

YOUR MONEY or YOUR LIFE

A Study Guide for Groups



To be used with the book
Your Money or Your Life

by **Joe Dominguez** and **Vicki Robin**

A Penguin paperback

Created by the New Road Map Foundation
www.newroadmap.org

Produced and Distributed by The Simple Living Network
www.simpleliving.net

A Special Note To Users Of This PDF Edition

If you downloaded this special, free PDF edition of the Study Guide and find it useful, your financial contribution in any amount to the New Road Map Foundation and/or The Simple Living Network will be greatly appreciated.

Your Money or Your Life: A Study Guide for Groups, to be used with the book *Your Money or Your Life* by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin

Copyright © New Road Map Foundation 1996

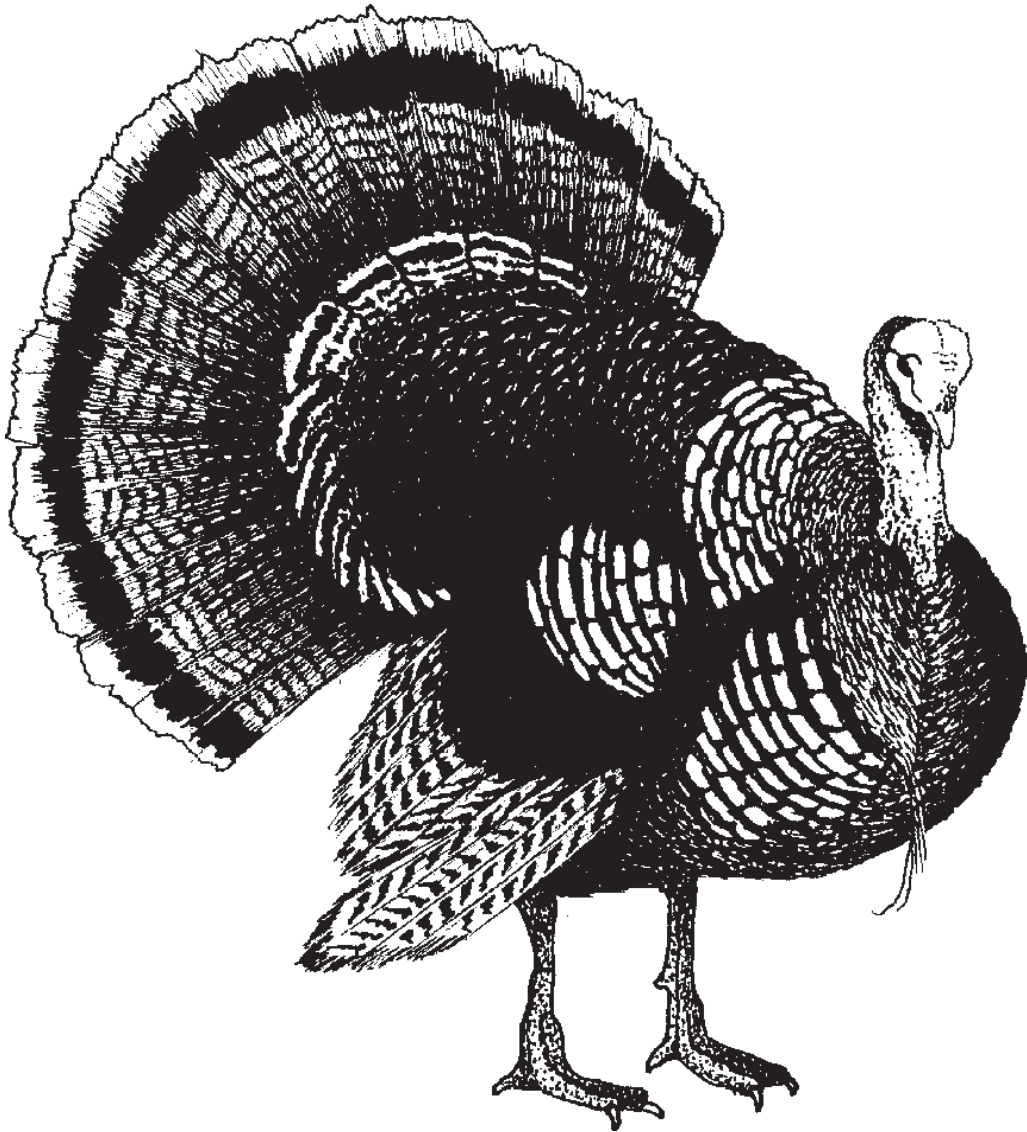
This Study Guide is available from The Simple Living Network (ordering information is provided in the back of this volume). If the need arises, however, permission to reproduce this Study Guide is granted, provided it is done in its entirety and presented as a complete unit, and that credit is given to The New Road Map Foundation and The Simple Living Network.

It is our hope that this Study Guide will serve you well. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact us.

New Road Map Foundation
P.O. Box 15981
Seattle, WA 98115
www.newroadmap.org

The Simple Living Network
P.O. Box 233
Trout Lake, WA 98650
www.simpleliving.net

Can you soar like an eagle...



...if you spend like a turkey?*

*One of New Road Map Foundation's founders grew up on a turkey farm, and she attests to the fact that domesticated turkeys *do* drown themselves by running around with their mouths open when it rains. They don't know *how much is enough*. Is it any wonder that the biggest shopping day of the year is the day after Thanksgiving?!

Foreword

What you have in your hands represents an important step in a long process. For you, it's the choice to transform your lifelong relationship with money, with all its ups and downs, fears and hopes, successes and sorrows. For the New Road Map Foundation, this Group Study Guide is a new step in our commitment to transform the way Americans think about, spend and save money.

Since the publication of *Your Money or Your Life* in 1992, the New Road Map Foundation has received countless requests from educators, corporations, unions, health-care providers, credit counselors and “just plain folks” for a tool to guide groups who want to study — and implement! — the program.

We developed and pilot tested this Study Guide in a corporate setting. What better location than the workplace to learn how to keep more of your paycheck! With the success of this pilot project behind us, we've developed this expanded version that is great for any setting where people gather to learn — community centers, adult education programs, high schools and colleges, libraries and living rooms. (We've also developed a "Group Study Guide for Contemporary Christians" and a "Group Study Guide on Money and Spirit." — Appendix B.)

Everything you need to know to get a group going is explained in the Introduction. If you would like to see a video of our introductory presentation (taped at the pilot site, Weyerhaeuser Corporation in Federal Way, Washington), see page 49 for ordering information.

Many valued colleagues added their genius to this Study Guide. Liesbeth Trappenburg gave invaluable input on content, as did Jane Hunt on graphics. Readers of early versions include Paul Wilson, Dave Ellis, Peter Moore, Karen Nims, Barb Clagett, Dick Roy, Mike and Linda Lenich, Enid Terhune, David Heitmiller and Jacques Blix. To them — our gratitude. Thanks also go to Susan Mersereau, Chris Wooten, Debra Hansen, Steve Hill, Joy Troche and Tom Oswald of Weyerhaeuser for supporting the test phase.

We wish you well on your journey to a transformed relationship with money.

Monica Wood, Editor

Contents

Foreword	4
Introduction	6
Facilitator List	10
Kick-off Session	11
Decide how your study group will operate; get to know each other. Begin Step 1.	
Session 1: Getting Started	17
Begin Step 2: Learn about your money behavior — keep track of every cent you spend.	
Session 2: Getting Out of the Money Trap	21
What do you have to show for what you've earned? Continue Step 1: Inventory your stuff.	
Session 3: What Is Money?	27
Find out what money is and what it costs you. Continue Step 2: Track your life energy.	
Session 4: Knowing Where Your Money Goes	31
Begin Step 3: Develop categories for your spending; create a Monthly Tabulation.	
Session 5: Fulfillment and Purpose	35
Look at your life purpose. Begin Step 4: Ask questions that can change your life.	
Session 6: Making Life Energy Visible	39
Begin Step 5: Plot your income and expenses on a chart; put it where you will see it every day.	
Follow-up Session: Looking at Your Progress	43
Reflect on your experiences and celebrate your progress.	
Appendix A: Additional Discussion Questions	46
Appendix B: Resources	48
Appendix C: Feedback Form	49



Introduction

Welcome!

You've made an important choice: to transform your relationship with money. This Study Guide will help you start implementing the program in *Your Money or Your Life*. Using both this Guide and *Your Money or Your Life*, your group sessions will be fast-paced, provocative and enjoyable.

What Is *Your Money or Your Life*?

Your Money or Your Life is the best-selling book by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin (New York: Viking Penguin, 1992). It presents a simple, nine-step plan that will transform the way you think about, earn and spend money. This plan, a whole-systems approach based on simple record-keeping and your own unique life situation, works for anyone who earns or spends money. Singles and couples (with and without children), retirees and students, big earners and those below the poverty line have all been successful in doing the program.

What Are the Results of the Nine-Step Program?

After following the steps for six months, people report that they have reduced their expenses an average of 20 percent, are paying off debt and building savings — and are enjoying a higher quality of life. Couples and families also gain a way to talk about money and make new decisions. There is a sense of discovery and aliveness as habits are questioned and old dreams are renewed. All of this can happen for you. This Study Guide is designed to give you the best start possible in understanding and using the steps.

Why Group Study?

This Study Guide harnesses the creative energy and effectiveness of group learning to help you improve your relationship with money. It will guide your group through a process — using exercises, reflection, discussion, and homework assignments — that will launch you on your journey.

Note, however, that most people who have implemented this program have done so on their own. The added support of a group can help you get started, but the real work on the program happens as you continue doing the steps on your own, or with your family.



Purpose of the Study Guide

By following this Study Guide, reading *Your Money or Your Life* and doing the homework assignments, you will begin to implement the first five steps in the nine-step program and anchor these key steps in your life.

In the process you will:

- explore your relationship with money
- understand better the relationship between money and work
- begin to discover what is “enough” for you
- change habits, and possibly begin making major life changes

Here are two keys to making this system work for you:

1. **Start.**
2. **Keep going.**

The objective of these sessions is not to finish. The objective is to begin.

Planning Your Group



This Study Guide takes you through the following sessions:

- Kick-off session (one hour)
- Six weekly, one-hour sessions
- Follow-up session after you’ve completed a second month of implementing the steps

If possible, schedule your Kick-off session in the middle of the month so you can start the new month with one of the basic steps of the program: tracking your expenses. This will give you time to generate the data you will be using in later sessions.

This Study Guide can be adapted to accommodate other meeting schedules:

- Two-hour weekly sessions
- Sessions every other week

For groups choosing to have longer sessions, we have included additional topics for discussion at the end of the Study Guide (see Appendix A, page 47). Meeting every other week allows participants more time to complete homework assignments.

Group Size: Optimal group size is about twelve people. If you have fewer than five, you might want to invite more to join. If you have more than twenty, consider dividing into two groups.

Tools Needed: Each group member needs a copy of *Your Money or Your Life* and this Study Guide. The person who convenes the group will bring the Study Guides to the Kick-off session (see ordering information on page 49).

For Individuals Too?

Though the primary purpose of this Study Guide is to facilitate group learning, it can be used for individual study. Simply respond to all group discussion questions in a notebook. If you wish, reflect on the supplementary questions in Appendix A.

Facilitation

The Kick-off session is facilitated by the person who brings the group together. For subsequent sessions, facilitation rotates among other group members. The Study Guide is designed to make facilitation easy and enjoyable, even for people who have never led groups. The facilitator's specific tasks will be reviewed during the Kick-off session (see page 12), at which time volunteers will sign up.

Format

Each session includes:

- Overview of the session
- “Group Check-in”: a chance to talk about your experience of doing the previous session's assignments
- Individual exercise(s)
- Group discussion (Note: Discussions may be done in subgroups if your study group is large.)
- Assignments for the next session

A suggested length of time is given for each activity.

The Kick-off and Follow-up sessions have slightly different formats.

How to Make Your Study Group a Success

A list of helpful guidelines will be reviewed by participants during the Kick-off session (see page 13).

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I do this program without my spouse or partner?

You can use this study group to get started. If you are part of a larger household, treat yourself, for now, as an individual entity. You will probably want to engage the rest of your family over time. As you do the assignments, consider your own finances separately to the extent that you can. Simply do what makes the most sense to you. There is no “right” way.

What if I fall behind the rest of the group?

Continue coming to the meetings. You can gain a lot by participating in the exercises and discussions and by doing assignments at home as you have time.

Facilitator List

At your Kick-off session, have different group members volunteer to facilitate each session. Note that the Follow-up session takes place one month after Session 6.

Session	Name	Date
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
Follow-up (one month later)		



Kick-off Session

Decide how your study group will operate; get to know each other. Begin Step 1.

Tools You Need for this Session

A copy of *Your Money or Your Life*, this Study Guide, pen or pencil

Group Introductions (5 minutes)



Facilitator asks participants to introduce themselves by name and say one word that describes their relationship with money.

Group Check-in (10 minutes)



Facilitator reads the following question aloud; go around the circle until everyone has had a chance to respond. (Please ask participants to avoid commenting on what others say during each session's opening Check-in.)

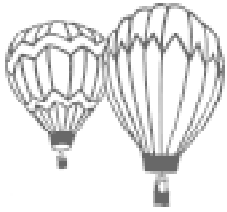
What do you want to gain or change by joining this study group and following the steps in *Your Money or Your Life*?

(Suggestion: Set your sights high and be specific regarding your goals.)



Launching Your Group (20 minutes)

Facilitator guides the group through the following:



Schedule Meeting Times

This Study Guide is designed to be used in six one-hour weekly sessions, plus this Kick-off session and a Follow-up session one month later. If possible, schedule your next session during the last week of the month so you can start the new month with one of the basic steps of the program: tracking your monthly expenses. Set meeting dates accordingly and write them on page 10. (As reviewed in the Introduction on page 7, this Study Guide can be adapted for different schedules. If decisions need to be made regarding these options, do so now.)

Facilitation

This is a self-facilitated program with rotating leadership, and volunteers for the remaining sessions are needed at this time. When you facilitate, your jobs are to:

- Introduce exercises as directed in this Study Guide.
- Make sure everyone understands the information presented.
- Keep the discussion focused on the topic; if people get off track, gently help the group refocus. (For example, say, “That’s an interesting idea, but it’s taking us off the topic. Perhaps you could talk further with someone about it after the meeting.”)
- Make sure everyone has a chance to participate — as a speaker and as a listener. Conduct group discussions by going around the circle, giving each participant the option to speak or pass. Or simply open the floor to whoever wishes to speak; as conversation winds down ask if anyone else wishes to speak.
- Keep track of time, letting everyone know when there is only one minute left for a given exercise.
- Step out of your facilitator role when it’s your turn to respond to a discussion question.

Write names of volunteer facilitators on page 10.

Guidelines for Making Your Group a Success

Facilitator asks group members to read these guidelines silently. Ask for each group member's agreement on the guidelines before proceeding.

- **Attend each meeting**

Each session builds on previous sessions, so your presence is important. Furthermore, each person brings a unique and valuable perspective, so your participation will affect the outcome for all. If you are unable to attend a meeting, inform that session's facilitator.

- **Do the homework assignments**

You will benefit from doing the assignments — and the group will benefit from your full participation. If you cannot complete the reading and assignments before the next session, at least read the key pages that are indicated, and come to the next group meeting anyway.

- **Do the steps**

Do the steps as they are presented in *Your Money or Your Life*. While other methods may work, your purpose here is to learn *this* method, which has a proven track record for producing significant results. The steps reinforce each other and work best when you do all of them.

- **Offer each other absolute confidentiality**

Money is one of the most intimate and difficult topics to discuss. You may reveal more about your personal relationship with money here than you ever have before. Let nothing that is said in this group go beyond those present.

- **Participate openly**

Be as open and honest as possible, while always respecting any group member's choice not to speak. Note: At no point are group members *required* to reveal any personal financial data.

- **Participate actively**

Feel free to speak up, while ensuring that others also have opportunities to speak. Every question and comment is important, and every contribution is appreciated. Both speaking and listening enliven the group.

- **Support your facilitator**

Groups can get waylaid by people who wander away from the topic, interrupt, complain or talk too much. Support your facilitator in keeping the group focused on the topic.

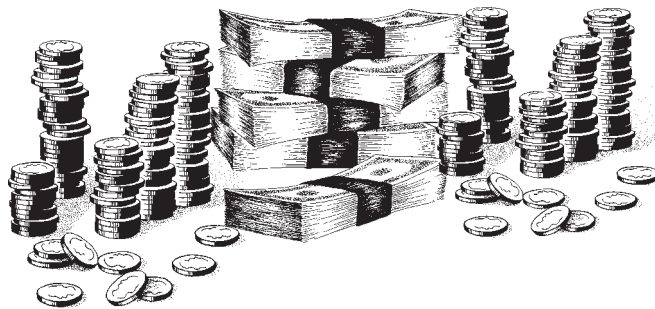
- **Start and end on time**

By beginning and ending at your agreed-upon time you demonstrate respect for all participants.

- **Have fun!**

Begin Step 1: Find Out How Much Money You Have Earned in Your Lifetime

- **Goal**
Make peace with your past in the area of money.
- **Why?**
Taking a look at your past relationship with money clears the slate for building a healthier relationship in the present and sheds light on your earning power.
- **How?**
Start looking at how much money you've made in your life.



Exercise: Making Peace with Your Past (10 minutes) (individual)

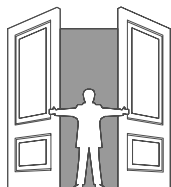
Your homework assignment includes contacting Social Security to find out how much money you have made in your lifetime. Use the space below to begin listing past employment that would not have been reported to Social Security, such as jobs you had as a youth (e.g., delivering newspapers, baby-sitting, bagging groceries).

Write down how much money you *think* you've made in your lifetime:

\$ _____

Facilitator: When time is up for this exercise, direct group members' attention to the assignments on the next page.

Looking Ahead



Reading Assignment for the next session

- Study Guide Introduction (pp. 6-9)
- From *Your Money or Your Life*:
 - Prologue
 - From Chapter 1:
pp. 30-33: How Much Have You Earned in Your Life?

Action Assignment for the next session

- To begin Step 1, write to Social Security for your Statement of Lifetime Earnings (see p. 30 of *Your Money or Your Life*) or call 1-800-772-1213.
- See page 10 of this Study Guide to check the date and facilitator of the next session.

Bring Next Session

Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide



This program has been, in a word, “profound.” It has now started to impact every facet of our life. Our life has become not only much “richer” but more deliberate, as we become more aware of our values and choose to live by them. The program has opened up many options for our life. We have become more at peace with money.

– Couple from Ohio



Session 1: Getting Started

Begin Step 2: Learn about your money behavior — keep track of every cent you spend.

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**

Begin gathering the information you'll need to make the changes you desire in your financial attitudes and behavior.

- **Why?**

To transform your relationship with money, it is important to observe both your *attitudes* and your *behavior*. By beginning Step 2, “Tracking Your Expenses,” you will generate the records you’ll need for later assignments. One key to the nine-step program is understanding that *you sell your most precious resource, your time, for money*. Spending your money well begins with knowing where it’s going. How can you make ends meet if you don’t know where the ends are?

- **How?**

Begin keeping a record of every cent you spend.

Tools to Bring

Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Instructions for the Facilitator

- Remind everyone to:
 - Keep what is said in confidence
 - Respect anyone’s choice not to respond to any particular question
- Keep track of time, letting everyone know when there is only one minute left for a given exercise.



Group Check-in (20 minutes)



Facilitator reads aloud: (Please ask participants to avoid commenting on what others say during each session's opening Check-in.)

Tell about one item you bought recently that you feel good about, and why.

Exercise: Tracking Your Expenses (15 minutes) (individual)

Facilitator: Make sure everyone understands this step.



In order to start a new relationship with money and enjoy the benefits promised by *Your Money or Your Life*, it is essential to gather information about your current spending patterns. One of your homework assignments is to begin recording every cent that comes into and goes out of your life. Later you will organize these expenses into categories and compute a monthly total.

On the next page is a list of typical expenses. Beside each item write how you normally pay for it and how you intend to keep track of it (e.g., check register, pocket or purse notebook, collect receipts). ***This list is to get you thinking; it is not intended to be complete.*** Also, note that over time you may refine your method of tracking expenses.

Facilitator: When there are 5 minutes left, ask if there was any type of expense that any group member couldn't imagine tracking. Allow others to suggest solutions.

	How I normally pay	How I will track this expense
Rent/House payment		
Utilities		
Phone		
Health insurance		
Auto insurance		
Groceries		
Clothes		
Gas for car		
Bus/Parking		
Dry cleaning		
Day care		
Movies/Theater		
Restaurant meals		
Charitable contributions		
Gifts		
Other		

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

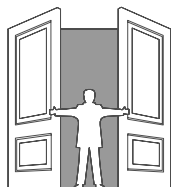


Note: If there are more than eight in your study group, you may wish to divide into subgroups for each session's Group Discussion. We recommend that these small groups remain the same for the duration of the course. *Facilitator reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for discussion after each question.*

- **How do you think keeping track of your expenses might affect your buying habits?**
- **What strengths (personal and other) can you draw on to help you keep track of every cent?**

If you divided into small groups, regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.

Looking Ahead



Note: All page numbers in the assignments refer to *Your Money or Your Life* unless otherwise indicated.

Reading Assignments

- Chapter 1

If you are short on time, *at least* read pp. 12-13 and pp. 23-28.

- From Chapter 2:
 - pp. 55-56: Your Life Energy
 - pp. 69-74: Keep Track of Every Cent

Action Assignments

- To begin Step 2, decide how you are going to track your expenses and get that system ready to go.
- Start tracking your expenses.

Begin this step as soon as possible so you can have a complete month of expenses to work with by Session 5.

Bring Next Session

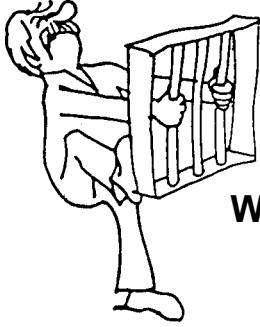
- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Your journey has begun! You're setting up systems that can bring measurable changes in how you spend your most precious resource, your life energy. Reminder: The key to success lies in doing the steps.



*I have a handle on how much money I have, how I spend it and where it is. No more money worries based on nebulous fears. My savings have increased from \$4,815 to \$10,550. And I have a whole new attitude! **I've transformed my relationship with money.***

– Woman from Hawaii, decreased expenses \$335/month



Session 2: Getting Out of the Money Trap

What do you have to show for what you've earned?
Continue Step 1: Inventory your stuff.

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**
Take stock of what you have — and what it has cost you to have it.
- **Why?**
Full accountability to yourself for your possessions, your savings and your debts opens up the opportunity for improvement in how you earn, spend and save money. The first exercise of this session will get you going in the assessment process.
- **How?**
Begin observing and reflecting on your possessions.

Tools to Bring

- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Instruction for the Facilitator

This session is a full one, and it will be especially important to stay on track and on time.



Group Check-in (15 minutes)

Facilitator reads aloud:

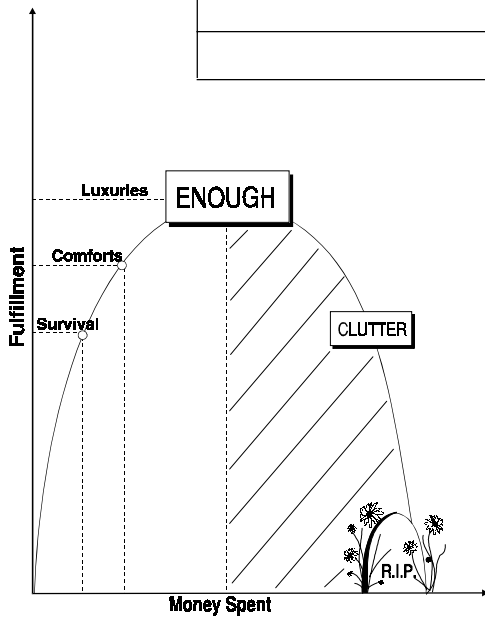


What was most exciting or eye-opening for you in tracking your expenses?

Exercise: Fulfillment Curve (10 minutes) (individual)

In the chart below, write down some of your possessions and evaluate them according to the following categories: Survival, Comfort, Luxury or Clutter (if needed, see pp. 23-27 of *Your Money or Your Life* for a review of the Fulfillment Curve). You may continue this exercise at home if you wish.

Item	Survival	Comfort	Luxury	Clutter



Exercise: A Walk Through Your House (10 minutes)



Facilitator: Have everyone sit comfortably, with eyes closed if they wish, and lead them on an imaginary walk through their homes. Read the following slowly, pausing after each sentence. (Hint for facilitator: pause long enough for each image to come to your mind.)

Picture your house or apartment building from the street or outside....

Enter your home through the door you normally use.... What room are you in?... If you are not already there, go to your living room or front room....

What furniture is in it?... Can you remember acquiring each piece?... Do you need all of it?... Put a price tag on each piece.... What's on the walls?... What values does this room reflect?... What items do you enjoy?... What's clutter?...

Now go to your kitchen.... How do you feel when you enter this room?...

Are there things on the counters or are they clear?... What's visible?...

Open the cupboards.... What do you see?... What appliances do you own? ...How often do you use each one?... What items could you do without?...

Go into your bedroom.... What do you notice first?... Open your closet....

What do you see?... How often do you wear each piece of clothing?... Are there items you could do without?... Think about your entire house.... Are there too many things?... Not enough?... What does your house represent to you?...

Open your eyes and continue with the next exercise.

Exercise: Reflection (3 minutes) (individual)



In the *More* column list what you would like more of; in the *Less* column list what you would like less of.

More

Less

More	Less

Group Discussion (10 minutes) (small groups if desired)

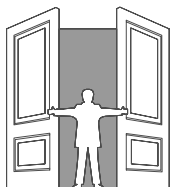


Facilitator (or someone in each small group) reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for discussion after each question.

- **Which items would you like to see more of and which would you like to see less of?**
- **Is one person's *more* another person's *less*?**

(Regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.)

Looking Ahead



Reading Assignments

- Chapter 2

If you are short on time, *at least* read pp. 41-42; pp. 44-48 (including Money as Social Acceptance); pp. 54-56 (start with bold text) and pp. 59-67 (start with How Much...).

Action Assignments

- Continue Step 1.
- Develop a method to inventory your possessions (see pp. 33-35).
- Begin your inventory. You may inventory one drawer, a closet, or even a whole room. (Your inventory does not have to be completed now — but *do* begin it.)
- Continue tracking your expenses.

Bring Next Session

- The inventory you've begun to take
- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Congratulations! You have completed Session 2 of your journey toward transforming your relationship with money.



*By keeping focused on what really matters, I've eliminated many inessentials in my life. **I've achieved remarkable financial clarity and confidence.** The steps and ideas presented in the program have helped me to build a life of love and fulfillment in the present.*

– Woman from California



Session 3: What Is Money?

Find out what money is and what it costs you. Continue Step 2: Track your life energy.

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**
Find out what you are trading your life energy for.
- **Why?**
This process puts paid employment into real perspective and enables you to see how much you are actually making at your job.
- **How?**
Calculate your *real* hourly wage.

Tools to Bring

- The inventory you have begun to take
- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Group Check-in (10 minutes)



Facilitator reads aloud:

Tell about what you inventoried — a drawer, a closet, a room — and what insights you gained.



Group Discussion (20 minutes) (small groups if desired)



Read the questions silently and take 5 minutes to think about them. Spend the next 15 minutes in group discussion.

Facilitator: Let all groups know when there are 3 minutes of discussion time left.

- **What did you learn about money as a child?**
- **Did your mother and father have different ideas about money? If so, which one did you tend to believe?**

Exercise: Developing a Life Energy vs. Salary Checklist

(10 minutes) (individual)

Because we trade our life energy for money, establishing the *actual* costs in time and money to maintain our jobs is a critical piece in evaluating our relationship to money.

Using pp. 67-68 of *Your Money or Your Life* as your guide, begin filling out your Life Energy vs. Salary Checklist on the next page. This will assist you in your homework assignment: calculating your *real* hourly wage.

- Write down job-related spending categories that apply to your life.
- Fill in estimates of your time and money expenditures in each category.

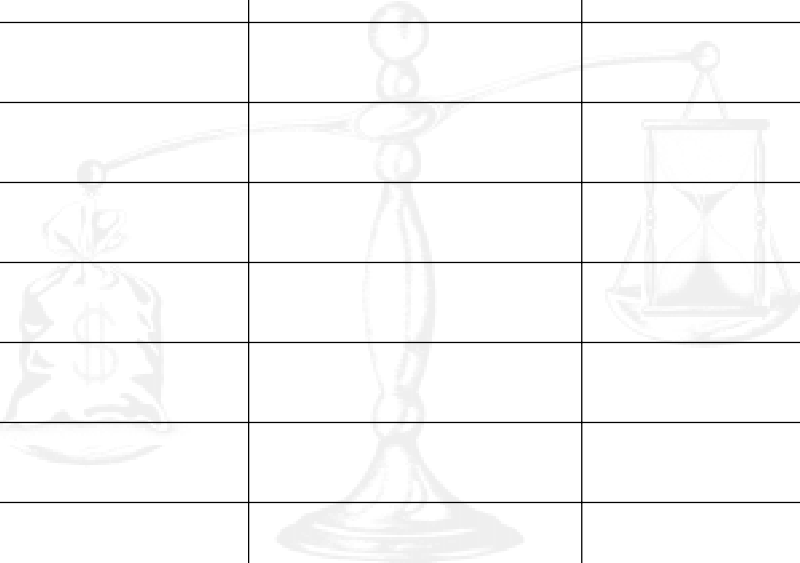
Note: If you are not currently employed, either estimate the job-related time and money expenditures of the main breadwinner in your family *or* estimate from a period of time when you were employed. Future exercises and assignments related to employment can be handled in the same way.

The cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.

– Henry David Thoreau

Checklist: Life Energy vs. Salary

Spending Category	Time hrs/week more	Money \$/week less



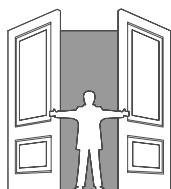
Group Discussion (5 minutes) (small groups if desired)



Facilitator (or someone in each small group) reads aloud:

As you became aware of hidden job-related costs, can you see areas where you could reduce or even eliminate expenses immediately?
 (Regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.)

Looking Ahead



Reading Assignments

- Chapter 3

If you are short on time, *at least* read pp. 76-79 (start with Budgets...); pp. 81-87 and pp. 90-93 (start with Making...).

Action Assignments

- Continue Step 2.
- Complete your Life Energy vs. Salary Checklist.
- Calculate your *real* hourly wage (see p. 64-65).
 - Add to your work week the hours spent in work-related activities.
 - Deduct from your weekly income all work-related expenses.
- Inventory another drawer, closet or room.
- Continue tracking your expenses.

Bring Next Session

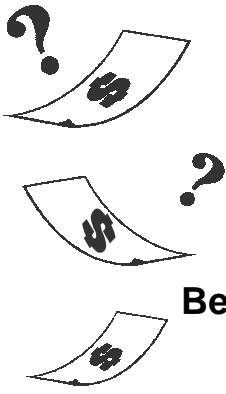
- Your real hourly wage calculation (Note: you are not expected to reveal personal financial data, but the factors you considered in your calculation will be valuable to the group.)
- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Keep up the good work! Your insights about life energy will help you transform your relationship with money.



*After I analyzed our spending patterns, it became clear that **nearly half of what I made was spent on the job**; that is, spent on gas, oil, repairs, lunches, a little here, a little there, and most of it unrecoverable. In short, I could stay home, work where I live part-time and actually save money by making half of what I formerly made.*

– Man in his 50s, California



Session 4: Knowing Where Your Money Goes

Begin Step 3: Develop categories for your spending; create a Monthly Tabulation.

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**
Become aware of your patterns of spending.
- **Why?**
The spending categories you will develop aren't the standard budget book entries of Food, Clothing and Shelter, but are based on your observation of how you actually use your life energy. This action is a process of self-discovery and awareness - and awareness is the beginning of change.
- **How?**
Develop categories generated by your own unique spending patterns.

Tools to Bring

- Your real hourly wage calculation
- The system you are using to track expenses
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Group Check-in (15 minutes)



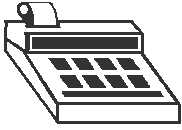
Facilitator reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for responses after each question.

- **What are you learning through the practice of keeping track of your expenses?**
- **When you calculated your real hourly wage, what was your biggest insight?**



Exercise: Monthly Tabulation Form (20 minutes) (individual)

Facilitator: At the end of the 20 minutes, ask for one or two volunteers to read their lists aloud.



Use the space below to begin listing your own unique spending categories that you want to track on your Monthly Tabulation form. Refer to your expense records (see pp. 103-08 of *Your Money or Your Life* for suggestions). You will be refining these categories as you work with them, so don't worry about getting it "right" the first time.

One of your homework assignments is to create your own expense categories for your Monthly Tabulation. This tabulation will help you to see where your money goes and to calculate the cost in hours of your life energy for each category.

Group Discussion (10 minutes) (small groups if desired)

Facilitator (or someone in each small group) reads aloud:

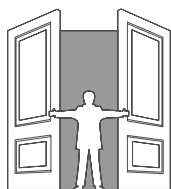


If, in tracking your expenses, you discovered a gazingus pin, tell the group about it.

(Don't remember what a gazingus pin is? See p. 27 of *Your Money or Your Life*.)

(Regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.)

Looking Ahead



Reading Assignments

- Chapter 4

If you are short on time, *at least* read p. 112; pp. 116-17; pp. 121-22; p. 128 (bold type only) and pp. 134-35 (start with Valuing...).

Action Assignments

- Step 3 of the program in *Your Money or Your Life*. Set up your Monthly Tabulation form (use pp. 94-96 as guidelines).
- Continue tracking expenses.
- Inventory another drawer, closet or room.

Bring Next Session

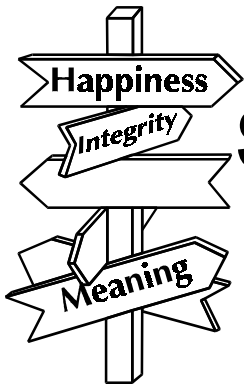
- Your Monthly Tabulation form
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Congratulations! You're doing some challenging work. The benefits to you will be increased clarity, insight and motivation.



*I used to own two trucks, a boat, and a motorcycle and spent a good deal of my time and money maintaining them. I now own one truck, a bicycle and a kayak and find that **I've tripled my free time**, decreased my expenses of ownership considerably, increased my enjoyment of use, have a built-in exercise program that didn't exist with the motorized possessions and am much further down the road to financial independence.*

– Man from Washington state, decreased expenses \$570/month; reduced debt \$12,100 in one year



Session 5: Fulfillment and Purpose

Look at your life purpose.

Begin Step 4: Ask questions that can change your life.

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**
See how your spending relates to your purpose, values and experience of fulfillment.
- **Why?**
Applying consciousness to your spending brings about a natural decrease in expenses and an increased sense of control over money. Aligning your spending with your life purpose — a unique feature of the *Your Money or Your Life* program — provides an ongoing feedback mechanism that will help you continue to improve.
- **How?**
Begin to methodically evaluate your expenses by asking:
 - Did I receive fulfillment, satisfaction and value in proportion to life energy spent?
 - Is this expenditure of life energy in alignment with my values and life purpose?

Tools to Bring

- Your Monthly Tabulation form
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide



Group Check-in (10 minutes)



Facilitator reads the following instructions one at a time, allowing time for responses after each one.

- **If you haven't yet talked about calculating your real hourly wage, talk about that experience now.**
- **Tell about any insights you had while designing your Monthly Tabulation form.**

Exercise: Discovering Purpose (10 minutes) (individual)

Facilitator, remember to watch the clock.

Take 2 minutes to remember:

- A time you experienced joy
- A time you had a sense of accomplishment
- A person who inspired you to explore your purpose

Take 8 minutes to write a list of the most fulfilling times of your life, when you knew you were doing just what you most wanted to be doing.

Group Discussion (10 minutes) (small groups if desired)



Share your lists and memories.

Group Discussion (15 minutes) (small groups if desired)

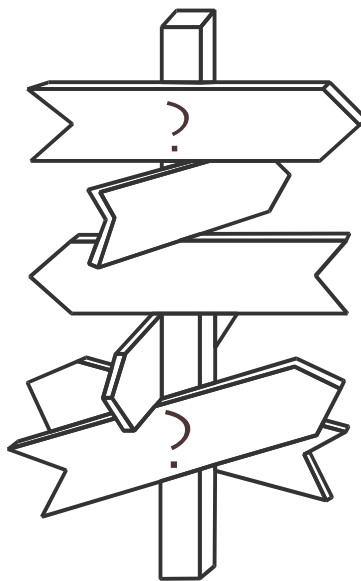


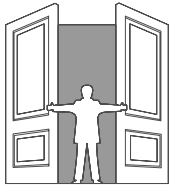
Facilitator (or someone in each small group) reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for discussion after each question.

- **If you had an extra day each week to do those things you never get around to, what would you do?**
- **If you were suddenly given a year to use in any way you wanted, knowing that at the end you could return to your current life, what would you do?**

(Regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.)

Looking Ahead





Reading Assignments

- Chapter 5

If you are short on time, *at least* read pp. 148-51 and pp. 157-65.

Action Assignments

- Fill out your month-end tabulation form:
- Step 3: List total expenses in each category; convert dollars into hours of life energy (see example on p. 96). Note: If you don't yet have a full month of expense records, do these calculations with what you have.
- Step 4: Ask yourself the questions for each of your spending categories and put in your Up and Down arrows (see pp. 113 and 118).
- When you go shopping, ask yourself the questions with at least some of your purchases. Notice your responses. (Remember: no shame, no blame.)

Bring Next Session

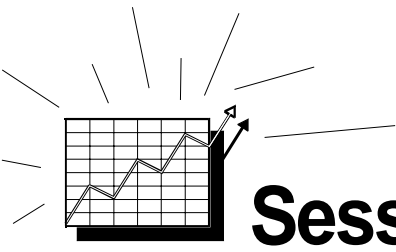
- Your month-end tabulations
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Now you are into the heart of this program. Aligning your earning and spending with what is truly fulfilling for you and with your values can be a real eye-opener. Keep watching and tracking!



*After only 3 months on the program my spouse and I are out of debt and have tripled our savings (on a grad student salary, no less!!). But more importantly, we finally feel like the world makes more "sense." As 20-somethings we had a hunch that everything we'd been taught growing up in the 80's was wrong. Your book finally explained why, and showed us a way out. **The process of financial integrity has helped us to begin to clarify our dreams and values.** We feel as if we've been given a "second chance" at life — real LIFE.*

— Couple in their 20s from Oregon



Session 6: Making Life Energy Visible

**Begin Step 5: Plot your income and expenses on a chart;
put it where you will see it every day.**

Overview of the Session

- **Goal**
Plot a course from where you are to where you want to be.
- **Why?**
Over time, a “moving picture” of your progress toward your financial goals will show trends as your relationship with money changes. This picture will provide ongoing *visual* feedback and encouragement.
- **How?**
Make a chart for recording your monthly income and expenses.

Tools to Bring

- Your month-end tabulations
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Group Check-in (15 minutes)



Facilitator reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for responses after each question.

- **Where were some of your Up arrows on your month-end tabulation form? Down arrows? Any surprises?**
- **What was your experience of asking the questions at the time of making purchases?**



Group Discussion (10 minutes) (small groups if desired)



One of your homework assignments will be to create a chart for your income and expenses.

Facilitator (or someone in each small group) reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for discussion after each question.

- **How would you feel about hanging your chart in your bedroom?**
- **How would you feel about hanging your chart in your living room?**

(Regroup and report on your discussions with everyone.)

Exercise: Making a Commitment (15 minutes total) (individual and whole group)

Reflect



Take a few minutes to think about:

- **What changes do you want to make in how you handle your money? Make a commitment to implement these changes.**
- **What will your challenges be? How can you meet them?**
- **What strengths do you have that can assist you in keeping your commitments?**

Share with a Partner

Turn to the person next to you and share your commitments, challenges and strengths with each other.

Write



Write down the change that you are most committed to making in how you handle money.

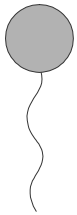
I am committed to:

Share with the Group



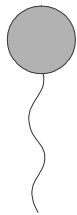
Those who wish to may share their commitment with the whole group.

Congratulations!

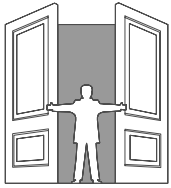


You have taken the first steps toward financial intelligence, integrity and independence.

Share a highlight from your group sessions so far.



Looking Ahead



Planning for Your Follow-up Session

In a month, come back together as a group. Continue doing the steps so you can share your progress.

- Note the date for the next session (p. 10 of this Study Guide). Write it in the space provided on the next page.
- Facilitator of the Follow-up session: Make reminder calls if your group wants them or if the location is changed.

Reading Assignments

- Finish reading Chapters 1-5 if you haven't already. You may want to review some sections for inspiration and clarification.

Action Assignments

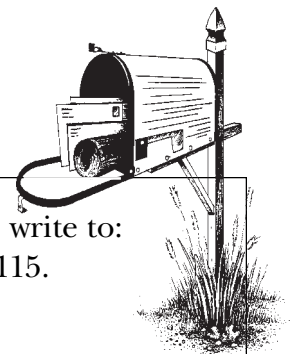
- Step 5: Get graph paper (18" by 22" or 24" by 36") and make your chart, using pp. 146-48 as a guideline. Enter your monthly income and expenses (see example on p. 162). Hang the chart on your wall.
- Continue your inventory (Step 1). You may complete Step 1 by creating a balance sheet of everything you owe and everything you own (see pp. 33-39 of *Your Money or Your Life*).
- Continue tracking expenses (Step 2).
- Do your monthly tabulations and ask the questions at the end of your second month (Steps 3 and 4).

Bring Next Session

- Your inventory to date
- Your month-end tabulations
- Your wall chart (You need not reveal any personal financial data.)
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

If you would like to be on the mailing list for our free occasional newsletter, write to:
New Road Map Foundation, Dept GSG, PO Box 15981, Seattle, WA 98115.

You may also register on-line at: www.newroadmap.org





Follow-up Session: Looking at Your Progress

Reflect on your experiences and celebrate your progress.

Date _____

Tools to Bring

- Your inventory to date
- Your month-end tabulations
- Your wall chart
- Pen or pencil, *Your Money or Your Life*, Study Guide

Group Check-in (10 minutes)

Facilitator reads aloud:



Tell about your experience of creating and hanging your wall chart.

Group Discussion (5 minutes) (small groups if desired)

Facilitator (or small group member) reads aloud:



- **Remind yourself of the commitment you wrote last session on page 41 of this Study Guide. Did you keep your commitment? If not, do you wish to recommit?**
- **What support can the group give you?**



Group Exercise: Wrapping It Up (30 minutes) (small groups if desired)



First, take 5 minutes to read the questions below silently and think about your answers.

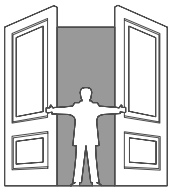
Facilitator (or small group member) then reads the questions one at a time, allowing time for discussion after each question. (25 minutes)

- **What is your most significant insight from doing this program?**
- **How have your spending and saving patterns changed?**
- **Has the quality of your life changed? If so, how?**
- **Do you have any plans for the future you'd like to share?**

(Regroup and report on your discussions to everyone.)

Facilitator: Guide the group members in discussing whether they would like to meet again at some point in the future. If so, set a date and ask for a volunteer to initiate reminder calls and a volunteer to facilitate. Ask if anyone would like to help another study group get started.

Looking Ahead



- Please fill out the Feedback Form (Appendix C, page 51).
- Continue implementing Steps 1-5 of the nine-step program.
- Read Chapters 6-9 and begin putting those steps into practice.
- **Remember, the steps work if you do them!**

You have begun a journey that will bring you many benefits in the months and years to come. Continue with the steps, and your relationship with money will be ever more clear, relaxed and powerful. Our best wishes to you.

*We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.*

– Winston Churchill

**Are you soaring
like an eagle...**



**...now that you're not
spending like a turkey?**

Appendix A:

Additional Discussion Questions

Following are some additional questions for Sessions 1-6, for use by groups meeting for two-hour sessions. Use the questions to extend your Group Discussions. You may use any or all of the suggested questions. Your group may choose to take a little reflective time after the facilitator reads each question aloud.

Session 1: Getting Started

Additional questions for the Group Discussion on page 19:

- What was one item you bought recently that you *knew* you didn't need? What motivated you to buy it?
- When asked, most Americans say that money does not bring happiness, yet people often act as if buying something will make them happier. Has this ever been true for you?
- How can you use this group to help you keep your commitment to tracking every penny?
- How might your fulfillment increase if you decreased your spending?

Session 2: Getting Out of the Money Trap

Additional questions for the Group Discussion on page 25:

- Turn to the Fulfillment Curve exercise on page 22 of this Study Guide. Share one of your items from each of the four categories.
- Did other members of your group put similar items in the same categories? Or in different categories? What can you learn from that?
- What images, thoughts or feelings came up as you “walked” through your house?
- What personal values does your house reflect? What does your house represent to you?
- What makes something clutter?

Session 3: What Is Money?

Additional questions for the first Group Discussion, page 28:

- Share an early memory having to do with money. How does it affect your life now?
- What does money *mean* to you? What are some of your personal beliefs about money?
- What does our culture tell us about how and why to spend money?

Additional questions for the second Group Discussion, page 29:

- Look at your checklist on page 29 of this Study Guide. Are there any money or time expenditures that surprise you? How do you feel about them?
- What does “money = life energy” mean to you? How is this awareness useful to you?

Session 4: Knowing Where Your Money Goes

Additional questions for Group Discussion on page 33:

- Some people tend to be “tightwads” while others tend to be “spendthrifts.” What about you? What about other members of your family?
- How do you distinguish a “need” from a “want”?
- What’s the last item you used until it actually wore out?
- Have you encountered any road blocks that keep you from recording expenses or doing your monthly tabulations? If yes, how can you overcome them?

Session 5: Fulfillment and Purpose

Additional questions for the second Group Discussion on page 37:

- What sort of expenses do you pay for with your credit card? Why?
- What is its interest rate? How does the interest rate affect the real price of an item or a meal?
- What have you always wanted to do that you haven’t yet done?
- What’s the work you would do, even if you weren’t paid to do it?

Session 6: Making Life Energy Visible

Additional questions for Group Discussion on page 40:

- Did your total in any expense category surprise you? What category? Was the total higher or lower than you expected?
- How many other people know how big your paycheck is? How many other peoples’ incomes do you know?
- How important is it to you to have savings, and why?
- Have you used the mantra “no shame, no blame” during the past few weeks? When? Did it help?
- What are you looking forward to in the years to come from following this program?

Appendix B: Resources

Available from The Simple Living Network

Order on-line at www.simpleliving.net or call 800-318-5725

Group Study Guide: Additional copies of this Study Guide are available. \$5 + s&h.

Church Study Guide: A Group Study Guide for Contemporary Christians. \$5 + s&h.

Study Guide on Money and Spirit. \$5 + s&h.

All Study Guides are for use with the book *Your Money or Your Life*.

Video introducing the above Study Guides and the study-group process, taped in a corporate setting. Features Vicki Robin. VHS, 33 minutes. \$20 + s&h.

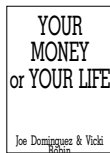
Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Achieving Financial Independence:

Audiocassette/Workbook Course. The same nine-step program you've been working with. Six one-hour audiocassettes keyed to a 120-page workbook. \$60 + s&h.

Your Money or Your Life by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin (Penguin paperback). \$13.95 + s&h.

Quantity prices:

2-4	\$13.26 each + s&h
5-9	\$12.56 each + s&h
10-24	\$11.16 each + s&h
25+	\$10.46 each + s&h



All-Consuming Passion: Waking Up from the American Dream. This illustrated booklet of statistics tells the story of our consumption patterns and how they affect both our personal lives and the planetary whole. \$1 (free s&h). Quantity discount available.

How Earth-Friendly Are You? A Lifestyle Self-Assessment Questionnaire. A tool for examining lifestyle choices in the context of personal values and planetary sustainability. \$1 (free s&h). Quantity discount available.

Getting A Life: Real Lives Transformed by Your Money or Your Life by Jacqueline Blix and David Heitmiller, introduction by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin (Viking, 1997). Jacque and Dave weave together case studies of over two dozen individuals and families who find practical and creative ways to implement each step. \$13.95 plus s&h.

Order from The Simple Living Network, P.O. Box 233, Trout Lake, WA 98650, phone 800-318-5725 or 509-395-2323. Make checks payable to The Simple Living Network.



Shipping & Handling	
\$0.01-\$19.99	\$3.50
\$20.00-\$39.99	4.20
\$40.00-\$59.99	5.30
\$60.00-\$79.99	6.40
\$80.00-\$99.99	7.50
\$100.00+	9.25

(WA residents add 7% sales tax after adding s&h.)

Prices and availability subject to change without notice. For current information, please visit us on-line.

Visit The Simple Living Network on-line at www.simpleliving.net

Visit the New Road Map Foundation on-line at www.newroadmap.org

Appendix C: Feedback Form

1. How did your group form? Check all that apply:

- Book club
- In the workplace
- Religious or spiritual group
- Family members
- Follow-up to another group or class. What group/class? _____
- Other: _____
- Follow-up to a public talk
- Adult education class
- Informal group of friends

2. Check here if you used this Study Guide as an individual working alone.

3. What format did your group use? Check all that apply:

- Six one-hour sessions (plus Kick-off and Follow-up)
- Six two-hour sessions (plus Kick-off and Follow-up)
- Sessions every week
- Sessions every other week
- Other: _____

4. How many people were in your group at the beginning? _____ How many at Session 6? _____

5. If your group formed at work:

- What business or organization do you work for? _____
- What is your position? _____
- Did your employer sponsor the group? _____
- Did your employer donate time? _____ space? _____ materials? _____
- How was the group initiated? (e.g., Human Resources, Employee Assistance, Work/Family Life, Continuing Education, department head, employee) _____
- Did any problems arise related to meeting in the workplace? _____
If yes, what? _____
How did you deal with them? _____

6. How valuable was the study group process to you? Very Somewhat Not at all

7. Please rate the Study Guide: Great Good Fair Poor

- Best features: _____
- Features that need improvement: _____

8. Were the homework assignments clear? Always Usually Sometimes Never

Explain: _____

9. Please rate the value of the Kick-off Session: Great Good Fair Poor

- Did you have enough time? _____ Too much? _____
- Did it get people engaged in the process? _____
- Suggestions for improvement: _____

- Did your group use the introductory video? _____
If yes, was it useful? _____ Why? _____

10. When/if you facilitated a session, were the guidelines and instructions adequate? Yes No

Suggestions for improvement: _____

11. Please note any particular exercises or discussions where you ran short of time: _____

12. Were you able to complete the homework assignments? Yes No

If no, what problems arose? _____

13. What is the greatest value to you of the nine-step *Your Money or Your Life* program? _____

14. Are you motivated to continue working with this program? Yes No

If yes, why? _____

If no, why not? _____

15. Other comments about your experience with the study group and/or Study Guide: _____

Optional: Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Today's Date _____

Send to: NRM, Dept GSG, P.O. Box 15981, Seattle, WA 98115

You may send this individually or your group may send all of its forms together. **Thank You!**