personal finance freedom

Unlocking Your Financial Destiny: A Comprehensive Guide to Personal Finance Freedom

personal finance freedom is more than just having money; it's about having control over your life, making choices unburdened by financial stress, and pursuing your passions with confidence. It signifies a state where your income consistently exceeds your expenses, your savings and investments are growing, and you have the capacity to handle unexpected events without derailing your long-term goals. This article will serve as your in-depth roadmap, exploring the fundamental pillars of achieving this coveted state, from understanding your current financial landscape to implementing strategic planning and cultivating a mindset of abundance. We will delve into crucial areas such as budgeting, debt management, smart investing, and the psychological aspects that contribute to lasting financial well-being.

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Understanding Your Current Financial Situation

The cornerstone of any journey towards personal finance freedom begins with an honest and thorough assessment of where you stand today. This isn't a judgment, but rather an objective snapshot that will inform all subsequent strategies. Without a clear understanding of your income, expenses, assets, and liabilities, any financial plan is akin to navigating without a compass.

Assessing Your Income Streams

Begin by cataloging all sources of income. This includes your primary salary, any freelance earnings, rental income, dividends, or other passive revenue. It's important to differentiate between gross income (before taxes and deductions) and net income (take-home pay), as the latter is what you actually have available for spending, saving, and investing. Understanding the consistency and reliability of each income stream is also crucial for accurate forecasting.

Tracking Your Expenses Diligently

The next critical step is to meticulously track every dollar you spend. This exercise often reveals surprising insights into spending habits. Categorize your expenses into fixed costs (rent/mortgage, loan payments, insurance) and variable costs (groceries, entertainment, utilities). Utilize budgeting apps, spreadsheets, or even a simple notebook to monitor where your money is going for at least a month, ideally three. This granular detail is essential for identifying areas where you can potentially cut back.

Calculating Your Net Worth

Your net worth is a powerful metric that represents your overall financial health. It is calculated by subtracting your total liabilities (debts) from your total assets (what you own). Assets can include savings accounts, investments, real estate, vehicles, and any other valuable possessions. By regularly tracking your net worth, you can see tangible progress towards your personal finance freedom goals and make adjustments as needed.

Building a Solid Financial Foundation

Once you have a clear picture of your current financial standing, the next phase involves building the essential infrastructure that supports long-term financial stability and growth. This foundation is built on sound financial habits and strategic planning, setting the stage for achieving true personal finance freedom.

Creating a Realistic Budget

A budget is not a tool of restriction; it's a blueprint for your money. Based on your income and expense tracking, create a budget that allocates funds for necessities, savings, debt repayment, and discretionary spending. Popular budgeting methods include the 50/30/20 rule (50% needs, 30% wants, 20% savings/debt) or zero-based budgeting, where every dollar is assigned a purpose. The key is to find a system that works for you and that you can consistently adhere to.

Establishing an Emergency Fund

An emergency fund is a non-negotiable component of financial security. This fund, typically held in a readily accessible savings account, should cover three to six months of essential living expenses. It acts as a critical buffer against unexpected events such as job loss, medical emergencies, or significant home repairs, preventing you from derailing your financial progress by incurring high-interest debt.

Setting Clear Financial Goals

Define what personal finance freedom means to you by setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) financial goals. These could range from saving for a down payment on a home, paying off student loans, funding your retirement, or traveling the world. Having well-defined goals provides motivation and direction for your financial planning efforts.

Strategic Approaches to Debt Reduction

High-interest debt can be a significant impediment to achieving personal finance freedom. Proactive and strategic debt management is therefore paramount to freeing up cash flow and accelerating wealth accumulation.

Understanding Different Types of Debt

It's important to differentiate between good debt (e.g., a mortgage on a appreciating asset, student loans with reasonable interest rates) and bad debt (e.g., high-interest credit card debt, personal loans for depreciating assets). Focusing on eliminating high-interest, non-asset-building debt should be a top priority.

Debt Snowball vs. Debt Avalanche Methods

- **Debt Snowball Method:** This popular strategy involves paying off your smallest debts first, regardless of interest rate, while making minimum payments on others. Once a debt is paid off, you roll that payment amount into the next smallest debt. This method provides psychological wins and can be highly motivating.
- **Debt Avalanche Method:** This approach prioritizes paying off debts with the highest interest rates first, while making minimum payments on others. Mathematically, this method saves you more money on interest over time.

Choosing between these methods often comes down to personal preference and what keeps you most motivated on your debt-free journey.

Negotiating with Creditors

If you are struggling to manage your debt, don't hesitate to contact your creditors. Many are willing to work with you to set up more manageable payment plans, reduce interest

rates, or even offer hardship programs. Open communication is key to finding solutions.

The Power of Saving and Investing

Once debt is under control and an emergency fund is established, the focus shifts to growing your wealth through consistent saving and strategic investing. This is where your money begins to work for you, paving the path to financial independence.

The Importance of Consistent Saving

Regularly saving a portion of your income is fundamental. Automating savings transfers from your checking account to your savings or investment accounts each payday ensures that you consistently set money aside, treating savings as a non-negotiable expense rather than an afterthought.

Exploring Investment Options

Investing allows your money to grow faster than inflation, preserving and increasing your purchasing power over time. Common investment vehicles include:

- Stocks: Represent ownership in a company.
- Bonds: Represent loans to governments or corporations.
- Mutual Funds and ETFs: Pooled investment vehicles that offer diversification.
- Real Estate: Physical property that can generate rental income and appreciate in value.

The choice of investment depends on your risk tolerance, time horizon, and financial goals. Diversification across different asset classes is a key strategy to mitigate risk.

Understanding Compound Interest

Compound interest is often referred to as the "eighth wonder of the world." It's the interest earned on both the initial principal and the accumulated interest from previous periods. The earlier you start investing, the more time compound interest has to work its magic, significantly accelerating your wealth growth towards personal finance freedom.

Cultivating a Mindset for Financial Success

Achieving and maintaining personal finance freedom is not solely about numbers and strategies; it's also deeply intertwined with your mindset and habits. Developing a positive and proactive approach to your finances is crucial for long-term success.

Overcoming Financial Scarcity Mindset

A scarcity mindset focuses on what you lack, fostering fear and limiting your perception of opportunities. Cultivating an abundance mindset, conversely, focuses on possibilities, gratitude, and the belief that there are sufficient resources to meet your needs and achieve your goals. This shift in perspective can unlock new avenues for income and wealth creation.

Practicing Financial Discipline

Financial discipline is the ability to stick to your financial plan, even when faced with temptations or setbacks. It involves making conscious choices to prioritize your long-term financial well-being over immediate gratification. This discipline is built through consistent practice and a clear understanding of your values and goals.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation

The world of personal finance is constantly evolving. Staying informed about economic trends, new investment opportunities, and changes in tax laws is essential. Be willing to adapt your strategies as your circumstances change and as you gain more knowledge and experience. Embracing continuous learning is key to navigating the path to lasting financial freedom.

Maintaining and Growing Your Personal Finance Freedom

Achieving personal finance freedom is an ongoing journey, not a destination. It requires continuous effort to maintain your progress and to adapt to life's inevitable changes, ensuring your financial well-being for years to come. Regular review and recalibration are vital.

Regularly Reviewing Your Financial Plan

Life circumstances, market conditions, and personal goals evolve. It is imperative to schedule regular reviews of your budget, investment portfolio, and overall financial plan, ideally at least annually. This allows you to make necessary adjustments, ensuring your plan remains aligned with your objectives.

Protecting Your Financial Gains

As your net worth grows, so does the importance of protecting it. This includes having adequate insurance coverage (life, health, disability, property), safeguarding your assets through estate planning, and being vigilant against fraud and identity theft. Prudent risk management is a hallmark of sustained financial success.

The pursuit of personal finance freedom is a rewarding endeavor that empowers you to live life on your own terms. By understanding your finances, building a strong foundation, strategically managing debt, embracing saving and investing, and cultivating a resilient mindset, you can steadily move towards a future of financial security and limitless possibilities.

FAQ Section:

Q: What are the most common barriers to achieving personal finance freedom?

A: The most common barriers include a lack of financial literacy, uncontrolled spending habits, accumulating high-interest debt, inadequate savings, and a scarcity mindset that limits opportunities. Procrastination in starting to save and invest also plays a significant role.

Q: How much money do I realistically need to achieve personal finance freedom?

A: The amount needed varies greatly depending on your lifestyle, location, desired retirement age, and spending habits. Financial freedom is often defined as having enough passive income to cover your living expenses indefinitely, or having a large enough nest egg that you can draw from without depleting it. A common rule of thumb is the "4% rule," suggesting you can safely withdraw 4% of your investment portfolio annually in retirement.

Q: Is it possible to achieve personal finance freedom if I have significant student loan debt?

A: Yes, it is absolutely possible. While student loan debt can be a hurdle, it requires a strategic approach. Prioritizing high-interest debt repayment, exploring refinancing options, and creating a dedicated debt reduction plan are crucial steps. The key is to manage the debt effectively while simultaneously building savings and investments.

Q: How long does it typically take to achieve personal finance freedom?

A: The timeline for achieving personal finance freedom is highly individual. It depends on factors such as your income, savings rate, investment returns, debt levels, and your definition of freedom. For some, it might take 10-15 years of aggressive saving and investing, while for others, it could be 20-30 years. Consistency and discipline are more important than speed.

Q: What is the difference between personal finance freedom and early retirement?

A: Personal finance freedom is a broader concept meaning you are no longer dependent on a traditional job for income and have control over your finances. Early retirement is one potential outcome of achieving financial freedom, allowing you to stop working before the traditional retirement age. You can have financial freedom without necessarily retiring early, perhaps by choosing to work part-time or pursue passion projects.

Q: Are there specific investment strategies that are best for achieving personal finance freedom faster?

A: While there's no single "fastest" strategy that works for everyone, common approaches that can accelerate wealth building include consistently investing in diversified, low-cost index funds or ETFs, taking advantage of tax-advantaged retirement accounts, and understanding your risk tolerance to make appropriate investment decisions. Aggressively paying down high-interest debt also frees up capital for investment.

Q: How does budgeting contribute to achieving personal finance freedom?

A: Budgeting is foundational. It provides a clear roadmap for your money, allowing you to track where it's going, identify areas for savings, and allocate funds towards your financial goals. Without a budget, it's difficult to gain control of your spending and make intentional progress toward financial freedom.

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personal finance freedom: Personal Finance 101 Diogo Carvalho, 2019-12-14 Have you been living from paycheck to paycheck? Do you have some money stashed under your mattress? Have you been thinking of ways to grow your finances? Do you practice financial discipline? Whether you've been wishing you were financially independent, or you've been living frugally wishing it would make you rich, this might be a good book for you! The truth is, you don't have to be a math whiz to make your finances work! At 25 years of age, I've gathered my thoughts on personal finance and put them into this short book with the goal of sharing my experience so far. As far as personal finance is concerned, the most important thing I realized is that managing your finances is not only beneficial to your bank account. It is through proper personal financial planning that you can create a sense of stability that helps you achieve your personal, financial, and professional goals. This is something I truly believe in. As a worker and beginner investor, and as an average fellow like most, I can honestly say that I'm proud of my professional achievements so far. One of them is the writing of this book, the first of many I hope. Having purchased my first real estate investment property at the age of 24, I am now in the process of exploring new ways of investing the money I earn. Apart from the real estate investment, I own stocks from S&P 500 companies, I lend money to small companies and individuals using peer-to-peer lending platforms, amongst other things. And I wrote a book about it to share my views on optimizing personal finance management. A large part of planning our finances is about anticipating your dreams and needs. Although there is a chance that you already do this to some extent, you may not have thought about what you may need in the next 2, 5, or 10 years to come, right? Figuring this out is not an easy task! Here, I have put together what I think is helpful information to steer you in the right direction. In this short book I address the following subjects;-The basics of personal finance;-My golden rules of personal finance;-How to understand your financial situation;-Thoughts on how to get out of debt;-Tips on how to save money;-Passive income 101;-Tips on how to invest your money; The information you will find while reading is based on what works for me. There are no recipes for instant success, just some tips and thoughts that allowed me to achieve my goals and might also help you achieve your own. Therefore, I hope you find this book captivating and that it helps you improve your skills in managing personal finances. Happy Reading!

personal finance freedom: The 9 Steps to Financial Freedom Suze Orman, 2006-08-15 Suze Orman has transformed the concept of personal finance for millions by teaching us how to gain control of our money -- so that money does not control us. She goes beyond the nuts and bolts of managing money to explore the psychological, even spiritual power money has in our lives. The 9 Steps to Financial Freedom is the first personal finance book that gives you not only the knowledge of how to handle money, but also the will to break through all the barriers that hold you back. Combining real-life recommendations with the motivation to overcome financial anxieties, Suze Orman offers the keys to providing for yourself and your family, including: * seeing how your past holds the key to your financial future * facing your fears and creating new truths * trusting yourself more than you trust others * being open to receiving all that you are meant to have * understanding the lessons of the money cycle The 9 Steps to Financial Freedom is useful advice and inspiration from the leading voice in personal finance. As Orman shows, managing money is far more than a matter of balancing your checkbook or picking the right investments. It's about redefining financial freedom -- and realizing that you are worth far more than your money.

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personal finance freedom: 11 Principles to Achieve Financial Freedom: Master Your Financial Life 3 Nandish Desai, 2013-10-01 11 Principles To Achieve Financial Freedom: Master Your Financial Life 3 teaches about managing personal finance and shows readers how they can improve their financial life. Summary Of The Book 11 Principles To Achieve Financial Freedom: Master Your Financial Life 3 is guite different from conventional books on personal finance. The protagonist of the book is Sam. Instead of a story, the book is more of a collection of conversations between Sam, an IT professional, and his financial coach. Sam is portrayed as an amateur investor who is confused and totally lost when it comes to the world of finances. His coach invites him for a program called 90 Day Money Game that consists of 11 levels that span over a time period of nine days. The eleven levels of this money game are organized as eleven chapters in this book. These are not just chapters but eleven principles to make anybody a powerful investor. Sam's financial coach transforms him into a potent investor. The chapters in the book are titled Laying a Strong Foundation, Creating New Relationship with Money, How to Create System to Create Wealth, The Game Changers, Investigation Begins, Set Yourself Instead of Setting Goals, How to Increase Income, Active versus Passive Income, How to Master the Game of Financial Freedom, and How to Make Every Year, the Best Financial Year. 11 Principles to Achieve Financial Freedom: Master Your Financial Life 3 highlights that personal finance is more about the person rather than the numbers. It teaches readers how to change themselves to change their financial situation. Through Sam's story and his journey through the 90 Day Money Game, the readers will be taken out from their state of confusion. Sam's financial coach changes his perception about personal finance and teaches him the art of creating wealth. He turns him into a flourishing investor. Similarly, this book is designed to be the coach, mentor, and guide for the reader as they embark on the journey of money making. By teaching how to explore one's full financial potential, the book is designed to take one's financial life to another level. 11 Principles To Achieve Financial Freedom: Master Your Financial Life 3 aims to help readers understand the value of looking beyond just financial products and returns, and consider wealth creation as a project. It sets a new trend in the world of personal finance.

personal finance freedom: Financial Freedom Reuben Advani, 2014-03-01 If you're one of the millions of Americans who is buried in credit card debt, or maybe you're having trouble deciphering the fine print on your 401(K)—that is, if you even have a 401(K)!—don't dismay. You can

start taking steps toward closing your financial illiteracy gap right away with the sound, practical personal finance advice offered up in Reuben Advani's Financial Freedom. Designed for young adult professionals but filled with crucial information that will financially empower readers of all ages, Financial Freedom is more than just your standard personal finance book, which offers up plenty of encouragement but very little actionable advice. Instead, this user-friendly guide stands alone thanks to the clear approach it takes to the topic of personal finance. So, no matter whether you are in the market for a new car, are looking to become a first-time homeowner, want to save up for your child's college education, or have decided to try your hand at investing, you'll find engaging, nonjudgmental answers to your most pressing financial questions in this invaluable resource. Jam-packed with financial guidance yet presented in a gentle, humorous manner, Financial Freedom will teach you: The ins and outs of the world of finance, including targeted advice on how to use its tools to create a better financial future for yourself; The difference between good debt and bad debt—as well as tips and hints for avoiding the latter of the two; The low-down on mortgages, auto loans, student loans, and credit cards; Strategies and techniques for investing in stocks, bonds, and real estate; And much more. When it comes to securing your financial future, building a strong foundation of financial knowledge and skills is the smartest thing you can do. Put yourself on the path to long-term financialliteracy, independence, and success with Financial Freedom, which provides all the information you need to make sound financial decisions for a lifetime.

personal finance freedom: Financial Freedom: A Guide for Personal Finances Merlon Harper, 2015-08-05 Most people make simple mistakes that kill their chances of living a life defined by financial freedom. One of the big reasons is they dream big, but they fail to comprehend how significant a role money plays in achieving those dreams. The reality is that building a solid foundation of how finance works is usually the first step to getting what you want. Written in straightforward language, this guidebook to understanding money gives you the tools and insights you need to: - navigate college without taking out too many loans; - pay off debt you've already acquired; - use credit cards and bank accounts responsibly; - boost a lagging credit score; - decide what type of insurance you need. Filled with charts, graphs, and examples of how managing money right can pay off big, this guide is a must-have for anyone seeking to make smart decisions. Leave debt in the past, and start reaping the rewards that go along with Financial Freedom.

personal finance freedom: Financial Freedom Grant Sabatier, 2020-04-07 The International Bestseller New York Public Library's Top 10 Think Thrifty Reads of 2023 This book blew my mind. More importantly, it made financial independence seem achievable. I read Financial Freedom three times, cover-to-cover. —Lifehacker Money is unlimited. Time is not. Become financially independent as fast as possible. In 2010, 24-year old Grant Sabatier woke up to find he had \$2.26 in his bank account. Five years later, he had a net worth of over \$1.25 million, and CNBC began calling him the Millennial Millionaire. By age 30, he had reached financial independence. Along the way he uncovered that most of the accepted wisdom about money, work, and retirement is either incorrect, incomplete, or so old-school it's obsolete. Financial Freedom is a step-by-step path to make more money in less time, so you have more time for the things you love. It challenges the accepted narrative of spending decades working a traditional 9 to 5 job, pinching pennies, and finally earning the right to retirement at age 65, and instead offers readers an alternative: forget everything you've ever learned about money so that you can actually live the life you want. Sabatier offers surprising, counter-intuitive advice on topics such as how to: * Create profitable side hustles that you can turn into passive income streams or full-time businesses * Save money without giving up what makes you happy * Negotiate more out of your employer than you thought possible * Travel the world for less * Live for free--or better yet, make money on your living situation * Create a simple, money-making portfolio that only needs minor adjustments * Think creatively--there are so many ways to make money, but we don't see them. But most importantly, Sabatier highlights that, while one's ability to make money is limitless, one's time is not. There's also a limit to how much you can save, but not to how much money you can make. No one should spend precious years working at a job they dislike or worrying about how to make ends meet. Perhaps the biggest surprise: You need less money to retire

at age 30 than you do at age 65. Financial Freedom is not merely a laundry list of advice to follow to get rich quick--it's a practical roadmap to living life on one's own terms, as soon as possible.

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personal finance freedom: How to Be a Financial Grownup Bobbi Rebell, 2016-10-18 Bobbi Rebell, award-winning TV anchor and personal finance columnist at Thomson Reuters, taps into her exclusive network of business leaders to share with you stories of the financial lessons they learned early in their lives that helped them become successful. She then uses these stories as jumping off points to offer specific, actionable advice on how you can become a financial grownup just like them. Financial role models such as Author Tony Robbins, Entrepreneur Ivanka Trump, Shark Tank's Kevin O'Leary, Mad Money's Jim Cramer, Designer Cynthia Rowley, Macy's CEO Terry Lundgren, Zillow's CEO Spencer Rascoff, PwC's CEO Bob Moritz, and twenty others share their stories with you. The book walks you through some of the biggest money decisions you'll make regarding real estate, investing, debt management, careers, friends and money, family finances, and even health and wellness. You're guided by proven examples and given the information you need to make choices

that are right for you. How to Be a Financial Grownup will especially appeal to you if you're interested in new ideas to better manage your finances, especially if you're going through life changes where you have to pay more attention to your financial well-being.

personal finance freedom: The Average Family's Guide to Financial Freedom Bill Toohey, Mary Toohey, 2000-02-24 Bill and Mary Toohey are average middle income people from a small Iowa town. Bill has been employed for 23 years as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Mary has worked for 20 years as an Office Manager for a small psychological firm. They started saving and investing in 1991 when their net worth was \$63,000. Eight years later their net worth was \$467,000. In other words, their assets increased by an average of more than \$50,000 per year during that period while their income (not counting dividends and capital gains) averaged about \$65,000 per year. But it wasn't always easy. They have three children, Colleen (24), Tim (22), and Meghann (14). Tim has been severely disabled since birth and despite the challenges of helping Tim cope with his chronic illnesses, the Toohey family has been able to achieve financial freedom on a modest income. They were able to build a sizable nest egg in eight years while encountering some of life's biggest expenses during the period. They helped to pay for their daughter's college education and wedding, paid cash for a new car, and made several expensive home improvements. Despite those major expenses the Tooheys still managed to save 46% of their gross income and were listed among the Best Personal Finance Managers in America in the December 1994 issues of Money magazine. The Tooheys' story, in an article written by Bill, appeared in the April 1997 issue of Money magazine. Mary co-authored an article published in the February 1998 issue of McCall's magazine. In May, 1997 Bill was invited to speak at Money magazine's Elgin Project seminar series. Money magazine adopted Elgin, Illinois and brought in speakers with expertise in personal finance. Former President Bush kicked off the event. How did they do it? How do they think? How do they live? Is it possible to save so much and still have a decent life? Can my family do this? Get the answers to all these questions and more in a book written specifically for families with children who don't earn big bucks.

personal finance freedom: Live It, Love It, Earn It Marianna Olszewski, 2009-12-31 Does your heart race when your credit card bill arrives? Are you one flat tire or one emergency room visit from financial ruin? If you think a secure financial future is out of reach, you're wrong. Let Marianna Olszewski teach you how to love your money instead of running scared from it. Marianna didn't start out rich, happy and fabulous. A strapped-for-cash childhood motivated her to strive for abundance and financial independence-goals she exceeded by age thirty as a successful business owner and respected Wall Street player. Now Marianna reveals the lessons she learned on her own road to success and the savvy strategies of other amazing women. She shows how to let go of stress, break your bad money habits, take control of your finances, and finally achieve your goals and a happier, richer life. You'll learn to: -Say Yes to Yourself: Turn toward people and situations that enhance your life and well being, and away from those that don't. Until you start affirming your future through both thought and action, your efforts to improve your finances will fall flat. -Fall in Love with Your Money: Having a cavalier attitude toward money is part of the reason many of us find ourselves in a financial pickle. But when you treat your money with respect, keep track of it and spend and save it wisely your money will always love you back. -Act as If: If you think that change is impossible, think again. Start your transformation by acting as if you already are as successful, intelligent, and prosperous as you want to be. Live It, Love It, Earn It is full of true stories of ordinary women who have overcome tough challenges, such as climbing the corporate ladder, getting out of debt, and changing jobs mid-career, to get the life you want. Marianna also shares insights from other successful women like designer Diane von Furstenberg; shoe mogul Tamara Mellon (of Jimmy Choo); fashion entrepreneur Tory Burch; the first woman to hold a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, Muriel Seibert; and Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn. Let Marianna give you the tools you need to create and maintain and abundant and fulfilling life. For more information, visit: www.LiveItLoveITEarnIt.com

personal finance freedom: Are You BEHIND the Eight Ball Jack D. Letzer, Jr., 2006-12 Debt typically represents the most difficult financial hurdle for most Americans to overcome. As a

result too many of us are unable to enjoy any form of financial success. 'Are You BEHIND the 8 Ball? Six Cornerstones of Financial Freedom' is a book aimed primarily at young Americans, but with material of interest to all people. The principal goal is to raise the level of awareness and anticipation in all areas of personal financial planning before being subjected to the pitfalls that so many adults are afflicted with. The book navigates key focus areas ranging from budgeting and debt elimination to home purchasing and investing, ending with discussions on long term care and estate planning as well as an understanding of the tax landscape in America. Preparation, patience and discipline are possibly the three most important ingredients of financial success for all individuals.

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