

BALANCE

WELLNESS MAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019 | VOLUME 4 | NUMBER 2

Reporting workplace violence

Physical, Verbal, Online

The Power Behind
Our Thoughts

Practise Checking In
Versus Checking Out

Giving Yourself a
Breath Moment

It's All About
the Super EGG

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The
Manitoba
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Society



BALANCE
mind body spirit
THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

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EDITOR

Ralph Ramore
rramore@mbteach.org
Phone: (204) 934-0386/ TF: 1-866-504-9373

DESIGN

Krista Rutledge

CIRCULATION

Jennifer Nasse, jnasse@mbteach.org

ADVERTISING

Mireille Theriault, mtheriault@mbteach.org

BALANCE

191 Harcourt Street
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3H2
Phone: (204) 888-7961/ TF: 1-800-262-8803
Fax: (204) 831-0877

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10

“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change”.

– Dr. Wayne Dyer

Keith's corner:

8

The power behind our thoughts



4

It's all about the super EGG

7



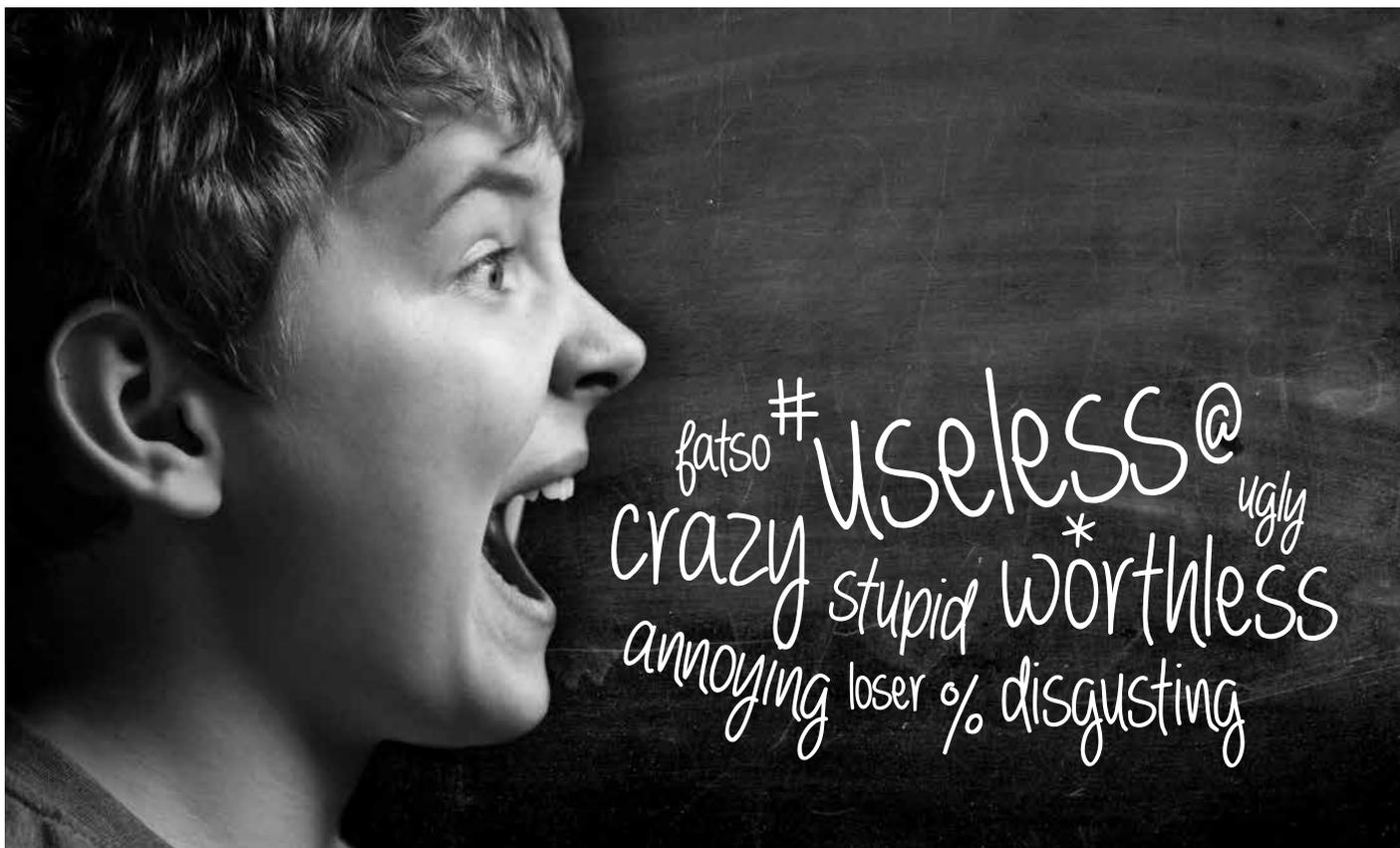
11



6

in this ISSUE

- 4 Reporting workplace violence
- 6 Practise checking in *versus* checking out
- 7 Enjoy your food:
It's all about the super EGG
- 8 Keith's corner:
The power behind our thoughts
- 10 Yoga practice:
Giving yourself a breath moment
- 11 Financial literacy:
The financial tale of Mike and John



Reporting workplace violence

Physical, verbal and online violence can lead to serious mental health problems

By **George Stephenson, The Manitoba Teachers' Society**

Teachers who don't report incidents of violence in schools run the risk of developing longer-term physical and psychological effects, a conference on workplace safety and health was told.

Bobbi Walling, a psychologist with Forensic Psychological Services, told a group of teachers that the impact of various types of violence – physical, verbal, online – can lead to serious mental health problems.

One of the best ways to avoid future problems is to report incidents, she said.

A recent poll of members by The Manitoba Teachers' Society found that 35 per cent of

public school teachers experienced physical violence in the past year.

While a majority of teachers who experienced that violence did report those incidents, 20 per cent said they did not.

The poll found that most violence is non-physical and that only 67 per cent of those who experienced it followed through with reporting the incidents.

Walling said reporting is critical for both students and teachers.

"Accurate reporting helps us understand the nature of the problem and ensuring the resources can be put into place.

Because of under-reporting support may not be put into place for a student who needs it. Part of reporting is being able to identify patterns of behavior and ensuring that resources are being put into place for the student."

In terms of student-teacher violence, early reporting of incidents can head off worse incidents in future.

"I think the same is true for teachers that reporting is important to ensure that teachers are truly getting the support that they need in dealing with the long-lasting effects of violence.

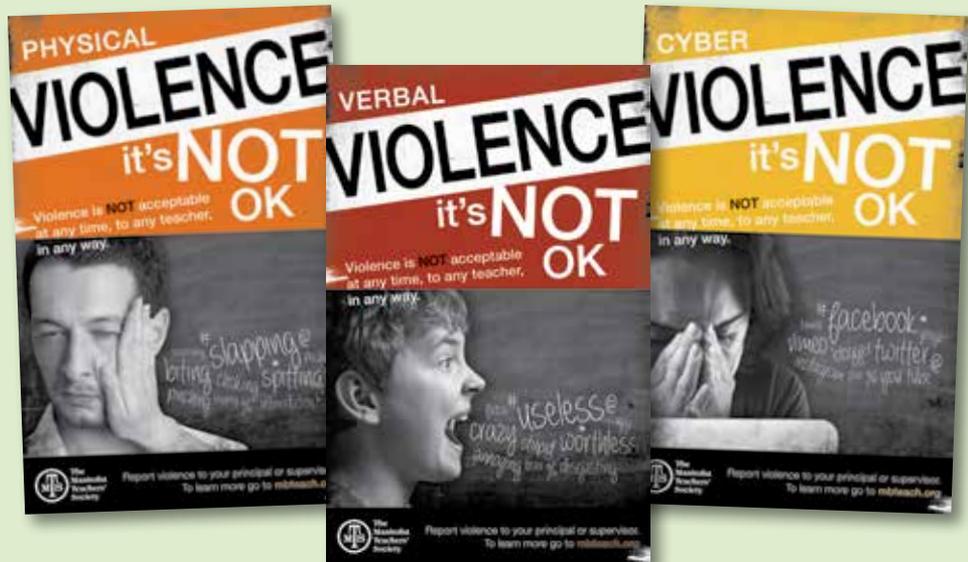


Examples of workplace violence

- Physical and sexual assault
- Property damage and vandalism
- Swearing and verbal abuse
- Online harassment
- Threats or intimidation

Negative impacts of workplace violence

- Increased absenteeism
- Anxiety, depression reduced morale
- Increased stress, burnout
- Negative public image
- Reduced productivity
- Liability issues, should harm occur in the workplace



Workplace violence posters are available from The Manitoba Teachers' Society. (Size 11"x17")

"These effects can be far-reaching," she said. "Often incidents of violence are occurring publicly, they're often occurring in front of a room full of people where teachers are expected to maintain some sort of professionalism or authority.

"So feelings of being victimized can lead to feelings of vulnerability and concerns about how a colleague or students might perceive you, worry about being perceived as weak. Due to the public nature of some of these types of experiences, having it happen in front of others, can also exacerbate feelings of shame or feelings of embarrassment."

All of these effects can impact a teacher's confidence and competency in the classroom.

"These kinds of experiences can also impact trust, a sense of trust with colleagues, with students even with administration. And that breach of trust can really leave us isolated and unsupported and both of those are risk factors for poor outcomes."

Walling said there are barriers to reporting incidents from being perceived as being weak, or not having control, or that the teacher feels blame.

"If the teacher comes to believe the

violence is something they could have prevented or something they caused, they might be feeling embarrassed, they might be feeling ashamed, feeling any number of those kinds of emotions and consequently they won't want to discuss it with anybody."

A greater barrier to reporting, however, is if teachers don't feel that anything will be done.

"If people report and their report is taken seriously, someone does something about it, then that teacher feels more empowered. If they report it and nothing happens, they won't report it in the future."

She says failure to act on reports leads to feelings of blame, powerlessness and a belief that the administration has no concern for the safety of teachers.

She said that a study in B.C. found that teachers who did report violence in any form are more likely to feel less afraid at school.

"Those who reported fear reported greater teaching effects, related to morale and job satisfaction, greater emotional effects, feelings of guilt and sadness as well as physical effects – headaches, fatigue, those kinds of things."

It can also lead to Post Traumatic Stress

Disorder: severe anxiety, nightmares and flashbacks.

Reporting can help avoid such a downward spiral, she said.

Under provincial legislation, teachers are expected to report incidents or if they have been a witness to a violent incident.

Teachers should immediately report incidents to their principal or vice-principal and they, in turn, must investigate and implement procedures to ensure the safety of others. Teachers must then fill out an incident form.

As Frank Restall, president of the Louis Riel Teachers' Association, explained in a recent association newsletter: "Although reporting incidents and completing the Incident Report form is an individual act, you are demonstrating your support of the entire membership, who, in turn, is supporting you through the same procedure."

He points out that forms cannot be used against a member for evaluation or disciplinary action. That is guaranteed in legislation.

"Support your colleagues (and future colleagues), the students and division by filling out the Incident Report form each and every time an incident occurs."

Practise checking in *versus* checking out



By Sofia Costantini

When life is extremely busy I become distracted and often get overwhelmed with all the thoughts racing through my head. I find myself feeling uneasy and unsettled, my heart pounding and my mind ready for some kind of detour, but from what? There are usually three factors that affect my state of mind.

1. I'm panicking about all the things that I need to get done in my day, as there never seems to be enough time.
2. I'm holding on to a past argument with a colleague, family member or friend that is still unsettled.
3. I'm dwelling on an experience that lingers deep in my mind from my childhood or a traumatic event from my past.

Often, I'm not even consciously aware of how much time these concerns take up throughout my day.

I try to stay in the moment, breathe, and focus on one task at a time; I allow the thoughts to pass through instead of letting them linger. Sometimes I'm so wound up that I check out and turn to social media as a distraction. When I'm worried or stressed about a situation, I tend to be very curious as to what is trending on social media. There are definitely times when I need a break from the demands of my creative outlets so I schedule little "time-outs" to surf throughout the day just to clear my head. Social media can be a great distraction and a fun source of entertainment, when used in moderation, however, there are times when I'm fixated and drawn to social media for a different reason as I'm choosing to avoid dealing with a problem that is unresolved. I realize I need to acknowledge what's bothering me emotionally instead of losing focus and become unproductive. It is beneficial to practise checking



in versus checking out. Knowing the difference between the two can be very useful when learning how to deal with avoidance or procrastination.

Do you find that you are choosing to check out and surf the net instead of dealing with your stressors? When does engaging in social media go from being a fun distraction to a need to replace something else? Can you identify the difference?

Consider checking in and determine your current stress level. Try practising some breathing exercises and create a checklist of things to calm you down to bring you back to a state of calm, as it will allow you to focus on what is important and what you really need in that moment.

Checking in when you're stressed

Here are 5 things you can do to check in with yourself when things are stressful:

1. Stop what you're doing and be still.
2. Take a moment to slow down your breathing and be aware of your body posture...try to relax.
3. Pinpoint the emotional trigger and decide if it is something that can be addressed quickly or needs further attention.
4. Focus on 3 positive statements that can change your frame of mind.
5. Remind yourself that you can handle anything that comes your way.

Have fun surfing the net and more importantly enjoy checking in within to ensure all is well emotionally.

Enjoy your food: It's all about the super EGG



By Carla D'Andreamatteo, RD, MSc www.thefoodlady.ca

Eggs are small but nutritionally powerful. Consuming an egg will provide a source of complete protein (the best quality protein available to the body) and more than 22 essential vitamins and minerals. In addition to the excellent nutritional profile, the cost of eggs compared to many other complete protein sources (meat, fish, poultry) seems almost unbelievable.

Over the past many years, the egg industry in Canada has expanded the variety of options for us in the grocery store. Along with that expansion, some consumers have become more confused about what the difference is between all of the choices available. I'm going to help you navigate through the options so that you can select the best egg for you and your family.

In full disclosure, I must inform you that I have been doing contract work with the Manitoba Egg Farmers (MEF) organization for many years. But I promise you that my love for eggs came much before my professional relationship with MEF.

Eggshell color

At this point, hen-laid eggshells are either white or brownish in color. Generally speaking, the color of the hen = the color of the shell. The nutritional value of eggs is equivalent regardless of the color.

Egg variety

The carton that eggs are sold in will typically provide details about any special circumstances related to how the hens are maintained or fed. Here are some different labels you may see on egg packaging.

Free range: Eggs that come from hens that are permitted to roam the barn floor area and are permitted to go outside when weather permits. In Canada this is limited to specific seasons.

Free run: Eggs that come from hens that are permitted to roam the barn floor area.

Organic: These eggs come from hens

living in a Free Range or Free Run farm (described above) and are fed certified organic feed.

Omega-3: The feed provided to hens contains 10-20% flaxseed.

Vegetarian: The hens are fed a diet that only contains feed from plant sources.

The ooey-gooey yolk

The color of an egg's yolk is influenced by the diet of the hen. Nutritional value is not altered by the color of the yolk. Typically, the lighter colored yolks are likely from a hen fed a wheat-based diet. The darker yolk is most likely a result of a corn-based diet.

Along with the color of yolk, another factor that can be altered is the fatty acid profile. Dietary omega-3 fatty acid is a hot commodity because it is essential to the body and has many health benefits associated with regular consumption of this nutrient. As identified in the chart previously presented, the omega-3 fatty acid content is increased by feeding the hen a diet with flaxseed. These eggs provide ten times the omega-3 fatty acid as a regular egg. The egg yolk is also a deeper yellow-orange color.

Eggs, cholesterol, heart disease

For many years, eggs have been identified as a higher source of dietary cholesterol. Cholesterol in the body is known to increase risk for heart disease. However, what is also important to know is that cholesterol in the body is primarily made by the liver (80% by some estimates) and approximately 20% comes from the diet.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada (2018) states:

Studies show that for healthy people with no history of heart disease, diabetes or high blood cholesterol, eating an average of one egg per day (or seven eggs per week) does not increase the long-term risk of heart disease.



Did you know?

- Store eggs in the fridge and leave in their original carton so that the shells do not take on the odors from other foods in the fridge.
- In Manitoba, eggs are on grocery store shelves within a week of being laid by the hen.

Furthermore, elevated cholesterol levels in the body are more strongly influenced by consumption of saturated fats (ex. processed meats, lard, hard margarines) and trans fats (found in foods containing vegetable oil shortening and/or partially hydrogenated oils). Efforts to limit or avoid these types of fats are encouraged for heart health.

Hormones and steroids

Eggs in Canada are regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, including the types of feed that are acceptable to provide to hens. Hormones and steroids are illegal and eggs that have been graded and processed to serve in a store do not contain either of these drugs.

In summary, eggs are a wonderful addition to a healthy diet (assuming you don't have an egg allergy). Understanding the options available will hopefully lead you to confidently head into your local grocery store and select the best egg variety to meet your needs.

Carla D'Andreamatteo owns and operates a nutrition consulting company, The Food Lady, since 1999. Based in Winnipeg, the team of dietitians offers a variety of nutrition services provincially and nationally.



Keith's corner:

The power behind our thoughts



By **Keith Macpherson** www.keithmacpherson.ca

What is the first thought that came across your mind when you woke up this morning? Was it the same thought you woke up thinking yesterday? Without consciously noticing it, many of us think the same thoughts over and over again, day after day. According to The National Science Foundation, the average person thinks up to 60,000 thoughts per day. Of those, 80% are negative and 95% are exactly the same repetitive thoughts as the day before.

A question I often ask the audience during my keynote talks is, "Are your thoughts beating you up or building you up on a regular basis?" If you woke up this morning and your first thought was, "I am so tired and this is going to be a very LONG day", the chances are very good that this will quickly become your reality. The thoughts we think in our inner imagination often begin to shape the reality we experience in the outside world around us.

In the mindfulness principles that I wrote about in my new book, *Making Sense of Mindfulness*, principle one states, "everything begins as an inner dream". Consider that right now as you are reading this article, whatever you focus your attention on was only once imagined. From the chair you may be sitting on, to the creation of this magazine, to the clothes you are wearing, the career you have chosen, the invention of the light bulb, along with all

the other inventions on this planet were only once a thought in the imagination of someone's mind. In a mindfulness framework, to image within your inner mind is where all things originate.

One of my mentors and teachers, Dr. Wayne Dyer used to say, "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change". I recently remembered this mindfulness practice when I found myself in the car on the way to the airport to catch a flight.

It was an early morning flight and I had been rushing around trying to ensure I had packed all that I needed for the two-week work trip ahead to Toronto and New York. As my wife pulled our car up to the curb of the airport terminal to drop me off, I reached into my pocket and discovered that I had left my wallet at home!

All of a sudden, I felt my heartbeat increase in speed and my chest started to tighten up. I quickly realized that without my wallet, I would have no way to pay for anything when arriving in Toronto. My wife graciously agreed to drive back to our house to get the wallet and rush it back to me before I would board the flight.

About 20 minutes later, I received a phone call from my wife explaining that she had looked everywhere in the house for my wallet and simply could not find it. I had to make a quick decision. Do I board the plane or not? I decided to take the flight and hope for the best! At least I had my phone with the Uber app, so I could get a ride when arriving in Toronto. As I waited in the terminal to board the plane, my mind raced with several critical thoughts about how frustrated I was. I also felt so guilty for sending my wife on a wild goose chase so early in the morning. To say I was feeling stressed in my mind would be an understatement.

As my mind raced out of control, trying to figure out what I was going to do, I decided to practice what I preach about mindfulness, and simply take a few deep breaths. I was completely taken back by what proceeded from this very simple shift in perspective.

Within seconds following this mindful pause and breath, a friend appeared in the airport and greeted me. After learning that my wallet was missing, he reached into his pocket and offered me twenty dollars. Although I felt

a bit awkward accepting his kind gesture, I intuitively took this as a sign of abundance and that everything was going to turn out fine. After all, I thought, there is even a documentary about how someone was able to live on one dollar a day.

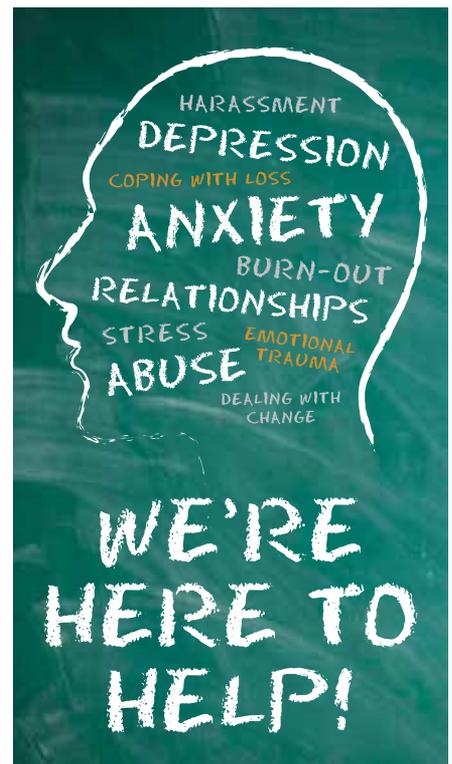
I felt my thoughts shift in that moment and all of a sudden, a calmness came over me. Everything was going to be alright and I was being supported by life. This peaceful, inner thought was affirmed even greater when I arrived at Pearson airport in Toronto. As I stepped off the flight and into the airport, I looked down and noticed a five dollar bill on the ground. At first, I thought I was being pranked, but as it turns out, I was being gifted another symbol of abundance. I picked up the extra money and took this as a confirmation that life has my back.

I share this story as an example of what is possible when we intentionally integrate a mindfulness practice into our life. The simple act of pausing during a moment of stress, taking a deep breath, and choosing a new, positive, perspective can have transformative effects in your life. I believe that everything we choose to think is shaping our reality. Everything around us is alive, aware, and responsive. Life wants to support us by offering us the manifestations of what we choose to imagine in our minds.

As you are reading this article, just take a moment to notice what types of thoughts you are currently thinking. Ask yourself, are my thoughts currently building me up or beating me up? If you catch yourself in a downward spiral of negative thinking, remember that you can pause, take a deep breath, and choose a new perspective. As you may discover, this practice can produce abundant results for you too!

I must conclude this article by reporting back that my wallet was found! Upon unpacking my suitcase in Toronto, I realized I had accidentally packed it in my checked luggage. Everything truly is happening perfectly on time!

Keith Macpherson is a motivational speaker, yoga instructor, life coach and recording artist. To connect further with Keith Macpherson and to sign up for his daily inspirational email and other free gifts, visit: <http://www.keithmacpherson.ca>



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The Manitoba Teachers' Society



Yoga practice: Giving yourself a breath moment



By Tally Young

I want you to feel this in your body. Right now, imagine you were in the woods, after a rainstorm on a warm sunny evening. While in the woods, the moment your first step lands on the earth, your body automatically takes a full breath in. You enjoy nature's aromatherapy as it moves through your lungs. It is calming and peaceful. Your body inherently knows that it is in a healing space and nurtures you with the forest's essence. You have taken a breath moment and have felt its ability to heal.

We all know the basic necessity to breathe. We do it unconsciously every day, the expansion and contraction of space in the chest, which renders our thoughts on it to mute and we go on with other activities. What we can often miss out on is our need to breathe just a little deeper to create the space necessary in the body to give us the sense of being grounded. The more we deeply breathe, our conscious breath takes over and we

can feel the sense of calm that moves through the body.

Giving ourselves the time to breathe consciously lowers our blood pressure, empties the jumble of thoughts that fire through our minds consistently and gives us our best opportunity to be who we truly are. The more we visit this conscious state we teach the body what it means to be at ease and we will continue to live there. Because taking conscious breath moments is meeting one of our basic needs, to live fully present in this moment.

The breath practice I am sharing with you is one that I personally love to move into at least twice a day. It delivers those daily reminders to our cells that breath is life.

The breath practice

To move with a conscious breath use the nose as the inhale and the exhale point:

1. Stand tall with your feet hip distance apart.



"Breathing in, I calm body and mind. Breathing out I smile. Dwelling in the present moment I know this is the only moment"

- Thich Nhat Hanh

2. Inhale, lift your arms tall to the ceiling and have your palms meet.
3. Exhale, sweep your arms to the floor.
4. Inhale, lift your heart halfway up your body.
5. Exhale, lower your torso onto your thighs, squeezing softly.
6. Inhale, sweep the body up, tall palms moving over head to touch.
7. Exhale, hands to center of chest. Repeat as many times as you would like.

Financial literacy: The financial tale of Mike and John



By Brian Denysuk, Creditaid www.creditaid.ca

How can two men graduating as teachers in the same year have a difference in net worth by \$600,000 at age 40?

This is the tale of Mike and John. John, knowing how his parents struggled financially, was wary of debt. He decided to pay for his university with the money he earned working 16 hours per week while in university and working full time each summer. Mike enjoyed his part time job during the summers and didn't work while in university for fear it would interfere with his studies. Mike got student loans to put himself through University while John paid for his tuition and books from his earnings.

Upon graduation Mike and John were both hired by the same school division with the same starting salary. Being friends, they decided to become roommates so they could share living expenses. Mike started making \$500 payments on his \$50,000 student loan debt while John started saving \$500 per month so he could purchase a house. Two years later John purchased his first house and set a goal to be mortgage free by 40. Mike had no money saved but felt pretty good about himself because he had just purchased a brand new car. His car payments were \$550 per month. John continued to drive his old beater that he bought while in university. Mike teased John about his crappy old car but John, good naturedly just shook off the teasing because he refused to get in debt with a large car payment knowing vehicles go down in value unlike property.

Six months later, Mike could no longer afford to pay rent on his own because of his student loan payments, car payments and the \$6,000 he owed on his credit card from vacations he had

not saved for. John let his friend move in with him at a reduced monthly rent of only \$400 to help Mike get back on his feet financially. With Mike's increased cash flow, (instead of paying off his credit card), he decided he could afford to spend more, like going out for dinner, movies etc. That winter Mike and John took a trip to Mexico. Mike ended up putting another \$1000 on his credit card which increased his credit card debt to \$7000. John used the money he saved from Mike's rent payments. At the end of the trip John had no credit card debt. John pays his credit card off every month to avoid paying the high interest cost.

Fast forward fifteen years...

John, who had accelerated his mortgage payments is thrilled because he just paid off his mortgage and more recently bought a modest brand new car for \$40,000 that he again paid cash for, because he had saved for it. Over the years he upgraded his old beaters periodically but always bought a used car that he paid cash for. He has enjoyed winter vacations every third year and always paid cash. John's house is now worth \$500,000 and he has another \$10,000 saved in the bank. With no longer having to make a mortgage payment he can afford to take one to two vacations per year for the rest of his life and even purchase a cottage or a rental property or pretty much whatever else he wants.

Mike is still renting, now at \$1500 per month. He has a large car payment at \$750 per month because every 5 years he has traded in his current car for the latest luxury model even though the previous loan had not been paid off. Mike owes \$15,000 more on his car than it is worth. He owes another \$45,000 (\$900 per month payment) on credit



cards because of his annual vacations and other toys he has purchased using credit. Mike has not paid off his student loan because he only pays the minimum each month. Mike will not qualify to buy a house anytime soon and even worse, he has a negative net worth of \$60,000. John, on the other hand has a positive net worth of \$540,000 and he has an extra \$2000 per month more than Mike in cash flow- even though their salaries are the same.

The moral of the story, save for the things you want first and then buy them, i.e. "Save to Spend". Practice delayed gratification by avoiding high interest debt and stay focused on your long-term financial goals.

Brian Denysuk is a local credit counsellor and registered insolvency counsellor at Creditaid who has been in the financial services industry for over 35 years.

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