



adds up *Women and finances*

ARE MEN AND WOMEN really from different planets? That may never be decided, but they certainly view financial strategies quite differently. According to a recent Meredith study, 68 percent of women interviewed cite financial strain as a major threat to the American family—even more than divorce. Here are five ways women see money differently than men do.

1 ASK MORE QUESTIONS. Women tend to ask

more precise questions. They want and need to know how financial decisions will affect their families: Will there be enough money to send my daughter to the university of her choice? What if one of us gets sick and can't work? What about retirement—will we run out of money?

2 SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP. Women are more willing to admit when they don't have all the answers or lack the technical skills to go it alone. There's less bravado

when seeking and taking advice from an outside source. And women more quickly admit when they need help.

3 COOL UNDER PRESSURE. Women tend to withstand pressure better than men—for years they have been juggling being wives, mothers, and, in many cases professionals. They have withstood the pressures, sorted out the priorities, and maneuvered their way through myriad financial hurdles without losing their

cool. As a result they tend to stick with their strategy.

4 MAKE TOUGH CHOICES. When it comes to caring for aging parents, it's often daughters who unselfishly take on the obligation of caring for mom and dad. As a result they are usually more open to frank conversations exploring their long-term care planning options.

5 LOOK TO THE LONG-TERM. Women worry more than men about running out of money. Consequently they tend to face this issue head on. Essentially they are more open and perhaps more honest about their family's financial situation. As a result they encounter fewer surprises by being more willing to look at the good, bad, and ugly.

Driven by an overwhelming need to feel safe, most women want to discuss all of the financial concerns their families face and ask enough questions to understand the details—even if they are a bit scary. They want to develop a financial plan that supports their desire for security as they define it.

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