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How to Really Talk About Money

TOUGH TALKS: NO MATTER HOW OPEN YOU AND YOUR HONEY ARE, THERE ARE ALWAYS A FEW TABOO TOPICS.

Believe it or not, money is actually harder for a lot of couples to talk frankly about than sex. The difficulty comes from the huge differences in attitudes. Everyone has an opinion (often shaped by the way they were brought up), and everyone thinks that the way they handle money is the right way. Here are the steps to take to get on the same financial page as your spouse, fast.

1. Make a plan to talk about it. This is one area of your lives where you and your partner absolutely have to come to an agreement. Anything less, could spell financial ruin.

2. Make a list of your respective financial priorities, then compare the two. Maybe buying a great bag every season is important to you. More important than putting money towards a house? Discuss it. Don't hold back and keep any secrets from one another. It might sound scary, but complete transparency is called for. If you must have a bit of gray area, agree on a number. For example, "I get \$200 a month to do whatever I want with."

3. Focus on the similarities between your two sets of financial goals and outline how you can achieve those things.

4. Bring in a pro. It's always a good idea to include a financial planner. Having an objective third party involved can really smooth out the process. You don't need to schedule frequent appointments, just spot check now and then – particularly as your goals shift.

5. Remember, it's very common in marriages for one person to be in charge of all the money and the other to play a more passive role. There's nothing wrong with that, just as long as you are both comfortable with the arrangement. What you don't want is one person calling all the shots and the other suffering in silence.

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