

What does it really mean to be rich?

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When a million dollars isn't enough to make you rich in 2012, perhaps it's time to take another look at what that word really means. An article in the Wall Street Journal, Wealth Report, indicates that to be classified as rich or wealthy today, you need to be worth \$1.4 to \$5million. Interestingly, the same report show that many people always think that if they had twice as much as they do now, they would be rich! The reality for most people (99% of the planet, including myself) is that even with twice the income or assets we have now, we would still be woefully behind the current definition of rich and yet we manage to survive. So I tried to come up with a different view of what being rich means; one that does not include a goal to have or earn a certain amount of money. My new definition is '*having enough money and **time** to do the things I want to do; whilst trying to financially secure my future, for when I can't or **don't want** to work anymore*'. Another reality is that having a goal like 'I want to be rich' or 'I want a million dollars' is a hard thing to achieve. Try to start with small goals and make small changes in you spending habits to reach them. Once you have worked out what being rich means to you, it's time to take a look at how you are going to get there and that means making all of your money work hard for you.

One of the biggest drains on your personal wealth is 'Financial Leakage'. This can be looked at as the portion of your money that you never even get to see, but it drips away slowly and can really hold you back from reaching your goals. Some of the most commonly missed leaks include bank charges, ATM machine charges, interest charges, fees for installment payments, making minimum payments on a debt. Try to identify your own leaks and find ways to stop them. You'll soon find that simple changes can lead to big savings over time. Imagine if you changed your spending habits for a few months and during this time you saved enough money to keep a good minimum balance in your bank account. Now you don't have to pay fees every month just to get at your money. You could then take that extra money and use it pay off a debt more quickly or start saving for something you need.

It's impossible to get away from the fact that we live in a society driven by money, but if we get smarter about how we spend it and value our time as much as the dollar itself, we don't have to be controlled by it. If you are ready to make a change to your financial situation but don't know where to start, free and confidential help is available. Please contact kirsten@caribooliteracy.com or phone and leave a message at 250-392-8161, option 3.