

Social Researcher Shaunti Feldhahn: Even With COVID-19 Economic Impact, 'It's Not About the Money'

When a major financial services company first approached bestselling authors and researchers Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn about writing a book on how finances affect marriage, they were excited. And shocked. And afraid.

Despite their widely known, faith-based work on relationships, “in this area of marriage, this one area, we were still so not on the same page,” Shaunti tells host Marti Pieper on the *Hope for Your Marriage* series on the *Charisma News* podcast. The kind of extensive research for which the couple has become known comes at a high cost, so “it was such an answer to prayer, but we were still so scared to try,” she says. But when they dug into the research for their new book, *Thriving in Love and Money* (Bethany House, 2020), what they discovered—both personally and professionally—amazed them.

“It turns out the big overarching principle that was so surprising is that when you’re having conflict over money, or tension or avoidance or whatever, it’s not about the money. ... it’s entirely about how money makes you feel. And how it makes your spouse feel,” Shaunti says. “It’s all these expectations and these beliefs about how money should work and these insecurities and these worries, all these things that are running into the surface, and we don’t even know half of them.”

So in this time of pandemic, as more couples face financial crises, what does this expert suggest? As in other areas of marriage, Shaunti and Jeff point out in their new book that

becoming one is essential. “Ask yourself, do you ever try to pull the Amazon package off the front step before your spouse sees it? ... This is just a smaller example of the lack of oneness that causes some people to separate their accounts entirely,” she says. “And so the first step, if we’re really going to try to be one, and be able to come together around money, is to do a really honest self-analysis of, ‘How much do I do this?’ Because almost everybody does.”

To learn more from Shaunti Feldhahn about how you and your spouse can move into healthy communication about finances that will last long beyond the pandemic, listen to the entire podcast here. {eo}

Click here to take the Feldhans’ free assessment on your own marital communication around money.