

Money Egg Exercise

This exercise is designed to help you explore your relationship with money. It's best to complete it rather quickly; don't try to think it through too deeply or analyze it, but put down the first memories that come into your mind. Spend perhaps ten minutes on the first three steps.

1. On a blank sheet of paper, draw a large egg-shaped oval.
2. Think back to the earliest time in your life that you can remember. What is that earliest painful or pleasurable experience around money that you can think of? Starting at the bottom of the egg and *using your non-dominant hand*, draw a symbol (a letter, a number, a symbol such as a dollar sign, a simple drawing) that represents this experience. Section off the symbol by drawing lines around it that extend to the edge of the egg.
3. In the same way, add the next money experience you can remember that was either pleasurable or painful. As you section off each experience, your egg will begin to resemble a patchwork quilt. Working from past to present, continue up the egg until you reach the most recent memory you have chosen to illustrate. It isn't necessary to go all the way to your current life (though you can if you wish), but you do want to record experiences that at least take you into adulthood.
4. Go back to the bottom of the egg and look at each symbol. Imagine the situations and scenes each one represents. Using your dominant hand, write down a word or words that describe the emotions you felt then or feel now in relation to the experience. If you are not aware of any feelings related to a situation, imagine you are witnessing it happening to your child or another loved one. Write down the feelings that come up for you as you watch it happen to that person.
5. Beginning at the bottom of the egg put a '+' or a '-' on each event to indicate whether you viewed the event as a positive or negative. Add them up and indicate the sum of each somewhere on the page with your egg. Do you have more positive events or negative?
6. Beginning at the bottom of the egg again and as you view each incident make a list of the top three positive events and the top three negative events. Create a list of lessons that you learned about money based on these experiences and write those on the backside of your money egg paper.
7. As you view your lessons learned about money, on the back of your money egg, quickly and without a lot of thought complete this sentence: "The moral of the story about money is..."