

## THE “3 E’s” AND “2 P’s” OF FINANCIAL WELLNESS

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All aspects of Wholeness involve finances. These are some wise **Financial Health Habits** that can aid your wholeness.

Financial well being is all about building wealth. **Wealth** is not a bad thing. It means having assets that will earn for you that which can help you fulfil worthwhile life goals. Such assets include education, skills, savings, investments, a business or real estate. Some of us Jamaicans were sent to school by the rearing and breeding of cows or goats! One’s *wealth* can be small or great. It does not matter. The best way to use money is to *let it work for you* – not just to spend it or have things to show off.

Remember, assets can help build wholeness of body, mind, spirit, relationship and your natural environment these in turn *will all aid your financial well being*. So it is a positive cycle!

Everything works together!

These are the steps to building financial wellness:

### 1. **Education**

Build a good *basic education*. Be *qualified* for a good job or business. Keep *well informed* by reading good books continuously or using the internet or on TV documentaries.

### 2. **Earning-based skills**

Gain a *skill (non-professional or professional)* that can guarantee an income. Have *more than one skill* if possible.

### 3. **Economic Independence**

- **Earn:** Find some honest way to earn with what skills you have
- **Produce and Market:** Many of us will need to work for somebody else. But you can work for yourself as well! As well, if possible, find a way to make or do something

that can be marketed to provide a service and earn for you. You could even form one or more businesses and employ persons to run them. *Be an entrepreneur if possible!* Or even produce to meet your own needs for food, clothes etc. Joining a Cooperative or Partnership enables a pooling of skills and capital for larger scale production. Get help from advisors such as the Small Business Association.

- **Use a Budget:** List your income and each item of necessary expenditure. Find ways to deal with the difference: Earn more and/or spend less and more efficiently.
- **Save:** Put aside the equivalent of 3-4 months expenses *monthly* for necessary but unusual needs, for example, health, and other emergencies. Save for, retirement, children's education, insurance needs, a car and house (if affordable), provision for elderly and disabled relatives, and defraying death duties on your estate. A *mutual fund* or "*partner system*" can help. A *credit union* is good to enable reasonable loans. Use a *salary deduction* or *standing order* so as to force yourself to save regularly.
- **Invest:** Salary earnings through employers or from your business may never be enough to make you a living. Invest part of your salary monthly in **assets** that will make you money while you sleep: e.g. the money market, stocks, real estate. A mutual fund (or unit trust) is a good start. Long-term Tax Free investments are good. *Get a financial advisor*. Follow financial newspapers or radio and TV programmes or www.investopedia.com

#### 4. Protect your money

- **Insure:** Protect your assets. Insure against loss of: your life, health, house, home contents, car etc.
- **Minimise Loans:** Avoid making loans where possible except for a home mortgage. Avoid using your credit card for loans. Pay Credit card bills immediately. Avoid giving unsecured loans.

- **Make it easier on your inheritors!** Make proper estate management plans. This includes a will, provisions for death duties (e.g. by an insurance policy, putting your children names on titles, joint bank accounts etc). Use a lawyer and financial advisor.
- **Give:** Give back to God. Give to the less fortunate, use a percentage giving policy (e.g. tithe). *Don't give to get back, but if you give you generously you will receive generously!*

#### 5. **Plan and Monitor:**

**Assess** your needs in each area of financial wellness.

**Plan:** Set up your *Financial Wellness Plan*. Set *goals* for each area. Set up *strategies* and *activities*.

- **Monitor** your progress.
- **Evaluate** the plan closely.
- **Involve your family:** Involve the family in all decision-making where appropriate. Gain cooperation where possible in all activities. Meet weekly, monthly and annually.
- **Involve God** (for those who are spiritual): All that we have comes from God to be used for our wellness and to serve others. *Commit your wealth to service*. Then prayer and Divine guidance will bring provision!