

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Bonnie Koo, MD**

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

Welcome to *The Wealthy Mom MD Podcast*, a podcast for women physicians who want to learn how to live a wealthy life. In this podcast you will learn how to make money work for you, how you can have more of it, and learn the tools to empower you to live a life on purpose. Get ready to up-level your money and your life. I'm your host, Dr. Bonnie Koo.

Hello, hello. So, today's episode, it's been something I've wanted to talk about for a while but I needed some time to sort of marinate in my brain and to figure out how to talk about it simply. And I was recently reminded about this topic when I was coaching someone in my program. And I know this comes up for so many of you, that basically we believe that having a certain amount of money is going to make us feel safe. And I've heard the word secure, but I really want to focus on the word safe today.

And before we dive in I just want to remind y'all that I'm having a retreat in Hawaii this October 10th through 13th, at the Four Seasons Oahu, which is obviously the island of Oahu, which is where Honolulu is. It is not in Honolulu, it is about probably a good 30 to 45 minute drive from Honolulu. It is in a totally different area, not urban like Honolulu, although I love urban things as being a New Yorker for a long time.

And it's in an area called Ko Olina. And it is basically sunny and warm there all year long. Of course it rains occasionally, but I'm digressing a bit here. But Hawaii is known for its micro-climates, meaning there certain areas of the island that rain all the time or just have very different weather. So Ko Olina's micro-climate is pretty much sunny and warm all your long, which is one of the many reasons why I love it.

And so this is a three day retreat with a small group of women. And we are going to coach hard and we are going to really enjoy the luxury of being in Hawaii, not just Hawaii, but being at the Four Seasons. And many of you, I know, have not treated yourself to a stay at the Four Seasons, maybe because of cost. It's not exactly a cheaper place to stay, meaning there's lots of other hotels that are less expensive. And so to get all the details and to claim your spot, go to [wealthymommd.com/retreat](http://wealthymommd.com/retreat).

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

All right, let's talk about creating safety. Now, I want to give you some background before we dive into the money and safety issue. So first, I want to say that feeling safe is a basic human need. And it starts as soon as you're born.

One of the most important things for an infant, for a baby is to feel safe. And studies have also proved how important this is because it helps kids develop, obviously they become adults, to learn how to take risks and to put ourselves out there. And when you don't feel safe, you don't feel secure, it deeply affects us.

Now, I know many of you are parents, this isn't something many of you probably consciously think about. Now, of course, you want to keep your children safe, I know you guys know that. But most of us haven't really thought about how we create safety for our children. And then we become adults and we need to learn how to create safety in ourselves.

And for those of you who had not so great childhoods, maybe traumatic childhoods, maybe broken homes, I want you to take a moment and think about whether you didn't feel safe and secure. I mean, if you grew up in those types of homes, the answer is you didn't feel safe growing up. And because you didn't feel safe, I mean, it really rocks your world as a child. You don't have the emotional capacity to process that.

As children, our families, our home should be a safe space. Now, the reason why I'm talking about safety is because money is also tied to our sense of safety. And many of us have also, you know, believe the opposite, that the lack of money, the thought of losing money as being so unsafe it literally feels like a threat to us.

I don't think we consciously think that but it's automatic that it doesn't feel safe. And it's safer to not put yourself out there, it's safer to not make money mistakes. And when we don't feel safe, we literally are afraid. We have fear. And we give that feeling of fear a lot of credence.

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

We have to learn what fear actually means. Now, unless you're in actual physical danger, which really isn't common in our day and age in our modern world, fear doesn't mean you're actually in physical danger. But when you have fear, that's what it feels like.

There's a saying, or rather an acronym about fear, false evidence appearing real. Now the bad news is that fear will never go away, it's always there. I think of emotions, including fear, as a notification system that's giving us information about something. Now, fear is useful when there is an actual physical threat.

Now I want to go back to the feeling safe part. Now, I talk a lot about thinking, the difference between the prefrontal cortex the primitive brain, the one thing I don't talk about is our nervous system. And most of us have been taught about our nervous system as sort of that automated part of our body.

And we are taught about sympathetic versus parasympathetic. You know, sympathetic is flight or fight, parasympathetic kind of being like the opposite. But there are two other nervous system states that we don't usually talk about, it's freeze and fawn. And I briefly mentioned this in my book, *Defining Wealth For Women*.

But freeze is basically like literally you are frozen and paralyzed. Like that is a thing that you literally cannot control consciously. And it happens, maybe in less than a split second. Your autonomic nervous system literally takes over when there is a real threat to your survival, physical threat. But also nonphysical threats and this is where we can get into trouble.

And fawn is where you try to appease the person threatening you. And so that is, I don't know this for sure so don't quote me on this. But I think this is part of why kidnap victims have that Stockholm Syndrome, because they basically have learned to fawn to protect themselves, okay?

So why am I bringing this up? How does this relate to money? When we've had the type of experience where the lack of money has created unsafety,

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

and a lot of my clients have experienced this, I have as well. Not so much my actual safety but there was definitely lack of money. Anything that created unsafety for you. So you know, broken home, alcoholic mom or dad, sexual abuse in the past, et cetera, it imprints on your nervous system and it becomes an automated response that is not accessible through thought work.

Now, I know a lot of coaches that have taken on additional training to understand the nervous system and how to recognize it. And some of them are actually trained to help you unwind and unlearn what your nervous system has taken on.

There's a book called *The Body Keeps Score*, that's from a trauma, I actually don't know what they're called, but it's by a guy who writes about trauma. I think he has a psychologist background. But nevertheless, I bring up the title of that book because it so underscores when I'm talking about.

The body keeps score, the body never forgets what happened to it even if consciously you might not be thinking about it. And let me just give you a quick illustration because animals in the wild don't carry trauma with them. And they actually talk about how, let's say a deer gets attacked by a lion but they're able to escape. They're not traumatized by that, they literally shake it off physically. And I was reading how that physical shake off is required to kind of get that out of your system so it doesn't stick with you.

And for those doctors listening, I truly feel that we need some trauma informed education in our medical school. And, like I said, I'm not an expert in this but I know that, for example, I'm thinking more like surgeries, surgeries are literally traumatic to the body. And I remember reading about how some patients literally shake in the recovery room. And usually how we "treat" that is by sedating them, and how that really prevents that person from processing that bodily trauma.

And so when you have trauma stored in the body, and let me define trauma by the way, because I think a lot of times when we hear about trauma we're

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

thinking of what they call big T trauma, like getting raped, sexual abuse, that sort of thing.

But there's also little T trauma. And honestly, all trauma means is when something that was too much too soon. Like something happened where you are unable to process it. The measure of the trauma has nothing to do with how it affects you. And I will say by definition when you are a young child, you are not equipped to handle any sort of trauma, even little "trauma." And that includes social trauma where you were outcast.

Now, I don't talk about this a lot but I did not have a great childhood socially. I was not popular, I was made fun of, I was ostracized. And that is, was trauma for me. When I tell people that they usually are surprised, because I don't seem to have a problem socially now. But I will just tell you, honestly, that is still something that gives me some anxiety about the fear of not being accepted and liked.

Now, this is why I think it's so important to talk about this topic. And many of you, I know, have unprocessed trauma from past experiences even if consciously you're like, "Oh, no, I'm fine about that." But like I said, the body keeps score and our nervous system is literally an automated system in our body to keep us safe.

And so if you're having a lot of fear about safety, if you're having a lot of fear about specifically money safety, an intense fear about losing money, I just want to say it's okay, of course you are. And even if you didn't have money trauma in the past, the fear of not having money is so tied to our survival. Like it really makes sense that we're so afraid of losing money.

But what I remind my clients all the time is losing money is only a problem if you never get it back. It's only a problem if that's your forever status. I just want to say any setback, and that includes losing money, it's always temporary. You always are able to get back up and do something about it and create something new, create more money.

## 113: The Truth About Financial Safety

So I hope this was really useful to you. I am learning more about the nervous system. In fact, I'll just tell you real quick, I've talked about how I've done some advanced coach certification that are specifically in the tools I use in my coaching practice, which is thought work, the thinking part of our brain. But what I really want to do next is trauma informed coach certification to really learn about how the nervous system ties in with thought work.

And I don't think I'm necessarily going to have a “trauma” coaching program. And there are trauma coaches out there that really work with clients on that and usually you probably need some therapy as well. But I think of it as an additional tool that's going to help me recognize when someone might need a bit more than just coaching to thrive in money or anything else.

Oh, and the other thing I want to do is I want to learn how to hypnotize people. Like seriously, can you imagine if I can hypnotize people into getting rich? I don't know, I think that would be awesome. I know it sounds weird, but why not? So anyway, I will talk to you next week. Bye.

Hey, if you're ready to create wealth, I want to invite you to join my program, Money For Women Physicians. You'll join a community of like-minded women physicians, who are committed to creating wealth, just head over to [wealthymommd.com/money](http://wealthymommd.com/money) to learn more.