

Dinner Table Conversation Starters

Philosophy & Family History

- ❧ *What makes money a good thing or a bad thing?*
- ❧ *Growing up, were our [Mom & Dad's] families well off, poor, or somewhere in the middle? What did our parents teach us about money and wealth-building?*
- ❧ *What money stories did we hear growing up – and did they have more scarcity or abundance overtones?*
- ❧ *How did we [Mom & Dad] get spending money when we were kids/teenagers?*
- ❧ *What is a constrained resource? What makes it constrained?*
 - ❧ *Can you make more money?*
 - ❧ *Can you make more time?*
- ❧ *How does the family look at debt – good, bad, or it depends?*
- ❧ *How important is buying new vs. buying used, and does it depend on the purchase? (cars, clothes, household items, etc.) Why/why not?*
- ❧ *What is the family's plan for funding higher education? Will student loans or scholarships play a role, and how can the kids play a part?*
- ❧ *Should kids have part time jobs during the school year? Why/why not?*
- ❧ *Should kids be able to buy & maintain a car while in High School?*
- ❧ *What role does giving to others play in our family's financial philosophy?*
- ❧ *When you imagine your future, how much wealth do you envision enjoying and how will you spend it?*
- ❧ *[Older kid conversations] Will Mom & Dad leave you anything in their will? Could they? Should they?*

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Income Topics

- ❧ *How do we [Mom & Dad] earn money?*
 - ❧ *What do we do when we go to work?*
 - ❧ *How do we feel about our work?*
 - ❧ *If Mom or Dad were to lose or leave our job [or if a stay-at-home parent were to start working outside the home], what impact would it have on the family, positive and negative?*
- ❧ *What are your [kids'] family responsibilities? How do you help in the kitchen, with cleaning the house, out in the yard, or by taking care of pets?*
- ❧ *How do you want to earn a living when you grow up? [share what the median income is for that job] Discuss pros and cons relative to standard of living that career path will offer vs. the passion & purpose behind the job.*
- ❧ *What can you do to earn money now, in the household or in the neighborhood?*
 - How do you feel about selling your outgrown items at yard sales or online?*
- ❧ *What is the difference between active and passive income? How does the household create passive income?*
- ❧ *Why can't we spend all of our household income?*

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Family Budgets & Spending

- ❧ *What's most important in our family to spend money on?*
- ❧ *What's less important to [each of] you for us to spend money on?*
- ❧ *How much does our family spend on housing (rent/mortgage + utilities) and food (groceries and eating out)? Is this a lot or a little compared to income?*
- ❧ *Describe in great detail the kind of family vacations you enjoy the most, including setting, transportation, lodging, and activities. Which of these aspects is most important, if your budget can't accommodate it all?*
- ❧ *What are our family's savings goals? [short/mid/long term] How do we set aside funds?*
- ❧ *How do we save for emergencies vs. invest for long term goals? What might an emergency look like?*
- ❧ *Does our family have to give money to Uncle Sammy? How does our family think about taxes – are they good or bad (or both or neither) and why?*
- ❧ *What happens if you spend more than you have and can't pay your bills?*

Dinner Table Conversation Starters

Kids & Spending

- ❧ *Do you prefer to spend your own money on things (like toys or electronics) or on activities (like eating out or taking trips)? Why?*
- ❧ *What's the BEST purchase you've ever made with your own money? What's the BEST gift you've ever received – and why?*
- ❧ *What do you wish you could spend more money on?*
- ❧ *Have you bought stuff you later wished you hadn't? What changed your mind?*
- ❧ *Have you ever returned something to a store? How did that feel?*
- ❧ *Is there something BIG you want to save for? How can we make that happen?*
- ❧ *Are the kids allowed to take on debt? If so, under what conditions?*