



I WAS BROKE.  
NOW I'M NOT.

# SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

ACCORDING TO A RECENT SURVEY BY THE INSTITUTE FOR DIVORCE FINANCIAL ANALYSTS, **22% OF DIVORCES ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO MONEY ISSUES.**

THIS EBOOK WAS WRITTEN TO HELP MANAGE YOUR FINANCES WHEN YOUR SPOUSE IS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT TALKING ABOUT MONEY.

By Joseph Sangl

[www.iwbnin.com](http://www.iwbnin.com)

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# SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE



## INTRODUCTION

So you are attempting to manage your finances with a spouse who is less than enthusiastic when it comes to talking about money.

Perhaps the most challenging issue I face as a financial author, teacher, and coach is “the reluctant spouse”. One spouse wants to prepare and live by a budget, invest, save, give, and live frugally. Meanwhile, their spouse is very reluctant to participate in the budgeting process and routinely makes contradictory financial decisions.

While your spouse may never be as enthusiastic about the topic as you are, it is possible to focus their attention on money decisions. In this ebook, I will share some tips and ideas to help bring your reluctant spouse on board as an active and willing participant in financial decisions.

You can do this!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph D. Sangl". The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'J' and 'S'.

Joseph Sangl  
**Founder, I Was Broke. Now I'm Not**



# IDENTIFY THE “WHY”

*Identify “WHY” your spouse is reluctant to participate in financial matters.*

This is an important moment for you. Consider the reason(s) your spouse may not want to participate in financial decisions. This is not an attempt to discover what is “wrong” with your spouse. The ultimate goal is to gain understanding.

As a financial coach, I’ve identified several reasons a person takes on the role of “The Reluctant Spouse”:

**1. Relationship Status:** Many times, financial behavior is an indicator of deeper relational issues. Are there areas of your marriage that need to be addressed? In a world full of blended families and past marriages, these past relationships can also play a role.

**2. Income Challenges:** When income does not meet expenses, it can cause some people to shut down completely. “There just isn’t enough money to manage”, they reason.

**3. Past Money Mistakes:** Has your spouse been burned by a financial decision they have made? Poor money decisions can cause some people to “freeze up” and choose to avoid them completely in the future.

**4. Upbringing:** Perhaps their behavior has been informed by their own parents. Maybe they saw all of the money decisions handled by one parent and honestly believe the same should be true for their own marriage. They may have been raised in a family that didn’t hear the word “no” used very often when it came to spending.

**5. Power:** Does your spouse feel like you are manipulating them to get something you want? Because money is attached to our hearts (read Matthew 6:21), it is powerfully and deeply connected into our plans, hopes, and dreams.

## SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

**6. Education:** Most people have had little money education. The feeling of ignorance can be very powerful and cause a person to feel the “fight or flight” defense mechanism.

**7. Embarrassment:** No one wants to be perceived as broke or unable to manage their money. We all want to be able to provide for our family. When one doesn't feel like they have done this very well, it can be embarrassing. This feeling is amplified if the “exuberant spouse” is pushing the “reluctant spouse” to meet with a financial coach because they know they will be faced with their financial shortcomings.

**8. Financial Infidelity:** Perhaps there is a hidden financial decision that will have to be revealed once “the reluctant spouse” becomes an active participant. It could be hidden debt, poor spending decisions, an addiction, or hidden income.

Do any of these reasons apply to your spouse? Again, reviewing these reasons is not to be used as a way to identify “who is right” and “who is wrong.” The goal is to identify the key reasons that cause your spouse to be very reluctant when it comes to money decisions.

The first step is to obtain complete understanding. Next, I will reveal another key step you can take, and it's about YOU not your reluctant spouse!





## SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

# LIVE THE FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

*Quietly live the financial principles in your own life.*

This is very important. Asking your reluctant spouse to take financial steps you are unwilling to take yourself is the very definition of hypocrisy.

If you are asking your spouse to prepare and live by a budget, be certain to prepare and live by a budget each month. Of course, there will be certain categories that your spouse will not follow. For the categories you can control, live out the principles.

Notice the word **“quietly”** in this key step. It is very unhelpful to announce, “I’m preparing a budget like Joseph Sangl says we should” or “I’m attacking debt like Dave Ramsey instructs” or “I called Suze Orman, and she said we can not afford to buy that item.” It only makes a reluctant spouse dislike the financial teacher!

Here are some quiet ways to employ financial principles:

1. Prepare a budget and post it in a visible place. As you pay bills, mark them off. This demonstrates active utilization of the budget without saying a word.
2. Utilize one of our free Savings Spectaculars (located on our website under tools) and begin saving for a dream you both share (like a Disney cruise).
3. Use cash envelopes to manage impulsive spending categories like groceries, restaurants, clothing, entertainment, and spending money. I’ve prepared a short video [HERE](#) that teaches how to implement this system.
4. Write down your plans, hopes, and dreams on your list! As a bonus, put the cost of each dream next to each one.
5. Be nice. Nagging automatically moves people to become defensive.
6. Automate your investments out of your paycheck.

Whether you are aware of it or not, your spouse is watching you manage money.

## SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

When you follow sound financial principles, it will yield excellent results in your wallet. It can be the key that unlocks the door to their participation!

Next, I'll be sharing a way to invite your reluctant spouse into the conversation.

# WHEN YOU FOLLOW SOUND FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES, IT WILL YIELD EXCELLENT RESULTS IN YOUR WALLET.

## SHARE YOUR “WHY”

*Share your “WHY”*

As you live out the principles in your life, it is important to begin addressing the reasons you've identified as the cause of your spouse's reluctance to participate in financial decisions. This can include marriage counseling / coaching as well as ongoing one-on-one conversations.

Ultimately, you must convey to your spouse why you want them to participate in financial decisions. This should be done with a few key things in mind.

**1. You should both be rested.** Trying to have a financial conversation when your spouse is exhausted is a recipe for a terrific argument.

**2. The kids should not be present.** Children tend to be very distracting to serious conversations. Hire a babysitter and go out to a nice dinner at a place where you can have a real conversation free of interruptions.

**3. Focus on the issue and the emotions.** Attempting to separate emotions from finances is an impossible task. Acknowledge this fact and remain focused on the issues which is the “why” you want their participation in financial decisions. Don't make any personal attacks.

**4. Don't take too long.** Your spouse probably isn't naturally drawn to financial conversations like you are. Don't drag out the conversation.

With these items in place, it is the moment to share WHY you want their help with financial decisions. Have your reasons written down on paper. Your preparedness will quietly convey the importance of this conversation. Remember, “Your level of EXPECTATION will determine your level of PREPARATION”.





## SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

Because of your high expectations, you must be prepared! Your reasons should not be focused on financial principles and tools like “I want to have a budget that works.” This is uninspiring to your reluctant spouse. Instead, focus on the outcome that will occur as a result of excellent budgeting. Outcomes like “I want to be able to retire by age 55.” Even better, “I want us both to be able to retire by age 55.” Here are a few statements to help you get started with your own list:

- “I want us to be able to build our dream house.”
- “I would like to own a cottage at the beach.”
- “I want to pay cash for our children’s college education so they don’t have student loan debt like us.”
- “I want to see you start that business that you’ve always talked about.”

## YOUR LEVEL OF EXPECTATION WILL DETERMINE YOUR LEVEL OF PREPARATION.

Do you see it? Share the WHY and then apply the next step.

## MAKE AN INVITATION

*Invite your spouse to participate*

As you tell your reluctant spouse about your plans, hopes, and dreams, you will be sharing your passion. After all, you can’t separate your heart from money. This means your passion will flow out of you as you share your dreams. Bill Hybels has shared this about vision, “Vision is painting a picture with passion and then putting people into it.”

As you passionately share the vision you have for your marriage and future, it is important to “paint them into the picture.” Ask them to share some of their dreams with you. Ask the “If we won the lottery...” question. Write each of their ideas down and then ask for their help in making those dreams come true.



## SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE MONEY WITH A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE

Let's be very clear. Ask them to take one step. Perhaps you will ask them to help prepare the monthly budget. Maybe you would like them to accompany you to a meeting with an investment officer. Even bolder, ask them to turn in their debit card and convert to the cash envelope system to control impulsive spending decisions.

Remember: ONE step. Not twenty. Not even five. One.

# REALITY CHECK

### *Be Realistic*

It is important to recognize that your spouse may never share your excitement about money management. While an Excel spreadsheet and budgeting may light your fire, it might always drive your spouse crazy. Don't ask them to become involved with the tasks as much as you ask them to become involved in the decisions and execution. Think about this for a moment. If you have a reluctant spouse right now who refuses to participate with any money decisions, which of the following is a better outcome?

1. For your spouse to prepare the budget each month?
2. For you to prepare the budget each month and gain your spouse's final input and support to follow it?

Of course, the answer is #2. Because it is their involvement you are seeking.

Change is difficult and will take some time. Depending upon the reasons for their reluctance outlined in Part 1, it can be vital to seek marriage coaching /counseling. There is hope and I should know because I used to be a reluctant spouse! And now I've written multiple books on the subject and started a business teaching about it!

I hope the same will come true for you!

**THERE IS HOPE, AND I SHOULD KNOW BECAUSE I  
USED TO BE A RELUCTANT SPOUSE!**

**I WAS BROKE.  
NOW I'M NOT.**

# **ABOUT I WAS BROKE. NOW I'M NOT.**

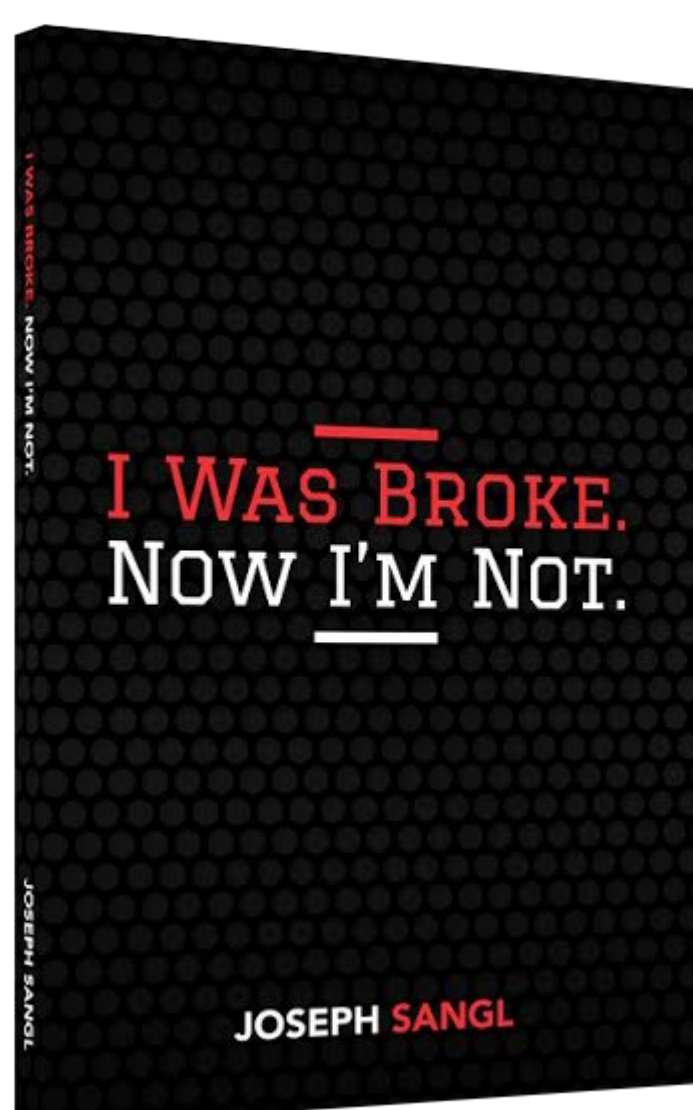
I Was Broke. Now I'm Not. was founded by Joseph Sangl who had a dream to teach people practical ways to win with their money. The IWBNIIN Team is passionate about equipping people to accomplish far more than they ever thought possible with their personal finances.

The IWBNIIN Team accomplishes its Passion Statement through the following means:

- Providing FREE personal finance tools via its website
- Writing books, studies, articles, and blog posts that teach practical and relevant personal finance tools
- Teaching live online experiences that build knowledge on financial topics
- LIVE speaking and teaching at churches, business and non-profit organizations throughout the world

Contact the IWBNIIN Team via email at [info@iwbnin.com](mailto:info@iwbnin.com) or call [864] 332-4151

# **I WAS BROKE. NOW I'M NOT.**



Money doesn't have to be a frustrating or confusing topic. When you apply the practical tools shared by Joseph Sangl in I Was Broke. Now I'm Not., you will gain control over your finances. As your financial education increases, you will begin to see your plans, hopes, and dreams become a reality as you start living a fully funded life! In this book, you will learn the fundamental rules of money. Even more importantly, you will walk away with HOPE that you can live a fully funded life!

U.S. \$20.00

This book and additional resources at [www.iwbnin.com](http://www.iwbnin.com)

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# ABOUT JOSEPH SANGL

Joseph Sangl is a leading teacher of personal finances. It is his passion and mission “to help people accomplish far more than they ever thought possible with their personal finances.” He firmly believes that when people are financially free, they are much more likely to go do EXACTLY what they have been put on Earth to do – regardless of the cost or income potential.

He is the founder of I Was Broke. Now I'm Not., an organization that provides financial teaching through live events, print and web resources.

Joe has taught hundreds of thousands of people through Financial Learning Experience, Financial Freedom Experiences, one-on-one financial coaching sessions and personal finance messages. He is the author of the books, I Was Broke. Now I'm Not., What Everyone Should Know About Money Before They Enter The Real World, Funded and Free, and OXEN: The Key to an Abundant Harvest. His story has been featured in Money Magazine, the world's largest personal finance magazine.

He obtained a BS Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Purdue University in 1996 and an MBA from Clemson University in 2001.

Joe resides in Anderson, South Carolina, with his bride, Jenn, and their three children.



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