

## When Your Significant Other Says No

**Scott A. T.:** Broadcasting from One Dallas Tower, welcome to the Financial Rock Star Show. I'm your host, Scott Alan Turner. Ready to help you get out of debt, save more money, and retire early. In the studio with me is producer Katie, who once got plowed over by a giant wave at the beach. On the show today, what if Katie says, "No"? No, what if your significant other says no. Plus, I'll be answering your questions about money, business, and life. If you have a question you'd like answered on the show visit [goaskscott.com](http://goaskscott.com). Please leave me a voicemail or email.

Jessica is one of the listeners of the show. She and I were engaged in an email communication about investing. At the very end of the email she said, "I'm going to the Guns N' Roses concert in Vegas." I was super excited for her and super jealous because I like Guns N' Roses. Keeping up with the news, saw that G&R, that's Guns N' Roses for short if you don't know who they are, or if you know know them at all, Guns N' Roses, famous '80s Rock 'n Roll band. Very very famous. Lead singer's name is Axl Rose, total prima donna, total jerk caused the band to break up. They haven't been on tour for 20 years with the original line up. Now they're back touring again. They were at the Coachella festival out in, I think it was California. Then they announced a North American tour.

When I heard that news I immediately got on their website and said, "I've got to find some tickets. Go see G&R." I am at a point in my life where I've been out of debt for a while, I've got financial freedom. When I go to a show I don't want the nosebleed seats. I want the absolute best seats money can buy. Either front row, second row, third row, in the pit if there's a pit so you can get up really close to the stage and really get that full-blown music concert going experience. Started looking through the G&R tickets and I found the pit tickets were \$1,750 a piece. Did my math, that's \$3,500. Immediately I go find Katie in the house and I say, "Come here, come here." I waive her on. We had some guests or something. I said, "Come in here. Come in here." As if these tickets were going to vanish within seconds.

I said, "G&R, they're coming to town at Dallas Stadium, Cowboy Stadium. Tickets are \$3,500. Can we go? Can we go?" She looks at me like, "No. We're not paying \$3,500 for tickets to go see Guns N' Roses." I hemmed and hawed a little bit. I tried to convince her otherwise. She said, "No" and then she left. Then my mind gets going. It's like, "Well, what if I go by myself? Then it's only \$1,700," because I do not object to going to shows by myself. I thought, "Well I could sell some stuff to come up with the money and that could supplement that. I could come up with the \$1,700 on my own and get pit tickets to go see G&R."

I thought, "Well, maybe we get the cheaper seats so that she can go. They're about \$650, but they're way ... Not way in the back. Farther back than I wanted to be from the front of the stage." It's Guns N' Roses. They haven't been together in 20 years. I'm excited. I'm thinking about all the ways that I could pull this off after Katie has said, "No." Then I said, "All right. I'm just going to go for a walk. Get some exercise for the day, kids are down for a nap." Started going over in my mind all the financial considerations, all the ways that I could pull this off, go to the show. Then I'm thinking, thinking. Finally after about 20, 30 minutes of mulling over every possible option I said, "You know what? I'm done thinking about it. I'm just going to sleep on it for the night. I've wasted too much brainpower on this already. The tickets are probably going to be there tomorrow."

Then the next day rolls around. I started thinking, "They're playing at Cowboy's Stadium where I have seen a concert before." I saw U2 play there. The sound isn't really that good at the stadium. I've seen all kinds of other events there as well. The seating isn't that good at the stadium. Just giving that 24 hour span from where I was 1 click away from getting those tickets, well I would have had to enter in my credit card information, I was a few

clicks away from getting those tickets. If she had said, "Yes" I would have bought them. 24 hours later I was like, "You know what? Guns N' Roses, they're not even one of my favorite bands." I love the music, I love the band. Would probably be a great experience to go see them live. For \$3,500? No, I really ... I don't know. Maybe that's just not really a good thing."

That cooling off period helped me change my perspective 180 degrees. It wasn't a matter of, "Can we afford it or not?" It was a question of, "Should you buy this or not?" What other things could we do with that money otherwise? Or, if I had gone by myself, just bought my own ticket, what else could I do with that money otherwise? This was not the first time this scenario has happened in our marriage. Years ago when I wanted to build a home studio I calculated the price tag out to \$5,000. Same deal, I went to Katie, "Hey, I want to put together a \$5,000 recording studio in the house." She said, "You've never even written a song. Write a song and then we'll talk about it."

Then the wheels get going, "I'm going again. What am I going to do? How can I come up with this \$5,000?" Her saying, "No" gave me the opportunity to do more research on home studio. I managed to cut the cost in half in order to buy the stuff that I wanted. I also sold a bunch of stuff in order to come up with that \$2,500. I didn't need her approval anymore. It was just money from stuff that I'd already bought and ended up selling. I did have to give up my Marshall stack. If you're a guitar player, everyone dreams of having a Marshall stack. It's a 6 foot high stack of speakers. It's awesome looking. It's awesome. I had to sell mine in order to finance the studio. I did it for half the cost. No out of pocket cost just by selling stuff that was around the house already. That "No" made all the difference.

If you hear a "No" from your significant other, family member, friend, probably wouldn't hear it from a coworker unless you're confiding in them, there's usually a good reason behind it. When you or I are looking to buy something we're so hyped up on emotion we don't think of the logic behind it. Then it goes out the door, especially if you're out of debt and you have the money to spend on something without any financial repercussions other than you lose that money for something else. You take it out of your opportunity fund or your personal allowance or whatever. Sleep on it, mull it over, take a walk, find an alternative way to afford it or just sit tight and wait. You'll often realize, "You know what? They might be right just this one time. Just this one time they might be right."

Another great alternative I heard recently is a story of a wife who bought stuff at the mall or wherever she liked to shop, and she gave her husband 2 weeks. He had a 2 week time frame to find that item for cheaper online. If she went out and bought a purse at the mall, she comes home says, "Here's my purse." However much it costs, let's just make up a dollar amount, \$150. "You have 2 weeks to find a cheaper alternative for this." If he found it online for a cheaper price they saved the money, win-win. The family saved money, she got the purse. If not, she still got the purse. That was the agreement that they had and that's what worked for them.

No, wait, tapping the brakes, slowing down. Somebody is looking out for you. Someone is looking out for you. Acknowledge that. Respect that. Take that into consideration. When we're looking at buying something we usually got the blinders on. Somebody outside who's looking at us from a different angle. Take advantage of that wise counsel. Usually it will keep you from shooting yourself in the foot. Now on to your questions.

Marjorie says,

**Marjorie:** "My husband and I will be finalizing our budget this week. We are so ready to get started. The issue that I am

struggling with is my husband is a smoker. While I've slowly self-disciplined myself in recent years; I get to 2 haircuts a year, I do my own nails, make my own coffee, I feel discouraged already at the thought of how much we'll need to set aside for his bad habit each month. This makes me want to even things out by allowing myself just as much of the budget for selfish reasons. I know this won't help us to achieve our goals of paying down debt. I know that 2 wrongs don't make a right. How do couples who have different circumstances come to an agreement and budget together? Do I need to have a cigarette envelope? I know my husband and I are on the same page about budgeting and paying off debt. I just don't feel like we are the cookie cutter couple that I so often hear and read about."

**Scott A. T.:** First, congratulation to you guys, first time budgeters. A word of encouragement, we all were first time budgeters at one time. Welcome to the journey to a new and better life. We got to dispel this myth that there is a cookie cutter budget, cookie cutter plan, something that covers every situation. You are unique Marjorie. I am unique. Our spending priorities are unique. Our incomes, our mistakes, our goals, they're all unique. Each of us has commonalities, yes. We've got car debt we may have had in the past, credit card debt, wherever we're coming from. How we get there is different, how we got there. When we hit the proverbial wall is different and how we got that wake-up call. How aggressive we choose to get ahead, which direction we choose to go, that's different. As well as how fast we choose to drive and get to our new destination.

My wife Katie and I still fight about money. Always have, always will. Shocker, right? We're married. You argue about money. Our arguments are infrequent. They're usually small and most of the time they're over stupid stuff like those stupid Santa pictures that we got with the kids that were just a complete rip-off. Still can't say anything about it. Can we afford the pictures? Yeah. Was it a good idea to use the money on that? No. Let's take it one small step at a time. For your husband to want to change he has to find his own big reasons for doing so. Sometimes math can be the big reason, sometimes not.

What do I mean? You add up how much cigarettes cost each month. You put that into the budget as a separate line item. Don't bury it in groceries, don't bury it in entertainment, anywhere else with anything else so that he can see that. The average price of a pack of cigarettes I looked up, varies from state to state. Average is about \$7.25. In New York, \$13.50. That is a lot. I did not know cigarettes cost that much. Let's call it \$7.50. You're spending that much a day, 30 days, \$225 a month you're going to have to budget for that. That's if he's smoking 1 pack. 2 packs, you're going to have to double it. That will show up in your budget. You take that out every month for him, put it in the cigarette envelope like you said. When you sit down and do a weekly budget review he's going to see that every week. It becomes hard to ignore.

When you do the long term math, \$225 a year, or I'm sorry, \$225 a month that's \$2,700 a year. You smoke for 20 years \$54,000. That's a lot of money to have lit on fire. It's gone. Nothing to show for it. Invested, that's just a savings. If you invest edthat over 20 years, \$225 a month \$150,000. I wouldn't hit him over the head with a math book just yet. Let's just get the budget rolling for a bit, get in the good habit of working on it. Get in the good habit of working on your spending plan and following it. Sometimes when you flip flop your entire life you're just starting out this budget journey, you might fall back to old ways because you've just gone totally crazy and you introduced too much change. Our brains, they really hate change and they fight it like mad. For some percentage of people, they fall back into the old habits in 6 to 8 months. Back into the debt pattern, back where they started from because the change, it can be challenging.

At some point you sit down with your husband and say, "Holy cow husband, if we cut out cable," pick a different budget item, "\$125 a month we'd save \$50,000 over 20 years. If we cut out eating out 3 times a week we'd save \$25,000 over 20 years." I'm just making up numbers with those. "Oh, what happens if we cut out the cigarettes?"

It's not an accusation, it's not an argument, it's just a question to show something he may not be aware of. Like the person who buys Starbucks on the way to work every day. You don't know how much it's costing you until you see the figure of how much it's costing you. It's a heck of a lot harder to quit smoking than to keep driving by Starbucks, though. No question. I'm not belittling that.

I don't want you to feel ... I feel you wanting to blow an equal amount because of his habit. Please do not. You're on the road to financial freedom. Your husband has struggles, you need to work those together. You've just got to ask yourself, "If I buy an equal amount of clothes, furniture, nick knacks, junk each month to be "fair", does that get you further toward your set of goals or farther away?" In this case I suggest you just have to suck it up. The time has come when things are going to be fair, when he stops smoking. Work towards that day together. Budget first, debt second, cigarettes third. You can use that compound interest calculator at investor.gov to plug in numbers, do your own math. I'll include that link in the show notes.

My dad smoked for decades and he quit. My brother smoked for decades and he quit. You can quit smoking. People do it. I don't take away anything from people that struggle to do that. It is hard but it is possible. When you look at the long term financial repercussions, speaking nothing of the health issues it's one more powerful way to help someone change that habit. Thanks Marjorie, and good luck.

Shout out to Ivan and his wife, thank you guys for listening to the show, and Pam from the DGM Camp. Thank you for listening to the show as well. If you're a subscriber and you want a shout out on the show take a screenshot showing you subscribed, email it to me so I can say hello to you and thank you. That bumper music is from ROMY, a Polish heavy metal band. Thank you guys for the tracks. One of our listeners is using the service raise.com, raise.com. You can buy and sell gift cards there to get discounts on places that you are already shopping. Examples: TJMaxx gift card with a 20% discount. Walmart 2 1/2%. Home Depot 5%. Starbucks 8%. Bed Bath and Beyond 6%. If you want to save 8% on a cup of coffee buy a Starbucks gift card there. Raise.com, another simple way to save money on stuff that you're already buying. Now back to your questions.

Justin from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin writes,

**Justin:** "I'm looking to start a website with a blog and it's based around inspiration for people. What I don't know is the legality issues. Could I link to your website or to another website so I could show people the advice others give or will they sue me? Also, what angles would you take at linking to people's sites for free, or do you market that as advertising?"

**Scott A. T.:** Blogging is a great way, number 1, just to get your thoughts out. Thoughts down on paper and learn. Also, it's a great opportunity to earn extra money. There's a lot of angles there you can take to generate passive income from that. Years ago Katie and I were running a company. It was early on in our days of the business and a customer out of the blue emailed us. The customer said, "Hey, there's this other website over here, looks a lot like yours. Do you know about these guys? Have you checked it out?" We went over to the website. It was a new competitor that had popped up. They decided to basically just copy everything that was on our website and put it on their own.

That's a no-no. That is a no-no. We had to hire, not hire. We had to get our law firm to write them a nasty-gram and saying, "Cease and desist. You're violating copyright laws." Immediately they changed around their website. That's what you don't want to do, just blatantly copy stuff from other websites word for word. You can cite stuff,

certainly, using quotations and references just like you would if you were writing a term paper. That's okay. You want to take somebody's entire blog post, copy it from Wall Street Journal, wherever, People Magazine's website, and put it on your own and try to pass it off as yourself? That's bad news that will get you in trouble.

Linking to other websites, sure. No one cares about that. You can link to any website you want. Maybe if somebody doesn't want you linking to their website they might send you an email or if they probably are not going to send you a Cease and Desist because that gets kind of costly when you get the lawyers involved saying, "Don't link to our website." Very very unlikely to happen. I can't think of any circumstances where you wouldn't want some other website linking to yours unless they are just in something that didn't agree with your values.

Now, when it comes to photos, this is where a lot of people get in trouble. You can't take other people's photos and just use them outright. Use stock photography. There's a lot of free photography sites that you can use if using stuff from Flickr, that's a popular photo sharing website. Each of those images has certain copyright restrictions on it. You just have to check those and read about them. Some are copyrighted, some are not. Some you have to use a citation and link back to the person who posted the photo. It's not really that big of deal. A lot of people do that, so just make sure you follow the rules if you're using a site like that.

The marketing side of all of this is just building relationships. I link to so-and-so's website over here and then I contact them, I say, "Hey I really liked your information so I linked to it on my site." What am I doing? I'm hoping they link to my website back so that people will go to their website who learn about me. It's kind of a give and take. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. A lot of time it doesn't and it's a lot of work to do that. Number 1, it's time consuming to do that if you're a website owner linking to everybody that cares about you. Number 2, if you already have a popular website you're not looking to link to websites that are of what's called a lower domain authority. Technical term, DA, domain authority.

A website like Forbes, Wall Street Journal, who else? New York Times, Huffington Post, those are domains, they are well known, very popular. That have what is called a higher domain authority. Google sees them as being higher valued sites. When you get links to your website from theirs that brings you up in the Google rankings. It increases your domain authority. Makes your website more valuable than somebody else's who is not linked to those. When I have a link to my website from Forbes, that's awesome. If I get a website link to a website from somebody who started their blog yesterday, not as valuable to me. It can actually hurt your website rankings by being linked to from a bunch of low quality sites. Google sees that and says, "Your website is a lower quality because you have all these links from lower quality websites." You just have to be aware of that when you start getting into this stuff and getting links and sharing links with other websites. Thanks, Justin for the question.

Back in 2 shakes of a lamb's tail. You're listening to Scott Alan Turner. Hey nation, Scott Alan Turner here. Now, for those of you that are my long time listeners, you know I'm not one of those guys on the radio who promotes every product that shows up on their desk. You're never going to hear me trying to get you to buy a Fender amplifier because only Marshall's go up to 11, or recommending you buy endorsed legal services from Dewey Cheatem and Hal. No. I have a name to uphold to you my wonderful listeners. If I were, if I were to recommend something to you, I would tell you about gold. Golden honey that is, from the Bad Bee Honey Company. 100% raw natural unfiltered Texas wildflower honey harvest treated from only the finest Italian bees. Maybe the Russian, I don't recall. You can't buy it in stores. You can only win Bad Bee Honey by being in the Rock Star Nation, which you are because you're listening to me right now. Bad Bee Honey, it's stickier than the rest.

Mario in Southern California is sick of being in debt. Says,

**Mario:** "I am 39 and my wife and I make about \$93,000 a year. Bought a house 2 years ago, it is \$380,000. We have a \$2,500 a month payment plus \$300 a month HOA fees. We've got 2 kids. 2 cars with loans, \$400 each month on each of them. We owe \$18,000 and \$23,000 each of them. Pretty much live month to month paying credit card bills and loans. We're trying to get rid of one of the cars and buy a cheaper one, which I'll probably use because my wife thinks new equals reliable. Total credit card debt \$8,000. Pay about \$200 a month on those and we have about \$2,000 left on one of them.

We have a credit card bill and car payment ... Have had credit card bills and car payments for 15 years that we've been married and I am tired of them. I just want to get out of debt before I turn 45 or 50. It's depressing because I don't think I would be working like this with no savings or anything when I'm about to turn 40. I want to cut costs and save more but my wife is not on board. She is thinking we are at the stage in life where we should be taking vacations and doing trips with the kids. Do you have any advice with getting a spouse on board with saving or even a good way to possibly secret away some money so it does not get spent right away?"

**Scott A. T.:** First thing that pops out at me is you guys have \$41,000 in car loans on a salary of \$93,000. That is completely out of whack. That's a big reason why you guys can't get ahead. On show episode number 61 I covered the myth of older cars being unreliable, which is a myth. It's a myth. Old cars can be reliable. They can be. Now, you guys have nearly half your money going towards housing after you take out the taxes and figure out what you're pulling home. Sure, you are in Southern California. It's not cheap to live there, certainly not. Life is going to look much much different for you guys on the other side of debt. I can hear from you that you want to get out of it. What about a partner that doesn't?

Well, you have to articulate the reasons and the shared goals that she is going to buy into. You guys have to sit down and say, "Where do we want to be in 20 years, 15 years, 10 years, 5 years? Where do we want to get to? What are our dreams? What are our shared visions?" Then we're going to figure out how we're going to get there. How we're going to get there. She clearly wants to take some vacations. That's fine. What about the end goal? Right now you're going down a path that is not going to get you where I think you want to be. You've got to figure out what is important to her. Does she want to work until 70? I doubt it unless she really loves her job.

You sit down, the kids are asleep. You figure out your 1, 5, and 10 year and your retirement goals and you put a price tag next to them. You might figure out she really wants to travel the world and take a year off. Hey, that's great. How are we going to do that? How are we going to pay for it? You may not even know that. Maybe she wants to take an RV trip around the country. You've got to figure out those things first, and then you've got to figure out how to get there. Right now you're not going to get there. You got to know what the target is first. She doesn't know it, you do. Your targets are not attainable by taking the path that you guys are on.

You really have to get a written spending plan going, putting it down on paper and being on the same page with that plan to get to those goals that you agree on together. Right now one of you is in the middle of the book and the other person is throwing the book on the fire to burn. That's okay. That's where you are. Just work on changing that. You got to cut up the credit cards. You got to stop using them. 15 years of credit card debt and car payments. I got to guess you guys have probably wasted \$50,000 on new cars, interest payments in that time, if not more when you factor in the compound interest that you could have had by investing that money. I don't say that to make you feel bad, but that's got to ignite you to make a change really quick. Cut those cards up. Get rid of both of those car loans. You can't afford it. If you don't change you guys are going to be working

until you die, and that is not living in my opinion.

The good news, you make a lot of money. You can have this thing turned around in 6 or 12 months. \$8,000, it's really not a lot of credit card debt given your income. If you can unload \$41,000 in car loans, pay cash for clunkers, pay off the credit card debts, you guys can be debt free minus the house a year from now. You've got to choose to do it. Then you can go out and pay for those vacations with the kids in cash. You want to add some fuel to the fire, you go figure out how much money you've wasted the past 15 years. Then when you put that number in front of you on paper and everybody looks at it, then we start shaking our heads.

We say, "Oh, that was wasteful. We shouldn't have done that. We didn't know. We didn't know because we didn't have a written spending plan. We didn't track it. We've been doing this for so long we just think it's normal." Don't be normal anymore. How else? Well, you're probably going to have to start pelting her with the inspiration that you found. Get listening to the show. Dreaming of retire early, if that's a shared goal. You've got to have those dreams and you've got to have those goals and a process to get there, which you can. Thanks, Mario for the question.

Jenn sent me a win. She writes,

**Jenn:** "After hearing your ask for a discount and negotiate for anything you buy I decided to try it out. I called Verizon and asked for a discount on my phone plan. I'd been with them for 4 years and had been on their "lowest priced plan" from day 1. I basically told the representative I will be shopping around once my contract ends. I want a loyalty discount if Verizon wants to keep me. I also used your, "Tell me who is the decision maker for this" card. The representative put me on hold for 30 seconds, came back to tell me she will give me the discount I asked for once my current contract ends, which is next month. I'll be saving money on my phone bill starting in a month thanks to you." Action, I love it.

**Scott A. T.:** Congrats Jenn on saving coin. Francis Chan is going to wrap us up today. His quote, "Our greatest fear should not be of failure but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter." Those are the words. That's it for this episode. I am your host, Scott Alan Turner. Rock Star Katie is my producer. All the links mentioned on this show are available on the show notes on scottalanturner.com. If you need some bad advice visit goaskscott.com and I'll do my best to pretend like I know what I'm talking about when I answer your questions. Thanks for listening.

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