved a ton of money by brewing your own coffee at home. When you look at these purchases through a different lens, you may find yourself thinking... I already have that, and I'm thankful for what I have. Do I really need to go out and spend my money on this stuff?

If you can delay gratification, you're more likely to save up for big purchases rather than tapping your credit card and having to pay interest on that splurge purchase later.

06:07 Megan: Exactly. This process of avoiding impulse shopping and instant gratification can help you save money on interest or even help you decide whether a purchase is something you really want or need after all. But there's a lot more to this weighing in of needs versus wants. And I think much of it has to do with our own values and priorities- the "why" behind what we value and our goals... For example, my "why", my personal "why" revolves around my children. I don't ever want to be in a position where my financial choices to keep up with my peers or engage in impulse shopping causes my children to go without.

06:51 Daniela: I couldn't agree more. Our personal "why" is an essential part of the choices and decisions we make. My "why" stems from being a first generation immigrant, a first-born daughter, and my family's first university graduate. So, everything I do is motivated by my desire to give back to my mom and help support my younger sister.

Practicing being grateful for what I have, helps me keep my spending in line and reinforces my "why". Keeping our "whys" top of mind helps us make smarter financial decisions. In turn, when we recognize and are thankful for what we have and all that's been given to us, we often feel the need to give back. Gratitude acts as the motivator for a pay-it forward mindset. When our actions or gifts are met with an expression of gratitude, we are more likely to repeat the behavior in the future.

07:42 Megan: I think practicing gratitude can put us all in a giving mood. When you're in a giving mood, you tend to look for ways to set aside money for the things you're most passionate about and want to support. And any time you're consciously realigning your budget to fit your passions and help support your "why", well... You're helping support your financial and overall well-being. I'd be willing to bet- this is something we can all stand behind.

08:12 Daniela: The problem with gratitude and feelings of thankfulness is that they pass so quickly. When a positive event first happens, there's often a rippling effect of many positive events thereafter. For example, when we buy a new car, we're likely to be excited about our purchase, we love showing it to our friends and family so they can share in our excitement. We take the car on our first road trip and we play our favorite songs for the first time on the new sound system.

When good things happen and create a cascade of positive emotions like excitement, relief, pride, and of course, happiness- eventually these feelings wear off. To get them back again, we may knowingly or unknowingly shift our standards and expectations upward. And once we've reached them, we've got to keep reaching higher and further to feel satisfied again. This is the root cause of lifestyle inflation- the want, not necessarily the need for a nicer car, bigger house and better technology.

09:10 Megan: So, I circle back... To gratitude being more than a feeling of thankfulness but a state of being... Gratitude requires a conscious effort. It can be a challenge, but a winnable challenge we must constantly strive to maintain. We all make mistakes, and financial mistakes are part of life. But what's important here is how we recover from these missteps. Practicing an attitude of gratitude can create a count your blessings mindset that helps us resist frivolous temptations and overcome our financial setbacks. We began to develop an appreciation for the good and the bad, because negative experiences can also cause us to re-evaluate our plans, values, and adjust our budgets and positive ways.

10:03 Daniela: This discussion really has me self-reflecting and writing down the things I'm grateful for. I hope that everyone has learned how practicing an attitude of gratitude, weighing out needs versus wants, and keeping in mind our "why" can significantly impact our finances and our overall well-being.

If you haven't already done so, subscribe to the Golden 1 Financial Wellness podcast on Apple, Google and Spotify to get more financial tips and insights. Plus go to the financial wellness tab at golden1.com to find many useful resources like videos, interactive modules and webcasts. You don't even have to be a member to use them!

Thank you so much for joining us today. I'm Megan.

and Daniela. Wishing you financial health and happiness- and, as always, reminding you to.

stay... golden!

10:55 Megan: Golden 1 Credit Union is insured by NCUA.

11:00 Megan: If you are joining us for our November 2022 sweepstakes, your golden word is "thankful". Don't forget to complete your entry form on the financial wellness tab at golden1.com.