

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ACHIEVING FINANCIAL HARMONY WITH YOUR PARTNER

Financial compatibility is important for the success of your relationship.

Money issues can be a major source of tension in a relationship. Ideally, communicating with your partner early on about your financial history, values, and expectations can prevent serious disagreements about money down the road. While you and your partner may have very different spending and saving habits, it's important to decide on shared goals and priorities. What are you both willing to work toward, even if it requires sacrifices in the short or long term? For example, big-ticket items such as buying a house, starting a business, or planning for retirement often require careful financial planning.

Talking about finances can bring up emotions ranging from worry to guilt to joy. We have all grown up learning different things about money, positive and negative. If money was scarce, we may hold the belief that it is a limited resource, we have to work hard for it, and we should always be thrifty. Or we may tie our self-worth to our net worth, and buy expensive things to show we've achieved financial success. Our money beliefs were shaped in childhood and influenced by the important people in our lives. However, we can choose to make financial decisions today that make sense to us as adults and move us forward in reaching our goals.

Successful relationships are built on love, trust and honesty, and that includes financial honesty. Conversations about money need not be difficult, provided we avoid blaming our partner for past mistakes and don't hide important financial information, such as debt. A commitment to transparency builds trust.

Once you and your partner have agreed on shared financial goals, stay on track with regular discussions about where you stand. It's common for one person to take a more active role with bill-paying or investments, but both people should be fully informed of progress or setbacks.

