

## [How To Stay Focused And Not Be Tempted By The Joneses](#)

**Scott A. T.:** Broadcasting from One Dallas Tower, welcome to the Financial Rockstar Show. I'm your host Scott Allen Turner ready to help you get out of debt, save money, and retire early. In the studio with me is producer Katie who just taught the kids what are names are. Not mommy and daddy. On the show today I'll be answering your questions about money, business, and life. If you have questions you'd like answered on the show visit [goaskscott.com](http://goaskscott.com).

James says, "Right now we're in the middle of the debt snowball and we'd like to get the car paid off first before some of the other things just because it's a depreciating asset. We also have quite a bit of student loans as well as a mortgage. Man, it's going to be nice when all this is paid off. It just can be overwhelming when you are probably 2 years or so from having everything but the house done. How do you stay focused and not be tempted by the Jones's, family and friends?"

The Joneses, they're looking good. They drive by my office window every day, all day. Land Rover, Infiniti, Lexus, Suburban, BMW, they're very nice cars. I don't see them at the gym because I go to the cheap gym, but I used to see them when I went to 23 Hour Fitness and they're good looking people. They also own better clothes than I do, and they have nicer watches, and shinier shoes. Call it prideful, but whenever I see the new car going by and the paper license plate flapping in the breeze, I have one thought. "Car payment. Car payment. Car payment." Statistically speaking, the majority of the people that are driving by my office window, probably living paycheck to paycheck. You're right James. They are looking good on the outside, but they're living in denial or they're worried to death on the inside.

Someday you have to pay the piper. They are not concerned about your happiness. That should be your only concern. Yours and your family's. "What should I be doing that's going to let my family and I live a life of abundance in a couple years?" You can't lease financial freedom. You can't put expensive rims on a rusted out car and say that it looks amazing. It looks silly. Happiness is going to come from your memories, your experiences, your close friends, your close family, the ones that value you for who you are and will not judge you for the decisions that you make in your life. The good decisions anyway. I would look at your stuff and just asks, ask, asks. Look at your stuff an asks if it makes you happy. I can't even remember 80 to 90% of the stuff I've owned over my lifetime, so I've learned, after buying a lot of stuff and going through this, that stuff isn't really that important. In fact, I bet if I asked you what'd you get for Christmas last year you may have a tough time remembering it. That's how much stuff that we own and don't really need.

What's important to me, I've found, my vacations that I get to enjoy with my wife and family, of course my wife and kids, family, friends, and experiences that we get to have, and the charities that I've helped out. They hold a great meaning in my heart. When I think about the things that I've been able to do for different charities, not the stuff that I bought, but when I think about stuff I've been able to give, that stands out in my mind. You're taking the right steps to secure your financial future. The Jones's, the Smiths, the Vanderbilts, whatever their last name is, the people next door, they haven't figured that out yet. In 5, 10, 15 years they're gonna. They're just a little bit behind you, but unfortunately sometimes it's going to be a little bit late for them and it's sad.

24 months further. Let's put a countdown on that. 2 years is going to fly by. Just think back to where you were 2 years ago. It blows me away to think I had 6 month olds back then who could not walk and could not crawl, could not talk. Now they're just chatterboxes. I would be done worrying about what others think of my lifestyle. I'd focus on your goals, and use your energy like you have been, paying down the debts. You're doing it. Put in your time, put in your sacrifice now. Someday you can go out and pay cash for anything that you want to buy. Vehicle, vacations, stuff, you can just write a check. You may find later on you don't even want that stuff anymore. 2 years is

something, but then again, it's nothing compared to the rest of your life being debt free. Thanks James and keep fighting the good fight. You will come out the winner.

Justin from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin asks,

**Justin:** "How secure is Mint?" I've been using budgeting software for a long time now starting out with Quicken, Quicken at the time was a software based solution on a computer, but you could still link it up to your online bank accounts, then moving on to Mint. I've used for a number of years. I still have my Mint account hooked into my bank and credit card accounts. Every Dollar You Need to Budget, YNAB. I've tried out, have those linked to my accounts as well. They are 100% safe, secure. I can't explain the encryption behind the services that these guys use, but it's 1 way communication. Even though you're entering your username and password to connect to your bank account, your credit card account, sometimes your investment accounts depending on what piece of software you're using, there's no features that they're building behind the scenes where they can go in and pull the money out of your account.

**Scott A. T.:** If somebody hacks your Mint account, let's say, you're sitting at Starbucks, and they're sitting over in the corner. There's some guy with creepy sunglasses on, and piercings in his face. You know the hackers. He's got blue hair and maybe he's pulling your password out of the sky because you're on Wi-Fi, and he gets access to your Mint account, well he'll be able to look at your budget and see how much money you make, and see how what you're spending in your credit card transactions. That's an extreme case assuming he would even break into that stuff when you're sitting there at Starbucks. He could get the read only access to what's in Mint, but he could not then go in and grab your bank account login that you've already stored in Mint, user name, password, and then go into your bank and start draining those accounts. That's not how those pieces of software are written. If they did that they would be in some big big trouble. It's read only, perfectly safe. I've been using these things for 15 years now. I have no worries about this security when I'm entering in my personal information.

But on that point, when you are out and about, you're in a library, at Starbucks, you're on an unsecured Wi-Fi location, sitting on an airplane perhaps, those are not the times you want to be logging into your bank account over the Wi-Fi connections. Investment accounts, checking your credit reports, any of that stuff where you've got personal information. Save those type of tasks for when you're at home on your own home based wireless network, or you have that security and somebody's not sitting right around trying to sniff out your password. Thanks for the question Justin.

Some people love the idea of investing in gold. They love it. The gold commercials on TV, they're tempting. "Gold. It's never been 0." Gold is a hedge against inflation. It's not an investment that's going to make you money over the long haul. If you don't believe me I've got an article here from the Independent, which is a UK news rag. It says, "It may be just a toy, but if you invest it in Lego rather than shares of gold for the last 15 years, you would be better off." Analysis by the Telegraph showed the value of a couple gold funds returned on average 4.1% to savers since the year 2000. Meanwhile the value of a mint condition Lego set has increased by 12% every year. 12%, more than gold. The most expensive Lego set was the Star Wars ultimate collector's Millennium Falcon. Then it gives some numbers in British pound units showing the increase in value.

Let's go cash out our 401K's and our Vanguard index funds and go buy Millennium Falcons at Walmart right? No, no, no. Collectibles are not necessarily a good investment. It's another one of those fringe investments. Stamps, coins, artwork. May or may not go up in value. Just depends. There's no consistent track record for stuff like that. They can go back and research the history, and have any degree of a certainty how well it's going to do in the long run. I have a whole house of original Star Wars toys, Star Wars trading cards which are worth about nothing. Back

to your questions.

Sajjad from DFW found Ally Bank has terrible reviews. Is it good or not? He says,

**Sajjad:** "It's okay if you butcher my name. It happens all the time." I apologies. "I love your show and I listen to it. I recently looked into opening an online savings account with Ally. After doing some research and reading other people's reviews I'm hesitant to sign up. Here's one of the sites I used. It's called mybanktracker.com. You talk about Ally Bank all the time and recommend it on your show, but have you had any issues with your account or do you have an account with them? What things do you like or dislike about the bank?"

**Scott A. T.:** Ally Bank on that website he mentioned, mybanktracker, 396 reviews and a lowly 2 out of 5 stars. Not very favorable certainly, but then you have to consider who's writing the review and what is the purpose behind it? Many times when people write negative reviews it's because they are extremely upset and they want to take action compared to people who may find something favorable. They may not write anything about it. We'll take that with a grain of salt. It's like reading reviews on Yelp, or even, generally not Amazon. Amazon they're more positive. I'm just going to read off a couple of these things that are on mybanktracker.com. The first one, "Do not lease with this company. We were stolen from." I'm not even going to get into the details of that. I don't know why you'd lease through Ally Bank anyways.

"Worst customer service and security protocols." From another review because, let's see, I read the details on this. Their account got taken advantage of. Somebody got into it and bought a bunch of gift cards at Sam's Clubs and they were not notified by Ally Bank. Okay, fair enough. "Awful and horrible," was another review. "We had a 5 year CD come due and it rolled over automatically." Ally didn't notify the person. I would argue that if you've got some CD's or something that's due in the future the ones is on you to take responsibility to make sure you take care of that, not relying on the bank or anywhere else. "Worst customer experience ever." Fair enough. That's true of many many companies. There's another one, "Very poor customer interaction." Okay. My favorite one was, where was it? "The pros of Ally are the savings rates. The cons, everything else." Maybe that sums it up.

If I'm looking for an online savings bank, then that's what I'm going to look for. An online savings bank. That's the features that I'm going to look for in it. I'm not going to look for leasing, or a debit card that might get stolen, or customer service because I'm probably never going to call them. I don't want to. I'm just going to throw my money in there and let it grow a little bit. Take it out if there's an emergency or something. Do I personally use Ally Online Savings Bank? No. Would I not use it because of all these terrible reviews? No. I would not. Here's why. I use Capital One 360. I've been using it since they bought out the prior owner. ING Direct was the name. I've been with the same place for about 10 years. 10 years ago ING Direct, they were not a brick and mortar shop. They had the best interest rates at the time, well I don't know what it was back then. Right now Capital One 360 is .75% savings rate. Compare that to Ally which is 1%. There's a quarter percent difference.

Capital One's got a lot of the features that I like beyond a savings, checking account, multiple savings accounts, decent customer service. I've only had to deal with them a couple times over the 10 years. When you use mybanktracker and look up Capital One 360, well what does it say there? 197 reviews, so half as many reviews, but still 2 out of 5 stars. 2 out of 5 stars, the same as Ally. Banks, like airlines, cable companies, they're just businesses that make people mad. They do a lot of things wrong. They usually have bad customer service, and when people get frustrated they're going to go out and write a negative review.

If I was starting over, if I didn't have an online savings account like Capital One 360, I would entertain, certainly,

going with Ally if they have the features that I wanted. Capital One 360's gives me a checkbook. I get check writing features. I don't know if Ally has that or not, but if you don't need that, if you're just looking for to stash some money, yeah it's perfectly acceptable. I would not worry about the reviews. As a final note, Bank of America, who's also listed on this website, 640 reviews, 1 out of 5 stars. 1 out of 5 stars, yet it's one of the biggest, maybe the biggest bank in America. Ally Bank, if it has the features you want, I would not hesitate to go with it. Forget about the reviews. Thanks for the question.

Jordan from Arkansas is back with us on the Scott Allen Turner show. I'm going to summarize. Jordan has, we'll call it work anxiety. It's the same anxiety you would feel if you went into the boss's office and asked for a raise. You're sweating bullets. Right? Or if you resign, I've never enjoyed that experience either. Even if you leave on good terms it's this fear of the unknown. He continues in his email.

**Jordan:** "I know there's so many others that deal with this to a certain scale after graduating college. I've been out for 2 years now and with what feels like no progress. Thank you for just listening and responding. I am grateful to you. If I ever get famous you'd be on my team for sure as my coach in life." You lost me at "if". "If I get famous." Start thinking "when". "When I achieve my goals. When I move. When I get out of the 1 horse town, or 1 stop light town." If you believe it, you can become it.

**Scott A. T.:** There are always going to be haters and people that drag you down, but the people at the gym where you're trying to get a position who can lift more weight than you, generally they aren't those people. I've never met a mean person there, or even really a jerk at the gym, except for this one lady who hogged too much equipment at one time. She was a jerk because she hogged 2 or 3 machines at once. Very inconsiderate, but I digress. Here's what I've learned about people. Unless they're having a bad day, they're friendly. There is a rare bird that isn't. The lady at our post office, she always seems grumpy. Out of the last 1,000 people I've met she sticks out. Again, it's a rare bird that's mean. I would suggest you write down exactly what you want to say. I've had to do this before too, in the past.

Say, "Hi, my name is Jordan. Can I speak with a manager? I'm a dance instructor. I'm calling to see if you'd be interested in offering dance lessons at your gym, for your members. It might help you get more new people to sign up for memberships. I'll do the first week for free so you can gauge the interest." That might be something that I'd write down. That's it. You call, and you read the script. You be quiet and you wait for a response. Your offer, as I presented it there, it's win win and shows the benefit to the person who's hiring. They get more members, which means more money. You work for free a couple weeks, there's no risk for them so they've got nothing to lose. If they're smart they say yes. If they are a bad business person or they have a Zumba class you just cross them off the list. I do a lot of interviews and I have to prepare for them well in advance. I actually just spend 2 days preparing for an interview that I did today, earlier when I'm recording this.

I'm not reading scripts though because sometimes I have no idea what I'm going to be asked about, but I have bullet points to discuss so it's no different. If you're nervous, you prepare. If you're anxious you prepare. If you're not nervous and you're not anxious, you still prepare because then you come across as your best, at your best. You practice too. If you have to practice 20 times by pretending to make a phone call, that's what you do. Or talk to your cats. I had my kids in the back seat of the car today when we're driving home and I was practicing for the interview that I gave today. I've given speeches to my kids in the past. They're 2. They don't care. They're a rowdy crowd and they interrupt a lot so I'm ready for the hecklers, or the dog barking, or someone ringing the doorbell, or whatever's going on. You just got to set a simple goal. Write out your script in 5 minutes and make 1 phone call today.

What's going to happen is you're going to call, and the manager won't be there. This will happen because that's the way things work out. Eventually you'll get the right person, after you call a few times. You get through it, find out hey, that wasn't so bad after all. Write down exactly what you want to say, find the phone number, stare at the phone for 10 minutes, psych yourself up and then just press the buttons. Make it happen. That's how you're going to get out of the 1 horse town. Thanks Jordan and, as always, keep us up to date. Quick break and then we'll be back. You're listening to Scott Allen Turner.

Hey nation. Scott Allen 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 promotes every product that shows up on their desk. You're never going to hear me trying to get you to buy high fructose corn syrup, or recommending you buy the DVD collection for Star Trek Deep Space 9. No. I have a name to uphold to you, the Rockstar Nation. If I were, if I were to recommend something to you, I would tell you about Spoon City.

Many of you are sitting there right now listening to this mindless drivel at home eating a bowl of cereal for breakfast. Unless you're like my 2 year olds, using their hands, you're using a spoon to shovel in those chocolate marshmallow sugar oh's. Spoon design has remained unchanged for hundreds of years until now. The fine folks at Spoon City have come up with the first ergonomic spoon to take your eating and health to a whole new level. Eating with a non-ergonomic spoon can cause side effects such as headaches, nausea, cramping, bloating, lightheadedness, stuffy or runny noses, chest pain, and in some rare cases spontaneous combustion. Head down to your local Spoon City today. Your mouth deserves the best.

Marilyn is up next.

**Marilyn:** "I am interested in investing a few thousand dollars on something that will grow safely and quickly with a reliable, honest broker." The most reliable and honest broker I ever met was named Marilyn. Not someone else named Marilyn either. I am talking about you. The moment you or I start letting someone else make financial decisions for us without getting educated first, that's when you start losing money. Not getting scammed outright for people that are taking your money and running off to the Cayman's, but paying more than you have to because it looks good on paper. Someone uses fancy words. They have nice charts and brochures. They smile a lot. They're friendly. You can find a reliable and honest broker that puts you in investments that cost you more over your lifetime than equivalent investments that can save you tens, sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars. It doesn't make them bad people. They believe they're providing you a good service and should be compensated for it. That's fair.

**Scott A. T.:** If they sit down with your for an hour, it's fair to be compensated for that time. They helped you learn, but I don't think it's fair to the tune of thousands of dollars any more than I think paying 6% in real estate transaction fees is fair. Betterment, Wealthfront, Vanguard, these are brokerage houses. Any of those 3 is a great place to get started investing on your own, using the do it yourself model. If that's too many choices, I don't know, it's kind of like picking from between a Honda and a Toyota. Or a Malibu boat and a Master-craft. You can't go wrong with any of them. Betterment, Wealthfront, Vanguard. To get started what you're looking for is called a target date fund. Invest your money in it.

You pick the target date in the future that you expect to retire or start using that money and they give you the best allocation for it taking into consideration your time horizon and risk so that you can maximize the growth of your money, minimize the amount of fees that you're paying, that's what you're trying to avoid by using one of these services, the high fees. They eat into your investments year after year after year. That's where you lose money. Marilyn, you really are the most reliable and honest broker I know. I understand it's intimidating to get started because it's your hard earned money and it's a lot of it. What I'm sharing is the same strategy I've used for the past



15 years, after I learned about investing, after I learned about losing, after I lost a bunch of money in the stock market. It's the same strategy used by the best certified financial planners. It's the same strategy Warren Buffett, second richest man in America, told LeBron James, the famous basketball player if you don't know him, that he should follow.

No one cares more about your money than you. You can check out my article at [howtogetstartedinvesting.com](http://howtogetstartedinvesting.com). You will do better than 99% of Wall Street professionals over time simply by investing in one of those companies that charges you low low fees. Thank you Marilyn for the question.

Jimmy has a question, how much to contribute to his 401K. He says,

**Jimmy:** "My company matches up to 6% with a cap up to 20%. Currently I am only investing the 6%. I just opened an eTrade account and I'm putting \$1,000 a month in that account. Made \$272,000, whoo, last year and I am debt free. No credit card payments or auto loans. It seems wise to put more in the 401K as it automatically is a winning situation considering that I'm not paying the 33% in taxes. I'm not sure how to proceed here." Congratulations on being debt free. You're in the band. What are the 401K limits? In case you're not familiar with those, if you're under age 50 you can contribute up to \$18,000 this year. Over 50 you can increase that contribution to \$24,000. IRA limits, which we're going to talk about in a second, if you're under age 50 your annual contribution limit is \$5,500 for 2015-2016. Over 50, an extra thousand on top of that, \$6,500.

**Scott A. T.:** Now, you are a high income earner. Not everyone qualifies for a Roth IRA, which would allow your investments to grow tax free. To qualify you have to have an adjusted gross income less than \$131,000 or 193,000 if you're married and filing jointly. You're over that. If you're in that camp, where you're out of those ranges you need to know about a slick little thing called the Back Door Roth. If you have a high income, you can open a non-deductible IRA up to \$5,500. There's some extra steps you can go through to convert it to a Roth, but it's simple to do. If you're not a high income earner, but have an IRA, listen up as well. Maybe you've already got an IRA. You want to look at, and this applies primarily if you're under age 40, if you've got a regular IRA you've got some free cash where you can pay the taxes on converting it. Remember if an IRA, you've got some growth in it, if you convert that to a Roth, you're going to have to pay taxes on the money that you've made over that investment period.

If you've got some free cash sitting around where you can pay those taxes, it's worth looking at converting a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. That's going to allow your money to grow tax free when you pull it out in retirement, when you're expecting to be in a higher tax bracket, or you're expecting to pay more in taxes, because it's kind of expected. Taxes are likely to go higher over the years. Makes more sense to pay taxes now while the rates are lower. How do you know if you should do this? Well, Fidelity has got this nice online calculator. Click the link in the show notes. You just plug in your numbers and you see what the long term savings would be. For you Jimmy, you're getting the company match already. I would check out fully funding an IRA, then doing a Roth conversion so you can have that money grow tax free. With the extra money go back and max out the 401K like you mentioned. Get those tax deductions now. If you've got even more money on top of that, keep doing what you're doing, investing it in a regular brokerage account, letting that money grow as well. Nice work, nice work. Keep it up. Thanks for the question.

Seth over in the Facebook community is debt free! Congratulations!

**Seth:** "As of today, we are debt free. We paid off all our credit cards and student loans saving us a total of \$1,150 per month in payments. I just completed our budget and have set aside \$5,000 into an Ally Bank savings account for an emergency fund. My stretch goal is identify a charity to donate with matching funds through my workplace by

end of month." Congratulations dude. You're in the band. That is awesome. Love stories like this. They inspire me to keep going on with the show, and they inspire everyone else to work towards debt freedom, financial freedom, living life as it is meant to be lived.

**Scott A. T.:** What do you think you could learn from a mouse? What can you learn from a mouse? Well, how about what can you learn from a mouse trying to get a cracker home for dinner? Got a video, there'll be a link to the YouTube video in the show notes. There's this tiny mouse and he's trying to get this massive cracker and throw it way up above his head, this little shelf above his head, so he can take it back to wherever he's going to take it, maybe his mouse family, and feed them a feast. What happens in this video? Mouse fails, and he fails, and he fails. He can't get that cracker up there. He throws it. He carries it. He gets it up there and it falls back down. Tries all kinds of things. He fails 32 times trying to get this cracker up on top of this little shelf. Finally, finally, finally on the 33rd attempt he makes it. He gets the cracker and he hauls it back, we assume, to his nest, his family, whatever else, so they can eat an awesome meal. It's a 1 1/2 minute video. Take the time and go watch it.

The point is this. If you want something, you have to keep trying until you get it, and not make any excuses each time you fail. Excuses like, "I don't have the time to do whatever." Well, the answer to that is sleep less. Watch less TV. Wake up a little early for a period of time. Doesn't mean the rest of your life. Could be a couple weeks, couple months. Sleep a little less. Or the excuse of, "I don't have enough money." Sell stuff. Get rid of the car. That's what I had to do. Get rid of the car. Pick up a part time gig. Deliver some pizza. Drive an Uber car. Pick up some extra cash on the side. Work some online jobs if you don't have that flexibility. Or the excuse, "I don't know what to do." Not knowing what you don't know is knowing what you need to go find out and know how to do. I don't even know if that makes sense. Go find somebody who knows how to do it and ask them. Get them to help you out. Find a mentor, a coach, listen to smart people and figure out what they did.

The biggest excuse of them all is, "I can't do it." The only response I have to that is, "Yes, you can." Your family, your friends, your co-workers, the people you haven't even met yet but someday you're going to have an impact on their lives, either positive impact, or a negative impact, or no impact at all, you are going to have an influence on them even if it's just for a tiny nanosecond. Positive, negative, not at all, you're going to have an impact. You're going to have that influence. If the mouse can do it so can you. Go get the cracker. One thing to do today. Go watch that video. Share it with 1 person. Share it with 1 person. Share that video with 1 person who you know who could use some encouragement. Share the YouTube link. It'll take you 30 seconds to share with 1 person. Email it to them. Private message somebody on Facebook. 1 person. Don't do the blanket thing. Don't blanket post it to everybody on Facebook because nobody will watch it. Pick 1 person. That 1 request will cause the recipient to watch the video because you have personally connected with them.

Those are the words. That's it for this episode. I'm your host, Scott Allen Turner. Rockstar Katie, yes, my producer. All the links mentioned in the show, including the mouse video, are available in the show notes on scottallanturner.com. If you have a question you'd like answered on the show visit goaskscott.com. Thank you so much for listening. Watch the mouse.

**Announcer:** Okay, nation. For your free copy of the guide, How to Save \$1,000 in One Week, simply subscribe to the podcast right now on iTunes and text the word saving to the number 33444 to prove that you did it. Subscribe now to get out of debt, save more money, and retire early. See you next time.