

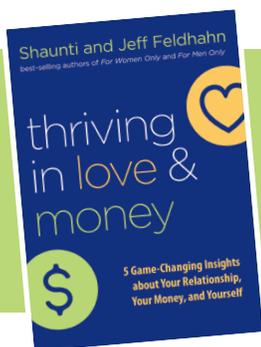
Top Truths for Thriving in Love & Money

Why do we fight about money in marriage—or avoid talking about it? Why might one spouse try to whisk the Amazon package off the porch before their mate gets home? Why might a couple agree on birthday spending but not church giving? Why do some people communicate *well* about money?

The reasons have very little to do with money, and everything to do with understanding what is going on under the surface in our spouse—and ourselves.

Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn conducted a three-year, nationally-representative research study for *Thriving in Love & Money: 5 Game-Changing Insights About Your Relationship, Your Money, and Yourself*.

Shaunti & Jeff
Feldhahn's
Important
Research on
Money & Marriage



Thriving in Love & Money

Couples need to talk about money before they can budget it.

thriveinloveandmoney.com

The tools and teaching YOU need to help them!



FREE ASSESSMENT!

Key Research Findings

A. THERE IS A CRUCIAL “CONVERSATION GAP”

Most money resources focus on how to budget, get out of debt, etc. Yet most couples can't even talk about money, much less create a budget. This project has nothing to do with how to handle money, and everything to do with what must happen first: understanding each other and being able to talk about it. That's the foundation for coming together, planning, creating margin, and building generosity.

One Effective Application: The Love & Money Exchange

Instruction to couples: *Step 1: Each of you go through the book, highlighting and making notes on what applies to you, personally. Step 2: Trade, and read through your partner's notes. Step 3: Talk about it. Enlist a counselor or coach if needed.*

B. MONEY DOES INDEED CAUSE MARRIAGE PROBLEMS—BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

Problems...

- 92% of couples have tension with money (fighting, irritation, blame/shame, etc.)
- Only 23% of people can talk well about money. 77% avoid it altogether, or talk if needed but find it difficult
- Only 19% have a written, working budget
- Those who can already talk about money are the ones most likely to attend a financial or budgeting course

...and Solutions

To reduce dangerous tension, a couple needs to:

- #3. Build financial cushion (what matters is not the income level but living below that line)
- #2. Be able to talk about money
- #1. Understand one another (in order to do both of the above)

Research and resources fueled by Thrivent.

C. UNDERSTANDING OUR SPOUSE—AND OURSELVES—IS GAME-CHANGING

5 Unseen Factors Underneath Our Responses to Money in Marriage:

1) We don't value what the other person values.

We each have unseen things that really matter to us—and we may not recognize why our spouse values something completely different. For example: “Enjoy today!” (“No, save for tomorrow!”) Or: What is the “right” process for making money decisions? Should we “give” or “preserve?” Prioritize things versus experiences? Do we spend money to save time?

Two-thirds of survey-takers admitted that at times they feel, “I just don't see the value in what my spouse sees as so important.” Thus, not surprisingly, half of us (51%) often don't believe our spouse cares about what we value.

Survey Says:

Do you ever feel this way in purchasing decisions? “My partner isn't adequately thinking of all the important factors. If they would just look at this with an unbiased view, they would probably agree with me.”

Yes, often/sometimes	67%
No	33%

2) We have fears our partner doesn't comprehend and use money to try to relieve those fears—which often makes our partner's fears worse.

Men and women tend to have two different sets of insecurities and fears. Roughly three out of four men worry whether they are good at what they do—and whether they'll be able to provide for their family. So, for example, men might work long hours away, to be sure they can provide.

Roughly three out of four women worry whether they are loved and lovable—and whether the marriage and family is okay. So, most women are willing to trade off financial security and/or spend money for family time, to be sure the family is close. Which often triggers a husband's feeling of needing to work even more hours to pay for it—which triggers her closeness worry. And so on. (This was regardless of who was a “saver” or “spender.”)

“Our” fear looms large, and we don't recognize that our spouse has a different anxiety—much less that we could be making our partner's worries worse.

3) We resist being one in marriage—and it is coming out in how we handle money.

We want a happy marriage, but subconsciously (or consciously) also want our own way. We hold ourselves back, try to maintain a little independence, separate accounts or debt, or simply resist full, complete accountability over how we handle money.

80% of married couples have meaningful indicators of a lack of oneness around money. Trying to whisk the Amazon package off the porch before a spouse gets home comes from the same self-protective root that drives other couples to separate finances completely.

Survey Says:

“Candidly, I just want to be able to handle money the way I want to handle money.”

Yes, definitely/sometimes	67%
No	33%

4) When dealing with money, our different wiring for processing and communication causes us to clash instead of connect.

In part because of differences in brain wiring, men and women tend to have different (and often opposite) styles of processing money decisions. Men tend to think things through internally, while women tend to think things through by talking them through. And they each misunderstand the other's processing style. (His efforts to get space to process can be viewed as uncaring; her efforts to talk things through after he's shared his decision can be viewed as criticism.)

5) We have knee-jerk reactions due to faulty beliefs about money or our partner.

We have knee-jerk reactions based on strong beliefs about how money “should” work—which we don't realize may stem from subconscious, faulty assumptions. Such as via quirks in our family background, or deep but unrecognized beliefs like, “The person who earns more money deserves more say,” “Money allocation should be fair—if you get this, I get that,” “If we don't do it now, we'll miss out!” And so on.

And we clash with our spouse when they have different subconscious beliefs, because each of us thinks it is so obvious that we are right!

Survey Says:

My expectations for handling money are directly related to my feelings about how my parents handled money, or experiences growing up.

Yes, definitely/somewhat	69%
No	31%