#39: Money, Margaritas and Mantras

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Debbie Sassen

#39: Money, Margaritas and Mantras

You're listening to the *Mastering Money in Midlife* podcast with Debbie Sassen Episode 39.

Welcome to *Mastering Money in Midlife*, a podcast for midlife women in business to overcome financial anxiety and make more money without burning out or sacrificing their families. Join Certified Life and Money Coach Debbie Sassen, as she shares practical business strategies and mindset shifts that help you dissolve the money blocks that keep you stuck in a cycle of under earning and under saving, sabotage the growth of your business and prevent you from building the wealth that you desire.

Hello, my friends, and welcome back to the podcast. I have a surprise for you. Today is Monday. You know, I usually record my podcast on Tuesday, but this morning I was out on a morning walk. Usually, on Monday mornings, I do weightlifting because, especially as we age, we have to make sure that we're staying strong and fit, we keep our balance. I have a personal trainer with whom I weightlift three times a week; Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. But today, she's abroad.

I took the opportunity to go for a nice long walk, about an hour and 15 minutes, in the early morning, when the weather was pleasant and cool, before it gets to 35°C here in Israel. As I was walking, I had what people call a divine download. Ideas were just flying in my brain, all the neural pathways were clicking and exploding. I said, “When I get home, I am going to record my podcast.” The title of this podcast is Money, Margaritas and Mantras. It's Monday. It works together very beautifully; all those M's and the alliteration work are absolutely lovely together.

The second thing that I have to tell you is that I don't actually drink Margaritas. I'm going to tell you a story: When my husband and I were out with some friends, a couple of months ago, I guess the guys were probably drinking some beer, or maybe some wine. I rarely drink. It's just not one of those things that excites me. I don't have a desire to drink and don’t enjoy the taste. Occasionally, I'll have some wine, but it doesn't go beyond that.

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Back in the day, when I was working on Wall Street, I used to go out for business meetings. If I was meeting a new client, or somebody that I had some professional relationship with, we might go out for dinner and share a bottle of wine. Back in the day, I could probably drink half a bottle of wine when I was out to dinner with someone. I might feel a little bit tipsy at the end of the evening.

Then, there were other times that I would drink a gin and tonic, because it's part of the thing that you do, when you're out, is that you drink. But I don't think I ever had a lot of enjoyment from drinking alcohol. But what's fascinating is that when I was focusing, let's say, on having those relationships and drinking, my capacity for alcohol expanded.

Now, if I have a glass of wine, I'll feel very, very tipsy. I won't have control of my balance. I don't know if my words will slur, but it's just not something that I do. I don't have a very high capacity for alcohol these days. But I think that, that is an important point to remember, which is wherever you put your focus, whether it's drinking alcohol and having business relationships, your capacity expands.

That can be your physical capacity. Like, if you're weight training, for example, the more you train with weight, your muscles will grow bigger and bigger, and you will have a healthier body and physique. You'll be able to maintain your balance. Whether you're doing push-ups or sit-ups or press-ups, whatever you're doing, pull-ups, you will be able to perform at a higher level. Because your capacity for that activity has expanded.

Similarly, when it comes to money, where you put your focus expands. If you want to start taking care of your money better than what you used to be doing, if you want to start investing, if you want to grow your business, you want to raise your prices, you want to ask for and receive more money.

If you are focusing on those activities, and putting thought and effort into expanding your capacity for money, it will expand with continued focus, attention and effort. Keep that in mind.

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Now today, what I want to do is share two things with you. One is a story. And one, is my opinion on money mantras or money affirmations. At the end, I'm actually going to share with you some money mantras, even though I don't really believe in affirmations. But you'll have to wait till the end of the podcast before we get there.

Back to my story. A couple of months ago my husband and I were out with some friends. We went out for dinner and, as I said, the guys were probably sharing some wine or beer, and maybe the woman from that couple was also drinking, I don't really remember. But we're not really alcohol drinking kind of people.

We were at dinner and our friends were telling us about someone they knew, a relative. A family relative, who emigrated from Europe to the United States, probably 100 years ago between the two World Wars, and he became very, very successful, very wealthy in his business. It seems to have been one of those ‘right place, right time;’ everything just seems to have worked out.

Of course, none of us know the story, we're just looking at it. This gentleman has passed away, but he did create a tremendous amount of financial success in his business. He was able to take his financial success and do a lot of good in the world.

He gave away tremendous amounts of money to schools and hospitals, there are many wings of buildings with his name on it, from what I understand; I just took it at face value. Yet, his family had a very negative perception of this gentleman. And, I am purposefully leaving out any details on the very, very, very slim chance that someone might know who this person is. I'm not going to give you any identifying details.

But apparently, he was someone who was very demanding, uncompromising, hard to please. He was someone who ruffled a lot of feathers; he had a few divorces. In his inner circle, he is someone who tended to repel more than attract people to him.

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My husband asked our friends, “Did money ruin him?” Now, if you say those words to a money coach, who's sitting next to you at the table, and that money coach just happens to be your wife… I said, “Wait a second, sweetheart.”

It's very interesting, because my husband knows what I do. But, he doesn't *know* what I do; like, he's watching me, occasionally. He sees my whiteboard. If you've ever seen any of my trainings, I often bring my whiteboard with me, or if you've coached with me one-on-one. Occasionally, he's peeked into my office because he had to give me something or get the car keys. That's usually what happens, I have the car keys and he needs them.

He's seen me tapping; he makes fun of me, you know, pretends like I’m a monkey tapping on my head and scratching my belly, or something like that. But otherwise, he doesn't really understand what I do as a coach.

I took this opportunity, this comment from my husband, “Did money ruin him?” to share with everybody a little bit of a coaching session. I went into my wallet, I grabbed out some bills that I had in there. I said, “Look, here's cash, right? Here's, I don't know, a few hundred shekels. This is money; it's just paper that's been plasticated.”

I said, “Money cannot ruin you. Money is just a thing, it's an object. Just like a fork can't ruin you. A glass can't ruin you. A car can't ruin you. Your wallet, your computer, your phone, none of those inanimate objects, those things can’t ruin you.”

We have so many thoughts about money, and people with money. I have that podcast episode, Thoughts about Wealthy People. That's exactly what I wanted to point out, is people do things. We have thoughts about the things that they do. Money can be the fall guy.

And, my husband just said the words, just sort of slipped out of his mouth, ‘did money ruin him?’ is believing that money and wealth can ruin a person; can make him very self-centered, can make a person arrogant, can make a

person demanding, short tempered, evil, mean, manipulative, whatever word you want to use. But, it is never the fault of the money. It is always the individual who has thoughts.

Money is a neutral situation, a neutral circumstance in his or her life. That person decides to act in a certain way because of the money. It is never the fault of the money; money cannot do anything. You put a stack of bills on the table, you put a pile of coins on the table, and the money just stays there. It can't serve you dinner. It can't pour you a cup of coffee. The money cannot ruin you. It is just money.

Money gives you a tremendous amount of opportunity to do good in the world. This individual did use money to do good things in the world, right? He donated to hospitals. He donated to schools. He was someone who was very philanthropic. And, I think that, that is a beautiful thing.

I was thinking, while I was on my walk this morning, you know, the government puts in place legal structures, which encourage wealthy people to give donations, and then they get a tax break. And, I have to say, the cynic in me would say, “Well, he just gave away money because he gets a tax break.”

But really, I was thinking about, it is a beautiful thing, that tax break, right? A legal way for you to avoid paying taxes, or reduce your tax obligation, is also a way that we help society. And, we give to those people and institutions who are less fortunate and do need financial support. I think it's actually a brilliant thing that governments put in place these tax, I don't want to call them loopholes, but these tax structures.

This tax legislation, which encourages wealthy people to pass on money to others. Just because these tax structures are in place, does not mean that all wealthy people will always take advantage of structures in place. I think that's a very beautiful thing, that this gentleman was able to give away large amounts of his wealth.

Now, of course, we are all holistic human beings. Sometimes we do good things, and sometimes we do less good things. As I was on my walk this morning, I was reminded of a sentence in the Torah, what some of you might call the Old Testament, if you're not Jewish.

The divine download, this is really beautiful, is that this week, on the Sabbath, we are reading this exact portion in the Torah, where this sentence comes up. It comes from the book of Devarim, Deuteronomy. We read there, in chapter six, that “You should love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your resources.”

That sentence in Hebrew is translated differently. Sometimes it comes out, “You should love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might.” I want to focus on the word heart. In Hebrew, the word heart is spelled “Lev.” It is spelled with one “Bet” at the end of the word.

But in this sentence, it's written in Hebrew, B'chol L'vavcha, there are two bets, which means it is a double word. Our commentators tell us about this word, that we're supposed to love the Lord our God, with both of our drives, the drive toward good, and the drive toward evil. What our commentators are telling us is that we have both of them inside us.

I don't want to characterize said gentleman has having an evil drive. But I think sometimes we do get a little bit, you know, as I said, less good. Having a desire to maybe rule over people, or manipulate them, or get your own personal desires met, is something that we've talked about in the podcast before, when I've talked about your higher brain and your lower brain.

Your higher brain is your more rational thinking, executive function, planning part of your brain. And, your emotional part of your brain, the lower brain, the more primitive brain, is that part of you that is seeking pleasure, avoiding pain, and wanting to be lazy.

So, I think that when this man was really trying to, let's say, manipulate people, or be short-tempered, or desiring their respect in specific ways,

again, I don't want to go into details, but his desire to be noticed, and to have things his way, in almost a toddler-like fashion, is coming from his lower brain, from his emotional brain. Those emotions and desires that are not necessarily rational.

We are commanded to use both of our higher brains and our lower brains, in order to serve God. But what does that mean, when we think about it? Is that we have the capability to use our rational brain, our higher thinking, to overcome our base desires.

If this person was short-tempered and maybe nasty or evil to others around him, or like my husband said, “Did money ruin him?” It stems from the fact that his lower brain, his primitive brain, is in charge at that moment.

Now, sometimes, you know, when we are running away from danger, or we have to make sure to feed ourselves and clothe ourselves, it's a very good thing to let our primitive brain be in charge. But at other times, when there is clearly no danger, we must use our rational thinking and our higher brain to overcome the triggers, right?

When it comes to money, we all have emotional triggers, each one of us at our own level. And, we have to become the person who uses again and again and again, her higher brain to overcome those emotional triggers with money.

It is never the money that ruins the person, it is always the way a person is thinking and feeling that is causing that person to do things and say things, or not do things and not say things, and that's coming from those more primitive desires and emotions. It is 100% Normal.

We have to be aware and introspective, and notice what's going on and really appreciate that we can use our higher thinking to overcome our more emotional reactions to money and money situations. That was a little money coaching that I gave to all the people at the dinner table that evening.

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Let me share with you my thoughts about affirmations. Some people love them. I don't love them, because our thoughts about money and our emotions about money, are really wired deeply in our nervous system.

I think that, that's actually what was happening with this gentleman. Is that he emigrated as a teenager from Europe to the United States. He built himself up from scratch. I really do believe that his wiring, around money, was scarcity and lack, and perhaps even deprivation.

I don't know exactly what year he arrived in the United States, but we do know that in 1929, there was the Great Depression. I don't know what he lived through or what his situation was, but as a young man, on his own in the United States, he probably had to work very hard.

There were probably many years where his reality was not a lot of money, not a lot of resources. Who knows if he even went hungry, right? He left as a teenager, without his parents. You can paint yourself a scenario of someone who was having a very hard time. And his wiring around money, I do believe, was scarcity and lack. That wiring runs very, very deep. Unless you actually do the work to reprogram your nervous system around money, it's always going to be inside of you.

You can use your higher brain, you can use your higher thinking, to say affirmations all day long: Money flows to me easily. I love money. Money is amazing. Money speeds things up. I've shared with you some affirmations on the podcast, in the past. Of course, you can go look online and find your own series of money affirmations.

But if you have deep wiring around scarcity and lack, there's going to be a clash between what your emotions are telling you, in your gut and in your body, and what your higher brain is trying to create as your new reality. Sometimes the higher brain will be able to override the emotions and what's going on in your primitive brain. Sometimes it won't. We're all normal. We're all human beings, and we all have our own individual and unique wiring around money.

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You want to know and notice what's happening with you around money. Where are you feeling triggered? I shared, on last week's podcast, that I have been doing this money work for more than a decade. And still, I was triggered by a couple of money events, that I shared with you last week.

You know, you can say your affirmations, but until you really get into your gut and into your nervous system, and start deconstructing and unraveling the money messages that you learned from your family-of-origin, and even there could be financial trauma from previous generations that's wired into your nervous system, it's very hard to change your money story by saying affirmations.

That being said, yesterday was my Hebrew birthday, and I shared with people on my email list. If you're not on my email list, by the way, you should join. Go to my website, DebbieSassen.com/newsletter, and get on my email list because, of course, you'll know when my podcast is coming out. But you'll be getting great things that I send out only to people who are subscribed to my email list.

I shared yesterday, on my Hebrew birthday, because it is customary on your Hebrew birthday to bless others. I blessed the people on my email list with abundance and all the financial resources that they need. I shared this money mantra that I use from time to time in my own work, and I'm going to read it to you.

In fact, this morning, when I was on my walk, I said, “You know what? My money mantra needs an additional line at the very end.” You guys are getting the most up-to-date version of my money mantras. Here we go.

I believe that we live in an abundant universe, created by an infinite Creator. I accept money as a positive force and ally in my life. I release and forgive my past money mistakes. I release and forgive my partner's money mistakes. I accept responsibility for myself and my financial well-being. Abundance is available to me; right here, right now.

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I release any obstacle, doubt or limitation that exists in my mind. I free all illusions of lack. I know there is more than enough. I have enough; I am enough. I am willing and ready to receive financial abundance with ease, openness, and a grateful heart. I am safe to receive financial abundance with ease, openness, and a grateful heart.

There you are my friends, that is my money mantra for you today. You can go to the show notes, you can download it, you can copy it and read it every day. Notice in your body, in your nervous system, where you might have any pushback to any of those statements.

When you say the same thing over and over and over again, and you just are curious and allow your body to send you signals, you will uncover and discover where your work is. When you're saying words like, ‘I release and forgive my partner's money mistakes,’ if all of a sudden, something's coming up in your mind, like, “Um, I don't really know if I can forgive him for that thing he did back in the day.”

Or, when you're saying to yourself, ‘I release and forgive my past money mistakes,’ and you're feeling uncomfortable, you're feeling guilty, or you have some shame, you will know where your money work is. Because the affirmations and the mantras cannot undo the wiring that runs deep in our nervous system around money. My blessing for you is that you use these mantras to uncover the money work that you still need to do.

All right, my friends, happy Monday. I know by the time you listen to this, it's going to be Tuesday or another day of the week, but for me, I'm wishing you a Happy Monday. I will see you next week on the podcast. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to *Mastering Money in Midlife*. If you want more information on Debbie Sassen or the resources from the podcast visit MasteringMoneyinMidlife.com.