



INTRODUCTION

Taking care of your money is like growing a garden

If you want a garden, before you put seeds in the ground, you would lay out where the garden is going to be located, how big it's going to be, what vegetables or flowers you want to grow, think about potential threats to the plants like bugs and pests, when you will harvest the plants you grow and how often you're going to tend that garden.

Once the garden starts growing, you would water it, pull weeds, and fertilize it. If problems crop up with your plants, you'd figure out what to do and adjust your actions.

Sometimes weather might negatively affect your garden. There's not much you can do for a garden if the weather turns cold when you don't expect it, or wind whips up or it hails. Sometimes, things just happen and your garden may suffer. But you know it's temporary.

When flowers bloom or vegetables ripen, you cut the flowers or pick the vegetables. You planted the garden to enjoy the bounty and you also enjoyed the journey.

Taking care of your money is a lot like taking care of a garden.





SMARTMONEY RULE #1

Have the Right Money Mindset

Money is emotional. I get that. It is for me and just about everyone I've ever met. If we accept the fact that money is emotional, it leads us to the first SmartMoney Rule™: have the right money mindset.

Basically, the right money mindset is to think in terms of abundance and not scarcity.

Why is this important? Because when it comes to your money and your wealth, it starts with your attitude. I used to play golf a great deal and in my golf reading, I came across a quote from Bobby Jones, whom many consider the father of American golf. He said:

“Competitive golf is played mainly on a five-and-a-half-inch course, the space between your ears.”

And good money stewardship is the same. Your attitude about money—whether you believe the world is awash in money or the opposite—largely dictates the way you deal with money. The space between your ears is your best money management tool.

This I Know to Be True

Here is something else I know to be true: we are all influenced/shaped by the way our parents dealt with money. I'm convinced that the acorn (that's you and me) either **doesn't** fall far from the tree or it **falls a long-way from the tree**. In other words, our early money experience influences us a great deal. Think about your earliest money experiences and see what you can conclude from the self-examination.