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Chuck: [00:00:20] If we allocate 10 grand a year for you to spend on whatever you want, I have no cares in the world of what you're spending money on, it's when you go to 15,000-

Mary: [00:00:32] Our seven-year-old, he knows, and he has told me, Mommy, don't blow all our money.

Chuck: [00:00:38] I'm frustrated I can't do more for myself. I feel like I'm working hard and doing a lot to provide for the family, yet I come less than it, I would like to do more for myself.

Mary: [00:00:49] There's only so much that people can put up with. I mean, it could be years, but it all eventually like crumbled if we don't have the same vision and the same plan, because that happened to my parents. They split up in their 60s.

Ramit Sethi: [00:01:09] I'm Ramit Sethi, and this is I Will Teach You To Be Rich, the podcast. In this episode, I'm speaking to Chuck and Mary. Mary's 37 years old, and she's originally from Argentina. She moved to Los Angeles with Chuck, who's 38, and she still feels guilty that she doesn't live close to her family anymore. Their issue is spending. Mary loves to spend a lot on high-end luxuries like Chanel bags, and Chuck is starting to feel like he can't spend any of his money on the things he likes. By the way, his annual income is \$450,000 a year. And there's another problem, Mary has started hiding her spending from Chuck.

Mary: [00:01:55] I definitely hid the fact that I did a cold sculpting treatment and some other skin treatment in my stomach, because I had three kids and I was very self-conscious about it, so I've hidden that for a long time. I ended up telling him, but it was in a very casual way like, yeah, I did this, they gave me payments, which they're going to be for the rest of my life, and it's not a big deal. But the truth is, I actually hid it for a while from him, and I was scared to tell him, because I didn't want him to judge me for it or get disappointed at me.

Chuck: [00:02:37] There have been a number of situations like that. I wish there weren't limits and wished to provide for the family, to not have any restrictions in terms of what she could do. But also, it feels challenging, that she has to hide it, and we can't have the conversation about it, or by the time we have the conversation, then it's a more tense place to have it, because one of us feels like the other person did something wrong.

Ramit Sethi: [00:03:03] How much did this CoolSculpting cost?

Mary: [00:03:06] It was \$7,000.

Ramit Sethi: [00:03:08] Okay. Now, is that a little or a lot based on your income?

Mary: [00:03:15] I mean, it's a lot. I mean, our income is really good, but we also have a lot of luxuries that we choose to have, like having a full-time housekeeper. So, that obviously doesn't leave a lot of room for discretionary spending. Because we need it at the moment, I just think I can figure it out later. I'm like, I'll figure it out later, I'll pay for it, I don't know, with a gift money or something.

Mary: [00:03:39] But it was definitely something that I should have talked about, because it was a commitment and I still have to pay for it, even though it was in 10,000 payments. My whole life, all I wanted was things, as a kid, I lacked a lot of things. And there was so much deprivation that once I got a glimpse of like the good life here in America, Josh and I are not wealthy, but he grew up in a family that is wealthy, and that gave me access to a bunch of things that I didn't know that they were possible.

Ramit Sethi: [00:04:18] Like what?

Mary: [00:04:19] Like buying a designer dress for my wedding. Like I don't know, that was, it's truly like princess moment for me. And this was early on in our relationship. Once I discovered that good life, I was like, I want it all. I never want to feel deprived again.

Ramit Sethi: [00:04:41] Because what?

Mary: [00:04:42] Because that makes me sad, and it makes me feel deprived, and it brings me back to the years when my mom would say like, we can't have this, because we don't have money and there's not enough, there's not enough, I can't buy you these, I can't buy you that, I can't give you what you want, because it's expensive. We're too many. That was another script. Like we're too many, can't afford that you can't have a Sweet 16 birthday party, because you have four sisters, I can't.

Mary: [00:05:13] So, it was all like, I can't, I can't, I can never have. And there was a lot of attachment to the material, too, because of course, once you lose it or you ruin it, there's no more money for replacing it or buying more. So, when I had the chance here in the US, especially in such an like easy economy, I would say, and access to everything, I went bananas. We grew up in a very unsafe social situation in my country.

Mary: [00:05:46] There was a lot of crime going on and there was a lot of like robberies around my neighborhood in my whole childhood, to the point that as an adult, I still carry a lot of like the fears and the phobias, or I have like this fear that something's going to happen to me. Still, to the day, like it's something that I battle with, and that's why I go to therapy and do other things just to like lose sort of like that fear for like getting hurt or something bad happening to me.

Ramit Sethi: [00:06:20] I can sense that burden that you are clearly still carrying today. I appreciate that you are so open about it, because it can't be easy. And I can also say that people who grew up in the US, in certain parts, they might have a sense of what you went through, but in most parts of the US, we cannot fathom, our currency might be totally devalued tomorrow. It's just not something that we grew up with. So, I appreciate you being so open about that.

Ramit Sethi: [00:06:48] Try to put yourself in her shoes. Think about what it must have been like to grow up in a country where you had no idea what would happen tomorrow. Most of us in the US simply cannot fathom it. When we go to the store, we know that one dollar is one dollar. We know there's going to be eggs in the grocery store and there's going to be gas at the gas stations. We cannot imagine what it's like to think about our currency being devalued overnight.

Ramit Sethi: [00:07:14] Sometimes, I wish I could take my loudmouth friends to India, and let them see what poverty and opportunity there looks like. I had one friend who said to me, well, if I could make it here, I could make it there. And I stopped him right away. I said, let me explain something to you, in my family's house in India, there's a maid. Her mother was a maid. Her mother's mother was a maid. And if she's lucky, her daughter will work in technical support. My friend's response?

Ramit Sethi: [00:07:45] Well, if one in a billion could do it, I could do it. This Western-centric way of thinking is pervasive, especially among people who are from small towns and haven't traveled much or been exposed to other cultures. For them, the world is easier to navigate if it's black or white. Successful people work hard, therefore poor people must not work hard. Okay. So, listening to her describe her upbringing, it might be tempting for us to roll our eyes, talk about how irresponsible she's being with spending and buying all these things, but we also have to take into account where she came from and where she is now.

Mary: [00:08:28] 450 sounds like a lot, and I don't feel like we have that much for some reason. I guess like between schools and the housekeeper, like it doesn't feel like it leaves a lot of room for things.

Ramit Sethi: [00:08:45] You did, earlier, say, we are not wealthy. Do you remember saying that?

Mary: [00:08:50] Right.

Ramit Sethi: [00:08:51] Now, when you hear that number, would you consider yourselves wealthy?

Mary: [00:08:54] I definitely will, it sounds like a lot of money. It sounds like somebody that's doing very well in life.

Ramit Sethi: [00:09:01] Why don't we change that phrasing a little bit?

Mary: [00:09:03] It is a lot of money, actually. Yeah, it's just it doesn't sound like it, it is a lot of money, especially for LA, I think it's a good living.

Ramit Sethi: [00:09:15] Okay. Rich, give that to me in a full sentence. What is it? I want to hear the whole thing.

Mary: [00:09:23] Earning 450,000 dollars a year, it is a lot of money, and it is a salary of someone that lives very well, like that's a good income.

Ramit Sethi: [00:09:37] Wow. How did that feel to say?

Mary: [00:09:41] It felt good.

Ramit Sethi: [00:09:42] Yeah.

Mary: [00:09:43] Like makes sense.

Ramit Sethi: [00:09:44] But do you believe it?

Mary: [00:09:44] I have a hard time doing so, I don't know why, because I guess like life in LA and with kids, it's so expensive that it doesn't seem like we're living this lavish, fabulous life of the rich and famous. But it is actually, because when we were young and we talked about how much we would like to make, this was like a super, like crazy goal.

Ramit Sethi: [00:10:17] This is classic. I literally have people who say to me, well, it's not like we're rich or anything, we're what I would call well-off. I'm like, you have a fucking net worth of \$32 million, you're rich. I'm going to spend a second here, because this is an important point. It's not just that this is eternally annoying to me, it's also that part of living a rich life is being honest, being honest with others and being honest with yourself.

Ramit Sethi: [00:10:44] If you earn \$450,000 a year, you are financially rich, you're wealthy. Now, we can argue over definitions and lifestyles, but by any calculation of median income, you are wealthy. Now, are you a 100 millionaire-wealthy, billionaire-wealthy? No, but you're wealthy nonetheless. It's important for you to be honest with yourself, because it forces you to take agency for your decisions.

Ramit Sethi: [00:11:12] It's not that you're just a middling upper middle class person who's struggling to save more, no, you chose to hire a chef, you chose to send kids to this school, to buy Chanel bags, own it. I want you to take ownership of your decisions. And once you're honest with yourself, then you finally earn the right to change. But without that honesty, you've created this fake scarcity in your mind, oh, boo-hoo, we don't really have a lot.

Ramit Sethi: [00:11:44] I mean, sure, we do fine, but it's not like we're rich. I would rather you say we do very well, and we're fortunate, here's what I choose to spend my money on, and here's what I don't spend my money on. Ramit, the reason I'm talking to you is that I don't think my spending is aligned with my values, and I want your help to change that, or Ramit, we make \$450,000 a year, I'm frustrated that we can't buy this one thing, I really want to do it, why can't we do it?

Ramit Sethi: [00:12:14] Great. I love the honesty. I might tell you, hey, you actually need to earn more in order to do that, or you need to spend less on something, but at least we can have an honest conversation. Okay. So, no matter what, please stop the bullshit about making \$450,000 in your 30s and not being wealthy. When you were a kid, how much did you want to make?

Mary: [00:12:36] No. And when we were talking about living in LA, about living in New York, that we considered once, he's like, I need to make at least half a million a year, and this was like when we were like young and not really married, so it's pretty crazy that we reached almost that point.

Chuck: [00:12:54] We haven't really traveled. We cut back on a lot of restaurant, and then cut back on things, discretionary items that I would like, personal training, good gym memberships. And I'd find ways to find the same enjoyment in food and self-care in more affordable ways. And I also have cut back in terms of where I'd want to invest and put money to work in other places. And so, it's not deprived in the sense of living in a Buddhist monastery, but we're still living a good quality of life, but I still hold back on different things that I'd like to do a bit more of.

Ramit Sethi: [00:13:34] What do you feel when you hear that?

Mary: [00:13:37] No. I mean, it makes me sad, but—it makes me sad, because I don't want him to feel deprived, because he also is the one like working super hard for that money.

Ramit Sethi: [00:13:48] How much money are you going to have to make in order for you to be able to get even one personal training session per week?

Chuck: [00:13:56] I don't know. Maybe 50% more right now.

Ramit Sethi: [00:13:59] So, you're going to have to make \$750,000 for you to spend one hundred dollars a week on personal trainer?

Chuck: [00:14:06] Maybe. The reality is we should already be able to do that if that's something that I prioritize, and value, and want to make happen.

Ramit Sethi: [00:14:13] I agree. What I'm really trying to point out here is in the current state you're going in, you're never going to get those training sessions.

Chuck: [00:14:23] Yeah.

Ramit Sethi: [00:14:24] Never. It's not about the amount of money, because you make a lot of money. And also, when I say personal training, I'm not necessarily saying you're getting five training sessions a week, that's expensive, but even one, which could be meaningful to you. The fact that what you just said is, I'm going to have to make three quarters of a million dollars to spend \$100 a week on something that's important to me and the health for me and my family, that doesn't seem right.

Chuck: [00:14:55] No, you're right.

Ramit Sethi: [00:14:57] So, why don't you tell Virginia that? And I don't want you to minimize? I want you to tell her exactly how you feel right now.

Chuck: [00:15:06] Yeah. The way I feel is I'm frustrated I can't do more for myself. I feel like I'm working hard and doing a lot to provide for the family, yet I come last in it. I would like to do more for myself.

Mary: [00:15:19] I hear you. I hear you. And you should, I think you should do more for yourself, because I would like to see you doing more for yourself, because that would inspire me to probably pull back a little bit, and also like see you happier, and enjoying your life and your hard work a little more.

Ramit Sethi: [00:15:40] I noticed this role of the pursuer and pursued, you're coming and saying, hey, what's up with the spending? And you're feeling judged, you're feeling guilty, uh-oh, I may have overspent again, retreat, Josh pursues a little more, and then it all kind of falls apart, because you're both dancing with each other, but you already know where the dance is going to go. You didn't follow through.

Ramit Sethi: [00:16:09] She spent more than we said. And worst of all, there's no real consequences. What's the effect of any of this? And the truth is nothing, really. You're living a pretty good life. You have a live-in housekeeper. If you want to get certain things, you get it. So, really, you both haven't yet uncovered a motivation strong enough to get you to want to change. Is there one?

Mary: [00:16:42] I don't know, actually.

Chuck: [00:16:43] There's so much more that we could do. And so, it's about this future state that doesn't exist, and maybe there's not enough color or shared vision for what that looks like. I want to accumulate the ability today over time to be able to do more in the future, because I don't know all the things that we want to do, but I know one, at any moment, our life could get disrupted, something could happen with the business, and I want to be prepared in the worst case scenario that if something does happen, we can continue at least sustaining our life until things could get back on track.

Chuck: [00:17:19] Both of us feel stress, because there's some future state. It may be owning more purses, or having more things that are important to her. And for me, it's about protecting this ability and flexibility to do things in the future, to have that stability, and have that abundance, and have those other things. And we might not have alignment around what that looks like from each other's point of views.

Ramit Sethi: [00:17:45] Oh, I love this. Did you catch what just happened? I asked what would get them to change, and he gave me this long, rambling answer. He doesn't even remember the question, he was just talking stream of consciousness. How do you think she responded to that?

Ramit Sethi: [00:18:03] The question I asked was, is there a motivation that would get you to change, and you just gave that answer, what did you hear?

Mary: [00:18:11] I heard nothing.

Chuck: [00:18:13] Correct.

Mary: [00:18:13] There's nothing there that motivates me to change.

Ramit Sethi: [00:18:18] Why?

Chuck: [00:18:21] I think because I haven't been concrete enough in outlining things that are motivating to her.

Mary: [00:18:27] Yeah.

Ramit Sethi: [00:18:28] Or, yourself, you're speaking academics. Oh, I want to be able to potentially invest one day in something. What I really was hoping you would say is I want to get a personal trainer four times a week. That is concrete. I wish you would say, you know what, I want to take all of us on a trip to this place and this hotel. I want to take all the kids on a kite surfing expedition. If you heard something like that, what would you think?

Mary: [00:18:55] That sounds awesome, let's get to it, but like I literally hear nothing. It's always the same answer, which I think is very valuable from a business point of view, but from a personal point of view, it really doesn't speak to me.

Ramit Sethi: [00:19:13] This is one of the most common things that I see from men. They go into long monologue land, and when I asked them, hey, did you see your wife's face while you were talking? They look at me completely bewildered, no, what do you

mean? I'll say, well, what do you think she thought of when you were giving me that answer? And they have no idea. In psychology, there's a concept called social monitoring.

Ramit Sethi: [00:19:38] I'll give you the simple version of it. If you're a high social monitor, you're aware of the social context around you. You're likely to adapt to it. If you're a low social monitor, you're not really aware and you're not going to change your approach. You're basically going to be the same in every situation, whether you're at the orchestra or a club in the meatpacking. The vast majority of low social monitors that I meet are men.

Ramit Sethi: [00:20:04] So, what's the lesson here? Don't do that. In your head, you sound logical and smooth. If you were to take one second during the middle of your long monologue and look up at your partner, you might realize they are not listening to you at all. They're totally disconnected. Now, I would love to spend more time on fine-tuning these social skills. If you want to do that, get my How to Talk to Anybody program from my products page.

Mary: [00:20:32] Whenever he gets himself something, even though I know that we're over budget, because of me, I'm actually really happy, because I see him like indulging, and enjoying, and taking care of himself, even if it's like, I need new shorts. And then, he got \$600 of shorts, and I was like, oh, that's a little money, but I'm so happy for you, because truthfully, you never do that for yourself and I'd like to see you enjoying the things I enjoy by more thinking about how we can make our life more enjoyable.

Ramit Sethi: [00:21:05] Okay. So, we're going to get to this right now. Let's actually do it. So, what I would like to ask both of you is to really think about the next five years. What are the bucket list items, the things that would be incredibly meaningful to you to achieve? And I'm talking specifics.

Mary: [00:21:34] So, within the next five years, in order for us to be living a rich life, I think I would love to go to Big Sur for every anniversary, and stay at the Post Ranch Inn, which is the most incredible place that I've been, and just spend a few days there, and enjoy, and not worry about cutting back on alcohol, because the bill is going to go up. Also, I would like to treat myself to a Chanel bag every year, which they cost around five

to seven grand each. I would like to get a bigger house and decorate it as I want it. I would like to go to Europe. I would like to go to Greece and the south of Italy. And I would like to go to the south of France. I don't know much about hotels there, but I probably would like to stay at a really nice one and travel business class for everything.

Chuck: [00:22:43] I think there's a lot of overlap in the things that I wrote down. The one question I have is those are the things that matter most, are you willing to make sacrifices in the day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month life in order to achieve those things?

Mary: [00:23:00] Yeah, if there's a plan, if there is a deadline, for sure. And if there's also, I think, no judgment on the other end, just because mostly, I never wanted to say the things that they were important to me, because you don't think that they are to you, then they don't deserve to be important at all. They felt dumb, sometimes, wanting a Chanel purse as an asset when he's like, that's not important, we can put that money in investment. I'm like, I know that, but I still love the purse.

Chuck: [00:23:43] What can I do differently in order for you not to feel judged? Because truthfully, if we allocate, whatever, 10 grand a year for you to spend on whatever you want, I have no cares in the world of what you're spending money on. It's when you go to 15,000 that there's judgment around, well, I thought you were going to be able to get what you want with this that we talked about, and the judgment is more about going above and beyond than what you're doing kind of with that spend.

Ramit Sethi: [00:24:16] I've heard you say multiple times, you feel judged. I hear it. And so, we've kind of narrowed it down to this one simple, beautiful example of a Chanel bag. What I might suggest to you is not telling what actually makes you anxious, and when you're not anxious, and you're not judging here, but you are judging if it gets above a certain amount, what if instead you simply said, you know what, I don't think I've ever really asked you why you love Chanel bags. What does it mean to you to be able to get one every single year? Can you tell me? I'd love to know, because I want to understand that. If you ask that, how do you think Virginia would react?

Chuck: [00:25:05] She would love to tell me.

Ramit Sethi: [00:25:07] Well, let's do it.

Chuck: [00:25:08] So, what is it about having a Chanel bag that so motivating and that you're so interested in?

Mary: [00:25:15] Because I think it's the material icon for, I made it, for, I achieved the rich life. It's such a precious thing in the fashion world, but also like in the world in general, like I feel like as a woman that likes clothes and fashion, having multiple Chanel purse basically is the realization of like the rich woman that I always wanted to be, like the Sex and the City kind of like vision of like me wearing designer clothes, and lunching, and having fun with friends. That was like the fantasy that I built up in my head growing up, and thinking like that's what I want to be, because I don't want to like lack things anymore, and I want to be able to treat myself whenever I want. So, for me, it's like, yeah, it's like the birth of the rich life that I wanted.

Ramit Sethi: [00:26:27] What did you hear just now?

Chuck: [00:26:29] So, what I heard is it's a token, or symbol of affluence, or respect, or prosperity that Virginia could prove to herself that she's made it out of the past that she came from, and get recognition for others that she's accepted on a different level, that maybe she feel wouldn't natively feel comfortable with.

Mary: [00:26:56] Which is funny, when I was little, my parents, they would have months that they were really bad, and that we were having like tea and crackers for dinner, and then month that they were better. So, when my mom would come back from the grocery store with prosciutto and a bottle of Coca-Cola, that meant that that month was like booming. It was like my dad was balling, so this would be basically the translation of that.

Ramit Sethi: [00:27:28] Yeah. The handbag goes way deeper than a bag. It's not about function. It's not frivolous. It represents something much, much deeper to her. I just love hearing people talk about what they want to spend money on. I love it. I love that it's conscious. I love that it's so focused. I love that it's a beautiful thing that you've thought about is clearly emotionally connected for you.

Ramit Sethi: [00:27:58] And the prosciutto example is such a beautiful capstone to that. It is your grown-up equivalent of getting prosciutto and coke. So, I hear that and I love it. I don't think it's shallow at all. My suggestion is that you could ask 30 more questions about a Chanel bag, and she would sit here for the next 15 hours and happily tell you every last detail about every Chanel bag she's ever looked at. Am I right?

Mary: [00:28:29] You are absolutely right.

Ramit Sethi: [00:28:31] Exactly.

Mary: [00:28:32] I just don't think that he cares about it-

Ramit Sethi: [00:28:35] But that's what we're talking about, because you've never given him a reason to understand why this is important. Before, it was just a bag, and actually kind of thought of as a frivolous symbol, but what we're seeing is that it's way deeper than that. It's way deeper. So we could sit, and you could learn about these bags, and you could ask her a bunch of questions, both about the bags, but also, what does it mean to you?

Ramit Sethi: [00:29:00] Well, tell me about this prosciutto thing. So, how often would they come home with it? And then, what happened? And would everybody gather around the table? What was that like? And then, what? You took one coke and shared it with all the different glasses. Oh, my god. That's crazy. What happened then? What you're starting to get to with these questions is the idea that this bag is not just a bag, it's really a symbol, as you put it, a token.

Ramit Sethi: [00:29:25] And so, suddenly, when you go together to get that bag once a year, maybe you make it a whole thing. Let's go there, and afterwards, we're going to take that bag in the box, and we're going to go to the prosciutto place, and we're going to eat prosciutto, coke, and enjoy the Chanel bag. It becomes a whole event. If you did that once a year, what do you think would happen in your relationship?

Chuck: [00:29:52] I think Virginia would feel less judged, more valued, and more motivated to stay on track.

Ramit Sethi: [00:29:58] I think so, too. And now, I want to hear from you. What did you write down for your rich life in the next five years?

Chuck: [00:30:05] So, travel was on mine, too. We just did a family trip to Yosemite, rented this amazing house, and the kids, especially after being stuck inside, were able to just get dirty, get wet, explore, and we had the best time. I would love if we could do two luxury trips like that, one with the family and one as a couple, where we don't have to be constrained around where we go. We could travel to Montana, or Hawaii, or go to Europe.

Chuck: [00:30:31] For me, that's the best use of money, are things that create memories, and create connection, and create those moments, where we can connect that we normally can't in each other's life. Two is right now, I hate that we feel stressed to have to pay for private school tuition for the kids. I would love for that not to be a worry. For middle school, high school, I want the kids to be able to go to whatever school they want to without money being a gating factor.

Chuck: [00:30:58] Three is I would love at least twice a week to have tennis lessons, personal training, some sport or activity that feels selfish that I can do for myself that makes me feel good. And lastly, I'll set something around the house. I would love to be able to add a bedroom, redo the yard, just kind of take our living to the next level, whether it's moving into a new house or doing something with ours.

Ramit Sethi: [00:31:23] Great. Thank you very much. That sounds amazing. What did you feel hearing those things?

Mary: [00:31:32] That makes me happy when he thinks about himself and about his own personal needs. Like I love that he wants the kids to have good education, because we all want that. But I like to hear when he's like, I want a personal trainer or I want to be able to do tennis classes, because it's at the end of the road. I like to hear that he wants to indulge or enjoy himself selfishly, because I am like that, and I have a lot of guilt towards thinking that way, that things that are just for me are selfish, or I have to hide it because I feel guilt. Like it's actually really nice to hear him say in that.

Ramit Sethi: [00:32:23] You hear that phrase, guilt, I have a lot of guilt, I'm going to reframe that for them. I don't feel guilty because there are limits, I love limits with my money. Let me show you why. I am glad you both have limits. Thank God that there are limits. I think life is a lot more fun with limits. It gives me something to look forward to. And that is a total reframe on your money, not only for yourself, but for your kids. What kind of example do you think that they are learning by seeing parents who pull away from each other, and hide money, and spending, and then it blows up, and they don't commit to fix it?

Mary: [00:33:13] Oh, my kids know.

Chuck: [00:33:14] That's terrible.

Mary: [00:33:15] My kids know. It's really terrible. My kids, they're like, can we buy this? But we're not going to tell Poppy, and I'm like, no, we shouldn't lie to him.

Ramit Sethi: [00:33:25] You shouldn't lie to him, but hold on, don't mention that CoolSculpting thing.

Mary: [00:33:29] I know. It's like it's one of those things like, do what I say, but not what I do.

Ramit Sethi: [00:33:37] So, your kids are smart and they're already old enough to have already picked up on this.

Mary: [00:33:44] Yeah, my older kid for sure, our seven-year-old, he knows, and he has told me, Mommy, don't blow all our money.

Ramit Sethi: [00:33:53] I love that we completely bury this until the end.

Mary: [00:33:57] Yeah.

Ramit Sethi: [00:33:57] There are real consequences for not committing to a plan that both of you put together and stick with it. Your seven-year-old is already picking up on this. And you both know as parents, once the kid picks up on something and starts

doing it, it is 100 times harder to reverse that behavior and to get it right in the first place.

Mary: [00:34:19] For sure.

Chuck: [00:34:20] Right.

Ramit Sethi: [00:34:20] What are the consequences if we don't live a rich life? So, in your case, the consequences are actually not that bad on the surface, oh, we can't get an extra floor in our house, and you can't get this Chanel bag and stay at this beautiful hotel. Oh, boo-hoo. But when you dig a little deeper, there are some serious consequences. What are they?

Mary: [00:34:44] Well, definitely, what we're modeling to our kids, and I don't want to set them for failure, because this is how we teach them, by modeling. It's like there's so much I can tell them, but if I don't do it, they will never do it.

Ramit Sethi: [00:35:00] Kind of like when you grew up and you heard things around you like, there's too many, and we don't have enough. And now, many years later, are you still working through those issues?

Mary: [00:35:13] I mean, I'm 38 years old and I still can't get over it.

Ramit Sethi: [00:35:18] Yeah. So, that's good. What other consequences are there if you don't live your rich life?

Chuck: [00:35:23] I mean, there's a lack of trust, and feeling of support, and commitment in the relationship, and that can't be good for the long-term health of a relationship.

Ramit Sethi: [00:35:34] Yeah.

Mary: [00:35:35] No, because there's only so much that people can put up with. I mean, it could be years, but it all eventually like crumbles if we don't have like the same vision and the same plan, because that happened to my parents, because my mom was an

ambitious woman. She was the daughter of someone who had money and she sort of like expected the same from my dad, who came from a more humble upbringing, and more like, I just want a 9:00 to 5:00 job and be happy about it. And that over years and years of struggling in their marriage, and with the family, and everything, each ended up, they split up in their 60s.

Ramit Sethi: [00:36:28] As I always say, the real issues often come out in the last five minutes. It is amazing to me that people will see something broken in their lives, like an overbearing parent or a lazy spouse, and then they will recreate the conditions that lead to that exact same thing happening again. In many ways, we are following a map that's been set since childhood, but we can change it. Now, these two are living a good life.

Ramit Sethi: [00:37:01] I would say a very good life. With just a few small tweaks, they could turn that into a rich life. But in this case, it takes both of them to make it happen. For him, he needs to speak up and be assertive about what's a priority to him. For her, first of all, she's got to stop hiding expenses. That's just unacceptable. She also needs to create the conditions that let him feel comfortable enough to spend on himself.

Ramit Sethi: [00:37:31] And for both of them, they need to have honest conversations about what they want, about their invisible scripts, where they came from. And during these conversations, they need to watch each other and do a lot of active listening, things like, what did you just take away from what I said? Here's what I heard, what do you think of that? If they can do this, they can change their lives in six months. If not, well, they have a preview of what their life might turn out to be.

Ramit Sethi: [00:38:09] Thanks for listening to I Will Teach You To Be Rich. I'm Ramit Sethi. Please follow the show on Apple, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't read I Will Teach You To Be Rich, my book, pick up a copy. You can get it at any bookstore or any library, and it will show you the specific tactics for how to build the I Will Teach You To Be Rich system into your personal finances. Here's what you'll find next week on the I Will Teach You To Be Rich podcast.

Kate: [00:38:47] I don't feel like we are working as a team when it comes to money.

Andy: [00:38:52] I mean, again, there are days that I couldn't afford food, I felt like.

Ramit Sethi: [00:38:55] Wait a second. You could definitely afford food.

Andy: [00:38:59] If you're kind of looking at me, you'd be like, oh, why is this guy walking around with holes in his shoes?

Ramit Sethi: [00:39:04] Do you really have holes in your shoes?

Andy: [00:39:06] Yeah, I have holes in my sneakers that I wear. Yeah.