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Season 1. Taking more control of your money

Episode 8.

What we've covered in this insight series

Hi there, Jason here and in this Insight we'll look back on everything we've covered in this first foundation series of Money Insights. And look forward to what's coming next. Taking control of our money is a long-term game and we're all at different stages on our journey to having it. So, if the first time you watched these lessons was not the ideal time for you, you might want to revisit some of them when the time is better. And this round up will help you decide which areas to focus on when you're ready. So here we go.

We kicked off this series by looking at the reasons why we might want to have control of our money. And we started there because it's always easier to make progress on an important project (whether at home or at work) if we understand why we're doing it. We learned the basics of motivation, noting how advertisers use our emotions against us to get us spending too much today. And we learned how we can engage our emotions to resist their temptations and keep more of our money for what really matters in our lives

In the second insight we noted how taking more control of our spending allows us to have more fun throughout our lives. And described a good spending plan as one which delivers what we need for three areas. For the basics of daily living, for emergencies and longer-term goals, and for having that fun and the occasional treat today. We talked again about engaging our emotions. To think how our spending habits could affect our future life choices about how we can help ourselves to stick to our budget, with a separate bank account to keep a lid on luxury spending. And we mentioned the importance of rewarding ourselves for all this hard work, as we make steady progress towards these vital life goals.

Insight three was about starting an emergency fund. Why everyone should have one, the best time to start one and how much to aim for initially. We noted how our spending control will set us on a path to success here and

how, even if we still carry some debts, we will have transformed ourselves from a spender into a saver. We explored the psychology that explains why it can make sense to build an emergency fund even before we've paid off all our expensive debts. And offered the powerful reminder that saving just £3 a day will cover more than a thousand pounds of emergencies each year.

In Insight four we opened the issue of how to tackle expensive debts if you have any. We explained the difference between good and bad types of debt, where good debt funds good investments and bad debt doesn't. And, again with evidence from psychology, we explored why the logical approach to debt repayment will simply not work for many people.

In Insight five we returned to the idea of building our cash reserves, and how much we might want to build up, before looking at other investments. We noted how, if we'd had to pay down an expensive debt, we'd now have some surplus income to make this task even easier. And we explored the idea of extending our cash reserves well beyond a basic emergency fund using Cash ISAs and the free bonus type accounts, if they're suitable, to achieve some great returns on our accessible funds, without taking any investment risks at all.

Insight six was about acknowledging that most of us will have an ongoing need to access credit from time to time. And focussed on the value of getting and keeping a good credit score. We mentioned the three main credit scoring agencies and how we can access our credit reports for free. And listed various ideas for building our credit score including: fixing mistakes on our credit report; ensuring that our bills get paid on time by automating them with Direct Debit; and keeping a credit card active but paying it off each month, keeping it well below our credit limit.

Finally, in this series, we explored the very serious need that most of us have to insure our greatest asset, ourselves. We looked at the four main reasons why most people don't deal with this issue. We gave examples of the very low cost of doing so. And offered a powerful idea for thinking about just how much we're really worth, in financial terms.

So, if that round up has reminded you of some areas that you need to revisit go ahead and watch those Insights again. And remember that you can find a lot more of the detail behind all of these Insights in the resources area of the Salary Finance Website.

Coming up in the next series we're going to focus on ideas to make it easier for you to achieve more of your long-term goals. And that includes the goal that most of us have of making paid work optional. I look forward to seeing you back here when you're ready for those ideas. And I wish you every success. All the best for now

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