

My Obsession With Saving Money

by Annie Margarita Yang

Orgasmic. That's the greatest word to describe my non-sexual, unhealthy obsession with saving money. For years, I saved 50 cents out of every dollar I earned. Now that I'm married and need my husband's approval on finances, I've compromised down to 25 cents.

I am the type of person who picks up every penny I find on the ground. I cut my own hair for free. I use canvas bags at the grocery store to save 5 cents. When my phone company surprised me by lowering my bill to \$19.00, I screamed like a little girl at the top of my lungs.

My best money saving idea was in 2013. I worked at a massage parlor making \$3.00/hour. The MTA (which stands for Might Take Awhile) increased the monthly MetroCard fare *again*. I couldn't afford to ride the subway to work, so I bought a foldable adult kick scooter. Every day, I kicked myself to work and back. I hit the jackpot with this one. Not only did I save money, I never dealt with morning train delays again.

Last April, soon after the David Dao fiasco, United Airlines lowered their prices. Being money-savvy, I bought a round-trip ticket from Lubbock to NYC for \$396.60 from United. Later, I wanted to change the departure date, but United wanted to charge \$200.00, plus the difference for a new ticket.

I said no.

I bought a one-way ticket for much less, planning to still use my original return flight. I thought I was genius—until the day before my return flight. Since I didn't take my original flight, United canceled the itinerary. I wasted \$400.00 on another new ticket. Meanwhile, United sold my original seat to someone else, making double the profit!

Something in me snapped.

I felt like starting a national movement to boycott United Airlines. That's how angry I was.

It wasn't just about the money. It was about how little control I had over the situation due to their ridiculous policies. It was exactly how controlling my parents were while growing up and how helpless I felt. The whole reason I saved every dollar was to break free from their control.

A significant moment in my life was when I fell in love with Matthew. He was my Aladdin; he showed me the world and how to order food from McDonald's since my parents never allowed me to do that. I realized how much freedom I lacked.

My parents attempted to separate us by confiscating my cell phone. That didn't work. I started paying my own phone bill and got a second-hand phone. This gave me a taste of freedom that even my parents

couldn't take away from me.

From then on, saving money meant total freedom from my parents. Now that I've moved out, my obsession with saving money is about achieving total freedom in life.

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