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Kathy Davis on Flourishing Amid Recession

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Kathy Davis, the [designer and author](#) of *Scatter Joy: Living, Giving and Creating a Life You Love*, says that the toughest times can serve as inspiration for pursuing business dreams. She also shares her own money-saving, and spending, tips.

What gave you the confidence to launch your own brand?

My confidence built up in me slowly over many years. After my divorce, when faced with a tough decision of what to do next in my life, I “gave myself permission” to put my desires to the test. I found through designing greeting cards and gifts I could flourish with creative freedom and the ability to express myself in a way that translated to others. While in those days I didn’t think what I was doing was “launching a brand,” the cumulative efforts of the work I was doing eventually caused me to think more like a brand – another eye-opening realization in my journey!

Many people would like to earn money through their passion, as you did. What advice do you have for them?

Believe in yourself, hone your skills and recognize your strengths, work hard, meet deadlines and persevere, take small steps, and always have a Plan B. Lastly, live and work by the Golden Rule.

You talk about how your brother is good with numbers. When it came to running your business, were you naturally good at the financial part, or how did you teach yourself?

Finance is still not my strength by any means, but I do have good general business instincts. In the formative years of my business, I’d wake up extra early to focus on my [income](#) and

expenditures. I kept careful records and grew slowly and organically. When I could, I hired a bookkeeper. Eventually my brother joined my business to become our finance director. What is key is recognizing those aspects of your business that are not your strengths and entrusting experts to advise in those areas.

Can we apply your tips to living in the moment when worrying about money? What exercise would you recommend?

I think so. Awareness is key. Being aware of how each potential expense affects the big picture is critical. Pennies saved turn into [dollars](#). Yet, in business, you have to be confident enough to invest in your growth. Spending money to [make money](#) is often a necessity.

Your parents learned frugality from the Great Depression. Did you pick up any of their habits?

Absolutely! I'm the "Left-over Queen!" I've learned when eating out to divide my meal to go home with a doggie bag. However, I'm a sucker when it comes to clothes and shoes.

Sometimes, you say a splurge is worth it - for example buying flowers.

Let's face it – it feels good to buy something new for yourself now and then. Flowers may be considered a small luxury since their beauty is fleeting, but the enjoyment they bring for a relatively small investment can pay [dividends](#) to the spirit! Investing a little extra in your well-being always pays off in the long run.

You've experienced two recessions, including this one. Do you have any specific strategies for surviving (and thriving)?

Sometimes we need to hunker down and secure our sails until the storms pass. But, that doesn't mean we stop what we do well, or panic that our returns aren't as great as they once were. Keep putting one foot in front of the other, keep the faith in the big picture and use your strengths wisely. Recognize while the economy isn't as strong as it could be, it may a good time to invest in certain areas. There are always new ways to do things, so think of how you can reinvest your strengths in new ways. Regardless, always look for that silver lining and know that the sun will

eventually shine again.

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