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Exclusive interview:
MONEY CHAMP DAPHNE FAN



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MEET THE MONEYCHAMP

- Daphne Fan



Teach them early and children will grow up knowing how to be financially independent. Daphne spends her day sharing what she knows with young ones.

TEXT KATERINA TIAPULA

Do you think you are successful?

It depends on your definition of success. I have had to overcome my own difficulties to get to this point in my life and now I feel I am financially independent. In that area I am successful. But, I feel a need to pass financial skills on to more children and in that area, I am not yet successful. Perhaps, I can say that I am satisfied with my life even though I know that there is more that I want to do. "Success" to me is perseverance - never giving up. One of the quotes I am often reminded of is from Thomas Edison: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

What do you think made you financially independent?

Becoming financially independent is very important to me because I am able to choose to do things that I am truly passionate about and not have to worry about having food on the table and paying the basic bills. I want to be able to be active in my children's lives and fulfill all their needs. They need emotional support, physical support and educational support. They are young now only six and eight and

I want to be there for them. Being financially independent affords me that ability. When I was a corporate employee, I didn't have time for my children or for myself and I feel that I was lost in a way. I am definitely happy with how my life is going now, although I do worry about being able to reach more children to teach them how to be financially savvy.

Has your opinion of success changed over the years?

Yes, in the past it was about winning. I was very competitive and always wanted to be better. I wanted to please my bosses and stand out. It is a hard way to be. Bosses change, times change and eventually my focus changed too but not before I lost a lot.

Today, I may not be earning as much but I am comfortable and ok with myself and my family. I spend time with my children and we work on things together as a family. This is important to me.

When you were in school, what did you think you would be?

I grew up walking directly toward the corporate ladder. In school, there was the path that was set out

and that path went one direction. I was focused and went that way without really considering other options. I just wanted to be the best where I was at then. Everyone just expected me to go that way, my parents, teachers and even friends.

Did you have a passion?

I have always loved children, but in school it was discouraged. They kept saying that there was no way to make enough money as a teacher and not to consider it a viable option. So I shelved my passion for children. It is funny because now I am doing what I want and I am educating children in finances and I find it very rewarding and I make ends meet.

What is the big change in values?

Definitely, my children have had the biggest influence on me. I feel a great need to provide as well as having a balanced life.

What do you stress in the education of your children?

I actually stress the foundation skills. Language and communication skills are vitally important in life. Having the power to communicate really



gives you the edge in any field. I also think that mathematics is important but not the calculations as much as the concepts. That is the reason I put my children in abacus training. Basic foundation skills need to be learned so well that the information is subconscious. We don't work out the actual calculation when someone asks us a multiplication problem. 7×7 for instance is 49. You should not have to do the math each time that you encounter it. You should just know it. Money management skills are the same, if they are learned the right way. I also stress discipline in academics as well as in finances. You know that each person's earning power is different and each person has their own personality which dictates if they save more or spend more. But, if a child follows the steps they will always be safe and financially secure no matter what happens. It takes discipline.

The Ice Cream Lesson

One hot afternoon, when I was with her, I decided to buy an ice-cream. Since she had just used up all her entertainment fund, she cannot "afford" an ice-cream for herself. So, I had an ice-cream myself, and she did not. I was pleased to notice she did not make a fuss because she understood she had only herself to blame for using up her money. What is most satisfying for me is that since the incident, she has made a conscious effort to reserve some amount in all her accounts.

My daughter is a spender, so she tends to spend her money allocated for entertainment. My daughter is using Home Practice Kit level 3 - one level higher than the one introduced in the book, which breaks her income into 4 different accounts that she is learning to manage.





If your child comes home with a grade that is less than desirable, how do you deal with it?

Of course, like every parent, we do our best to avoid this situation as much as possible. But you cannot let the academics be the most important and the only emphasis you have. There are many other parts of a person like their morals, values and their physical being. There are many things to think about and so long as they are not too far from what I expect, then I do not worry. If they need help in a subject, then of course that is what I do but I do not expect them to be, or drive them to be, number one.

In your book, you recommend starting the teaching of finances very early (around 1 and 2) After reading the book myself, I understand the logic in this but at what

age do children start to understand investing?

If they follow the system, the understanding of "investing" and "spending money to make money" actually happens naturally. The first money law is the most important. "Pay yourself first" This pay is 10% of your income that goes into a

retirement fund that is never spent. It must stay with you and that 10% will accumulate over time. A five year old child can understand that. You can take it a step further and step into investing. The hard part is the language of finances. This is

where the board game "Money Champ" comes in handy. They learn the language like they know the chess pieces or the monopoly cards. They learn while they play and have fun. The earlier you start the more embedded the knowledge becomes. I started my children when they were three and five. Now, they look at the prices of things and they think about the value of the item. Their personalities are different. One is more conservative and the other will liberally spend the entertainment money quickly but the money they spend is entertainment and the 10% is always paid.

Do your children work for their spending money?

Yes, my children work for their spending money. It is a carrot that shows them the value of their work. They overcome the dislike of the work and manage through to complete things with that extra motivation.

When my son started abacus class, he really disliked it. But it

“Success to me is perseverance - never giving up.”

was one of the things he did for his money and because he wants to buy certain things, he went through with the class. He disliked it at the beginning but after several months when he had finally mastered some of the basic skills, he commented to

me that it was getting better and that he didn't mind going so much. If he didn't have a reason to keep working maybe he wouldn't have kept at it and mastered the basics like he did.

Teaching children effective money management strategies is important and I hope that more parents step up and help their children while they still can. Once they are adults they have to manage so many things with families, jobs, and unsure markets. It really makes a difference if you know that they can manage and will be alright financially, no matter what happens to them. ☒

BOOTCAMP

We bring the boardgame to real life.
Young participants get to experience making and managing real money.

1 Little entrepreneur

teaching young participants how money can be earned through a simple retail business.

2 Money Management

enforcing the practice of money management using Money Champ's Home Practice Kit

3 Challenge

enjoying a friendly competition on a money game with peers

4 Science/ Art & Craft

teaching young participants to make products that can be sold under the Little Entrepreneur module *(Different training centres offer different subjects. The centre at Bukit Timah Shopping Centre creates ornaments using Science crystalization technique; and the centre at Goldhill Plaza creates art and craft products.)

- This bootcamp only costs \$295, which includes meal, training materials, as well as the one-month lease of the retail space.
- Participants will collect their net profit one month after the bootcamp, when we finalise the sales at the end of the lease.



Daphne Fan & Money Champ

Money Champ is created by the founder of Kids Hub - Daphne Fan - a mother of two pre-schoolers.

After working for twenty years in the corporate world as an employee, Daphne thought she was leading a comfortable "middle class" life with some savings and living from paycheck to paycheck. A turn of events in the family (heavy medical bills for her child) compelled her to find new money management strategies to grow money beyond a regular income. After 2 years of search, she finally found the secret "formula".

Daphne shares these principles and lessons in Money Champ Money Management system. The programme is able to teach young kids as young as 2 years old to master sound money management skills, improve their mathematical and reasoning skills towards money and strategies to grow their money beyond the old "piggybank savings" idea.

Personal Achievement:

- Founder of Money Champ System
- Author of Money Champ Book
- Creator of Money Champ Boardgame & other training products
- Chief Trainer to Money Champ Programs
- Featured in Money Mind, Channel News Asia in April 2011
- Featured in Money & You, The Sunday on 8-May-2011
- Founder of LogisHub, Logistics IT Consultancy
- Master of Business Administration from California State University, Hayward
- Certified Professional Logistician (CPL)
- Bachelor of Computer Engineering from NTU

