

# E64 Strategies to Save Money on Holiday Gifts

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## SPEAKERS

Terri, Introduction, AD, closing, Kevin, Liz

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- T** Terri 00:00

It's the holiday shopping season and you're likely neck deep in the hustle of picking out the perfect gifts for everyone on your list. But with prices rising across the board, you might be struggling to keep your spending from getting out of control. In this episode, we're going to be sharing a few practical tips and tools to save money on your gifting this year. Stay tuned.
- I** Introduction 00:24

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- L** Liz 00:41

Welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining us for this next episode of Making Money Personal podcast. I'm here with Terri and Kevin.
- T** Terri 00:46

Hello,
- K** Kevin 00:47

Hello.
- L** Liz 00:48

So guys, it's holiday season, right. And we just want to talk a little bit about, you know, some of the things surrounding the holiday season that we all face every year, particularly spending since it's a financial podcast. But some of the stats that I was looking at this year in particular are that Americans are set to spend more on holiday gifts than they did last year. So spending is going up. And that could be for a couple of reasons. It could be due to inflation and rising costs. But we just kinda want to talk a little bit about that. We want to kind of provide some insight for people listening about like some cool little tips or tricks that we all kind of utilize for saving money.

T Terri 01:26

Yeah, well, I just want to go on record and tell you that I've already told my family that we're cutting back. Now I tell them that every single year, and it never happens. So now I kind of feel like I'm the what's that story?

K Kevin 01:41

The Boy Who Cried Wolf?

T Terri 01:42

Yeah.

L Liz 01:45

They stop believing you.

T Terri 01:46

I'm the woman that cries poverty every year and never happens.

K Kevin 01:52

You know what, I wonder. So that's interesting if I could just add a tid bit. I think when it's family, particularly when you have kids, or if you have a spouse or somebody in your significant other like that, that you feel that but then there is that human component that leads you to want to just give

T Terri 02:08

Yes, yeah,

**K** Kevin 02:09  
That makes the restraint so very difficult, because you're looking forward to the joy that they get, or just the joy that you have in picking it out and giving the gift.

**T** Terri 02:20  
Right, right. 100%. So I have a follow up question then. So how do you manage your spending?

**L** Liz 02:28  
Well, I keep track of everything. So I'll either log it in a spreadsheet or you know, old fashioned pen and paper gal over here. Sometimes that too. I see you Kevin, you're shaking your head

**K** Kevin 02:38  
A spreadsheet? Wow.

**L** Liz 02:39  
Excel. Come on, man.

**K** Kevin 02:41  
That's next level.

**L** Liz 02:43  
What are you using like a chisel and a little tablet over there?

**K** Kevin 02:46  
No, no, I don't. I know that we have things like that. I don't know about a checklist on a spreadsheet. But my wife does most of that. So oh,

**L** Liz 02:57  
Okay, so she's using a spreadsheet.

**T** Terri 02:58



Terri 02:59

So here's a follow up question for you, then Kevin. Do you guys discuss what the budget is going to be for Christmas? And then have a list? Well, apparently you don't have a list? Because you're like, I don't?



Kevin 03:11

Well, I do see the list.



Terri 03:13

Oh, okay.



Kevin 03:13

So my wife is good about asking the kids. We have set things like we don't buy for everybody in my family because we would never have money for the rest of our lives because I have a lot of family. So we discussed that kids give us a list. And then we decide what on their list we're going to provide or purchase.



Liz 03:33

Oh, that's nice.



Kevin 03:33

Yeah, based on need versus something fun. So



Terri 03:36

yeah, yep. Good.



Liz 03:38

Well, there was that list. I'm sure you guys have heard of it. And then I'm sure people listening have heard of it. Isn't there like a little rhyme people use like something they need something. They want something? They read something to read? Like there's something right, yeah. There's like some little rhyme people use?



Terri 03:54

Yeah, and if we find it, we'll put it in the show notes.

L Liz 03:57  
Because clearly I didn't know what it was.

K Kevin 03:59  
You know what, though? That's an interesting point that you bring up because I think this is a good segue into one of the first tips that we could suggest is that I don't do that. But my wife's family, there is a Google spreadsheet that we've used for umpteen years where everybody goes on the list, and they suggest a bunch of things and even provide the website where it is. The reason why that's helpful as a tip is because it really does help you budget, or it helps you get your kind of head around what the landscape of gift giving looks like given the particular people that you're intending to purchase for. And I think what I've found to be helpful is that people can tag team the gift. Or, again, just seeing that list laid out allows you to almost like a registry, pick something that's manageable for you, depending on what the arrangement is.

T Terri 04:52  
Oh, that's great. So that's a shared document.

K Kevin 04:54  
Yeah, yeah.

T Terri 04:55  
That's Awesome. I like that.

L Liz 04:56  
So there is a spreadsheet over there.

K Kevin 04:58  
I didn't create it.

L Liz 04:59  
You were giving me so much hate earlier about spreadsheets. And here he says, Oh, we're using a Google doc

**K** Kevin 05:05  
I didn't create it. I just use it.

**L** Liz 05:07  
Got it

**T** Terri 05:08  
You admire it.

**K** Kevin 05:09  
Yeah, I have respect for the spreadsheet

**L** Liz 05:13  
On behalf of all Excel users listening to this podcast.

**T** Terri 05:16  
Yeah including our boss who like if she'll be like she'll she'll review this and be like, I want you to cut that segment out if you start dissing on my spreadsheet,

**K** Kevin 05:27  
I'll just have to use it more so I can excel at it.

**T** Terri 05:31  
Alright, well, Lizzie you mentioned that Americans are spending more on the holiday than ever before. And there are a number of reasons for that. So is everybody did? Did you personally increase your budget for the holiday?

**L** Liz 05:47  
Yeah, I actually did. I mean, not by a lot. So I guess they're saying consumers will increase spending by around 7%. Allocating an average of \$1500 for gifts? So I think last year was a little the average again, the average was around like 1000. So for many people. It's looking like

it's probably going up around \$500. Which is kind of a big jump when you think about it. In terms of spending.

**T** Terri 06:14

Well, if you've gone to the grocery store lately, I mean, you Yeah, who knows why that? That is because everything has gone up? Yep. I personally, every year, I would say that we come in, you know, in the past, we've probably come in between \$1,000 and \$1,500. This year, I'm going to keep it at my existing. And one of the big things that we we've done since the kids were born, is we've taken a trip. And sometimes it's more local, and other times it's away. And I already told them I said this year, this coming year, just I want you to be aware because sometimes I trick them, right? I'm like, oh, we can't afford it. We're not gonna go you don't expect it.

**K** Kevin 07:00

Crying wolf.

**L** Liz 07:01

I was just gonna say that Kevin. I was like, wow, we're bringing this up again aren't we.

**T** Terri 07:05

Oh, my gosh, that is a character flaw.

**K** Kevin 07:07

I don't know, should I believe you when you tell me things?

**L** Liz 07:09

How do we know if we're gonna be able to trust her.

**T** Terri 07:13

Okay, I'm a liar. I'm a liar. But anyway, no, I did. I told him that. I said, Look, I said, I know I've mentioned that in the past, or I've told you that in the past this year, and I'll tell you why. We have to put on a new deck. So a deck. I mean, I'm already looking at for next summer, it's going to be probably about \$8,000. Again, you know, because of the cost of materials that have gone up so much. So I you know, I'm like, we've been putting this off for like two to three years. So I've already established the fact that don't expect the big gift, which is a trip, I just wanted to tell you that that's that was my strategy, you can go to Litchfield, pretty cheap.

L Liz 07:54  
A really, really cheap vacation this year, we're going across town.

K Kevin 07:59  
So can I ask you on the report that you looked up the information that you got does break it down by almost want to say genre but where the increase may be the most?

L Liz 08:09  
Um, let's see.

K Kevin 08:11  
I mean, electronics are always expensive, but

L Liz 08:13  
They do it really just says gifts, travel and entertainment. So I mean, travel is pretty big. The travel boom will continue into winter with travel related spending increasing 12%.

T Terri 08:27  
I wonder if that's just because more people are traveling or if the actual cost?

L Liz 08:31  
That's what I was wondering, too.

T Terri 08:33  
We're starting to especially in New England, we're getting more options on what we'll call discount carriers. Right. So these are, these are carriers, like Spirit or, you know, kind of JetBlue is on the verge of that Avelo Airlines out of you know, they just opened up a new route out of Manchester. So I mean, these are no thrill airlines, like you know, don't expect any type of snack. And it's a terribly cold cabin. The cabin was the last time I flew Avelo it was like it was it was a little bit chilly. But Are seat belts optional? No, safety's important, and they're very particular about that.



K Kevin 09:19

But then there's an upcharge for anything else you want to do. So if you want to just fly quick and easy. Then it's the ticket. But if you need to check a bag or whatever, then there's up charges, but that's Yeah, yeah. Okay.

T Terri 09:32

100%.

L Liz 09:32

Yeah, no, no specification and where it's all broken down. I think it's just overall spending holiday related spending.

K Kevin 09:38

Got it.

L Liz 09:38

Yeah.

T Terri 09:39

The other thing that's on the rise is fraud around holidays. Yeah. So do you all have a fraud protection plan?

K Kevin 09:54

Yeah, several actually.

T Terri 09:56

Excellent. multiple layers.

K Kevin 09:58

Multiple layers. Certainly I would recommend for our listeners who are TCU members that you ensure that you have Better Checking, so that you have the fraud prevention and identity monitoring. Because that's just an extra layer in case someone is trying to do some loan

spending on your behalf. But with your membership, obviously, with your debit card, most institutions, I would think have some sort of fraud related services with their debit card. Yeah, but I know for my credit card, I have that sort of thing.

**T** Terri 10:35

And alerts on all that other good stuff.

**L** Liz 10:37

Oh, yeah, I always have, I have alerts on pretty much all my cards. So anytime I charge it, I get a notification that something's been charged. So it's super helpful to be aware of, like, if I see something I don't recognize, then I can go investigate, you know, but most of the time, I know what they are. Because I'd be like, Oh, by Dunkin's coffee, and then I get the notification immediately, oh, this much was spent at Dunkin's. So I know. So yeah, definitely paying attention to the cards. And you mentioned the identity protection through Better Checking, they do the card registration as well. So if you're someone who's probably like most of us, we're buying our gifts on credit cards, credit and debit cards. So you know, all of those cards are out there like that card information is out there. And, you know, due to breaches and hacks and all kinds of other reasons they can, people can come in, obviously steal that information. So you want to make sure your cards are registered. So if something does happen, God forbid, you can easily get it remedied through the service.

**K** Kevin 11:29

Yeah. And I like that you mentioned notifications, because that's a recommendation as well is that I don't know how extensively people use the notifications that their online banking comes with so that they get just general notifications.

**L** Liz 11:41

Oh, yeah.

**K** Kevin 11:42

Because nowadays, you can make them a bit more detailed than they might have been in the beginning where it was kind of generic like if it's over \$100. Now you can really set it if there's a withdrawal for like over \$10 or even \$1 so that you're always getting a notification. So those are helpful because it allows you to discern or to be able to differentiate between stuff that you recognize and stuff that you don't.

**T** Terri 12:04

And you can set those parameters within online banking?

K Kevin 12:08  
Yes.

T Terri 12:09  
That's good to know.

L Liz 12:10  
Another fraud aspect that just came to my head was so we talked about like, like protecting ourselves from like identity theft. But I think another aspect of fraud particularly around the holidays is be aware of like misleading deals, because I can imagine a lot of you know, thieves will probably try to like mask this really appealing holiday deal. You know,

T Terri 12:34  
especially online,

L Liz 12:35  
Exactly. Online, on social media, you know, just be extra aware of that, like, if they're offering the newest iPhone for, you know, an insanely cheap price. Maybe you should think twice before clicking on any of those. So just being aware of emails you may get that might seem like a too good to be true holiday offer is just another thing to keep in mind.

T Terri 12:55  
Yeah, I did buy into that a couple of years ago, I was I forget what I was looking at. It was electronic related. And I was on eBay. And and I purchased something and even inside of me intuitively, I was like, Ooh, this is probably too good to be true. And, you know, I paid through PayPal. And shortly after, I would say probably within like an hour Pay Pal came back and said, Do you really I mean, I'm paraphrasing, but it was like, it was an alert, like, do you really want to pay this person? And so I was like, I processed the payment. And then there were just like a bunch of red flags that came up. But I will say this PayPal stood by their protection plan. And they reimbursed me and then they went after the seller who was a fraud. So good. But yeah, I mean, you know, reputable, reputable companies. You know, that's who you should be dealing with for sure. So, absolutely. 100%.

K Kevin 14:03  
Yeah, that's good. I would almost if you're doing your spending through cash or your debit ..

card, particularly really your debit card, credit cards seem to have that stuff in hand pretty well, with fraud prevention and stuff, they make it a bit I feel like it's easier to kind of get around that if there is an issue with fraud but with your debit cards, because financial institutions have guidelines and rules they have to follow for disputes and things I would almost recommend although maybe I have two different checking accounts and I have one that I use for debits and one I use for writing checks and it's almost a way and I've seen a number of people do that so that you keep your debit usage away from say your main checking accounts so that if there's an issue with fraud it doesn't affect your main account that you pay your car or your mortgage or your rent out of.

**T** Terri 14:54

Yeah, that's good. That's good.

**K** Kevin 14:56

It's can be easily be shut down and it doesn't affect

**T** Terri 14:59

Right that's, that's being prepared for sure. Yeah, like that. That's great.

**L** Liz 15:05

At this time, we're going to take a really quick break. And then we're going to bring our next topic in which is going to talk about holiday tips and ways to save this season. We'll be right back.

**A** AD 15:16

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**L** Liz 15:50

Welcome back. We're talking about holiday money saving tips and ways to kind of keep ourselves from overspending during the holidays. So do any of you guys have any particular holiday saving tips that you'd like to share.

K

Kevin 16:05

Well the first one that popped up on my mind was bundle shipping. Like when you order things through Amazon in particular, you can sometimes bundle them the the items together so that you're saving money on shipping or even saving Amazon money, I suppose maybe that comes back to you or working with your family to order things together so that you're saving on shipping?

L

Liz 16:27

That's a great idea. Yeah, Amazon, is that where they say they'll give you like a \$2 credit or something like that? If you decide to have it shipped in one box? Is that we're referring to okay, because I've been trying to utilize that more. It doesn't always apply to my order but like when it does I usually select Yeah, I'll save a couple bucks. Right?

K

Kevin 16:35

Yeah. Yeah, I know, with Prime you might get free shipping, but sometimes not. infrequently, but sometimes not. So I've found that when I'm ordering things, particularly through Amazon and other places, if you can bundle as much together as possible, then it saves you on shipping.

T

Terri 17:02

That's good. Yeah. I know, some local restaurants actually have bonus, almost like bonus buys or something like that, for their gift cards. So especially, I'm not going to mention any names. But you know, for the for the restaurants that have there's an affiliation. And again, in Nashua, they're pretty well known. But if you buy a gift card, let's say a \$25 gift card, then you get like a \$5 bonus or a \$10 bonus, and it's separate from your gift card. So what's cool about that is that it's comes back to you like, you know, you could give the additional \$5 or \$10. Or you can keep it for yourself. So it's kind of like a little nice thing.

K

Kevin 17:54

Yeah, that's one of the things I had. I know, in particular, that Target does that, particularly around the holidays, and maybe all year I don't shop at Target very much. But I know that around the holidays in particular, if you spend like \$50 or \$100, they'll give you a five or \$10 gift card in return. So yeah,

L


Liz 18:10


That's helpful. That's one way to get some money back. Yeah, one of the things that I was looking up is utilizing some of the new apps out there, and even AI this time of year. There's like a lot of shopping apps now that people are starting to use more which are either like price comparison tools, they allow you to bargain shop. So they'll either give you notifications when


like a price drop has occurred. One of them is actually the Amazon app, I didn't know this. But like you can if you're in a store, you can scan the item through the Amazon App, and Amazon will tell you what the price is on Amazon. So you can compare right in store. Which I was like, wow, that's one way to kind of look at the items and see because for me if I'm out shopping, sometimes I do wonder like is this cheaper somewhere else. So I usually pop on my phone to check the price. Or I either won't buy it and I'll do some research later on it. But there are tools out there that you can use to compare either in person or you can set up notices. So that way it will let you know if that item is cheaper. So if there's something in particular you're looking to buy, put it in a list or put it in an app, and then maybe you'll get some feedback as to like a price drop save you some money.

 Kevin 19:19  
Or a spreadsheet

 Liz 19:20  
or spreadsheet.

 Kevin 19:22  
Oh, that's a good tip. I had forgotten about that. Yeah, you can either use those things. Yep. Great one. Okay,

 Terri 19:29  
I'm gonna go out on a limb and I and I'm sure the only person in my family who actually will listen to this podcast is my husband. And he probably already knows that I do this. Do you all ever give secondhand gifts? And here, let me let me and I'm not let me be a little bit more clear. So we go to thrift stores throughout the year my kids have I have like, taught them how to yard sale effectively since from the time they were little, and we're now all thrifters, and now it's become kind of like a new thing, right? It's very trendy to go to a thrift store for stuff, and I will buy stuff at a thrift store, as opposed to something new for Christmas. If it's really like really good condition, right? I mean, and usually when I buy stuff at thrift stores, it's gonna be pretty good. You know, nothing pilly right, like knows, no pilly sweaters or something like that. But do you all do that?

 Kevin 20:32  
I don't know if I have done that to present, but I can see the value in that. And I can say that in the future I could see doing something like that. Because I think that's very, very smart. And I see again, no pun, I see the value in that. That's a really good. Yeah, yeah,

 Liz 20:51



Liz 20:51

I've never done that. But I've not considered it. So it is something worth considering.



Terri 20:56

I bought this happened a couple of years ago. So on Christmas Eve, we allow the kids to open up a present and I really try to restrain myself from guiding them on which present it should be. So Cameron, my oldest daughter, who was like, again, both of my daughters really like the thrift, you know, going thrifting and stuff like that. But I bought her a really nice secondhand jacket, it looks so it looked like it looked brand new at a local thrift store in Amherst. And if you are from New England, especially New Hampshire, you know that the Amherst community is very well off. So this was a nice jacket. It was a North Face jacket. But of course, when you, with a second hand, you know, it doesn't come with all of the clear wrapping and it looks, the packages look a little different, right? I should invest actually in one of those wrapping things. So, but anyway, so Christmas Eve, we're all sitting down. They're opening up their present and we're about to go over to my in-law's house for Christmas Eve party. So the girls are pretty excited. And Cameron unwraps her present. And it's the second hand jacket that I had bought. And so she opens it up and she looks she looks at me, she goes, are all my gifts gonna be second hand this year? I was like, No, I mean, it ended up having that was the only one but I kind of like, you know, she was like, this is the first one, they all better not be like second hand.



Liz 22:35

She's like this isn't a good sign.



Kevin 22:37

So in changing my answer, I have not shopped for other people at the secondhand store, particularly the one that you referenced, because I know which one there's really only one in Amherst. But I've gone there numerous times for myself.



Terri 22:53

It's great store,



Kevin 22:53

And I've found lots of amazing things. Because some thrift stores are more, I wouldn't say high end, but they make sure that the quality of the stuff they're selling is I found stuff still with the tags on it. So just because it's in a thrift store, it is going to save you and this one will downgrade the price the longer it's in the store. So after like three months, I bought something for six bucks that was originally would have been probably \$50.



Terri 23:25

Okay. Kev, like, I have to ask, Did you keep going in the store and hiding it?

K

Kevin 23:30

No, absolutely not.

T

Terri 23:33

Kevin goes in there like 18 times over a two month period just waiting to get the price down

L

Liz 23:39

Really drive that price into the ground.

T

Terri 23:42

There's a little secret stash for you.

K

Kevin 23:44

Yeah. Yeah. No, I didn't do that. Actually, I haven't been there in a while. So I actually went in there for work and not for personal

T

Terri 23:53

That is a good store. Yeah. So it is and then the other thing too, I'll be honest, like, if I'm looking for something big. You know, Bill and I, my husband and I always look at Facebook Marketplace for large items, like whether it's a grill or lawnmower or you know, whatever. And I know, it's a little bit outside of like, what a traditional Christmas present would be. But if you really want to save a ton of money, you know, Facebook Marketplace is always a good and I and again, my daughter, one of my daughters wants a like a camel trench coat type of thing or whatever. Yeah, you know, we were at the mall a couple of days ago. And it's like \$200.

L

Liz 24:36

Yeah, those are expensive.

T

Terri 24:37

Very expensive. I mean, it's a beautiful long wool coat and I get it, but I'm like you know what, I'm gonna troll Facebook Marketplace for a few days before I actually like lay out \$200 for a



coat that she may or may not wear right, you know, let's be real.

L Liz 24:51

Do you ever check Poshmark? Yeah,

T Terri 24:55

I don't have an account on Poshmark I really should Lizzie. I bought things from that site before and it is good because the sellers, they know what they have. And the prices are usually fair. And you get you get good quality because you kind of you know, the brands you're buying. But if you're looking for something specific like that, try Poshmark. And you might find something. That's a good idea.

K Kevin 25:15

Can I ask you a question now? since we're doing the money saving tips is what what do you think about alternative gifts? Like making something or cooking for somebody, instead of purchasing a gift? I know it still costs money. But do you ever do that sort of thing? Or when it comes to saving? Well, no, I'll just leave it at that.

L Liz 25:36

I love those. I love those kinds of gifts. I like making gifts, and I like receiving homemade gifts. Some people in my life not so much. They don't really like homemade gifts, which kind of like annoys me. But I will say one thing that I did last year was I made a card for my dad, because my dad that I mean, he doesn't really need anything, you know? And I was like, What can I give him that he might enjoy. And he loves going to breakfast. So what I did is I made a card with 12 different restaurants on it. And what I did is you can buy these little scratch off stickers online. So like like a scratch ticket, right? So I put over each restaurant, I put a little scratch off sticker. So I gave him this card and it was 12 breakfasts on me. So throughout the year, he can scratch off one of those little scratch marks and reveal a restaurant and I take him to breakfast.

K Kevin 26:30

Oh, that is awesome.

L Liz 26:31

And he loves it. He loves that card.

T Terri 26:34

I want one of those cards. Lizzie that is a terrific idea.

L Liz 26:40

Yeah. And he liked it so much. He had me make one for his friend. You know, whatever they wanted to do. And he's happened to be restaurants too, because they like to go out to lunch and breakfast and stuff as friends. So he had me make him one for his birthday.

K Kevin 26:55

One of the things we did in my family as a, this isn't a made gift it was part of it is that we picked, this is my wife's side of the family, we picked somebody and then we made a ornament for them. And just kind of I think it was out of wood or something, you just had to be creative and think about the person and make an ornament for them. And then the other thing we tend to do more than anything is just stick to stockings. So the stockings become a big deal as well versus because my wife's family's like a third of the size of mine. But we don't, we don't buy gifts for all of them. We try to just choose our parents, but the stockings themselves, we all purchase something. So they're a bit smaller, and stuff that'll fit in a stocking. But it also is pretty cool.

L Liz 27:42

Yeah, I love that

T Terri 27:43

That is a great idea. I will say stocking stuffers are huge in my family. And they don't need to be as big. I mean, I think they should be a big deal. You should put a lot of thought into what goes in your stocking. But for us Kevin, it's like a \$200 situation like and, and you can go to Dollar Tree, you can go to Five Below, you know what I mean? There are areas that, you know, nice little stocking stuffers that you know, if you just take a little extra time to plan, you know that it doesn't have to be that expensive, honestly.

K Kevin 28:18

Yeah, true. Very true.

T Terri 28:19

But I love the idea about both of those ideas. I think those are great. And I will say you know, we we were talking a little bit before we actually turned the mics on. And, you know, I think that it's okay. It's actually more than okay, that if you're trying to stick to a budget, and you're buying for large families outside of your immediate family, like and this is kind of a little bit I want to say if you know if you're making a lot of money and you're single it's a little bit easier

to buy for everybody but at the same time. You know, you you put that expectation on others in your family that say Oh, with and we talked about this Kev, right? So if you buy for me than I feel obligated to buy for you, right? It's okay to have those conversations. Let's say you don't have to buy me anything or let's agree not to buy anything. Let's agree to go out to maybe out for coffee. And instead you buy my coffee, I'll buy yours or whatever. Like you know something ridiculous like that.

**K** Kevin 29:22

Yes. You know what's interesting about that is because if you bought me a gift, wink wink

**T** Terri 29:27

Oh I saw that, I thought it was a little weird, but go ahead.

**K** Kevin 29:30

That's because I can't wink.

**T** Terri 29:33

You have to say wink wink.

**K** Kevin 29:37

It's like explaining my jokes. You know that I know if you bought me a gift, we know each other well enough in and Liz you're the same way that we know we don't have to have that conversation. Like it's unspoken that you know that if I bought you a gift you wouldn't have to and I wouldn't think of it like whoa, Terri didn't give me a gift. But yet sometimes there's that internal struggle that we have where you feel, as you already said, obligated to do that, where, I don't know, I don't know how you overcome that other than just because if I gave you a gift, I wouldn't expect one in return. Because there is the enjoyment of giving the gift to somebody. So,

**T** Terri 30:18

I feel like again, I mean, you know, just to sum up, because I know that we're probably getting a little bit close to time here. But you know, it's so important to have a budget, right? So go into this holiday planning season with a budget in mind and don't overextend yourself. I feel like that, that's so important, you know, just for your own sanity's sake. And then, you know, if you do, if your shopping list is well beyond what you anticipate, you know, you have to cut back. But have those frank conversations, whether it's with your own children, or with, you know, extended family members let's say, you know, we're, let's just do with something a little bit different. And that was a conversation when, early on, in my marriage, my brother is seven

years younger than I am, but he got married young as well. So we were constantly, you know, buying for one another, and then but as two young families, my sister in law said, Hey, can we not do this anymore? Let's just focus on your parents and stop buying for one another. And I was like, that sounds like a great idea. So now, I really I mean, it's reduced a lot. So and I will say that for Bill's side of the family, he has seven siblings, and we don't buy for everybody in their family. But we all get together on Christmas Eve so we do buy something very, very small, or it's a homemade gift for the sibling only. You know, and sometimes I just go to like, I'll go to Hobby Lobby, especially on a good day at Hobby Lobby when everything is like 50% off. And that's a lot. Like I mean, they they have a lot of good sales over there. Yeah. Um, so.

**K** Kevin 32:06

Yeah, so that's a great idea, too. And that could be another excuse me, another money saving tip. Where if you do have a larger family, because I have six is that you could agree to almost do a fun thing like a Yankee swap kind of thing with gifts so that you're purchasing just one gift but yet everybody is receiving something as in you can make it fun. I mean, you can do hide and seek or whatever you want to do some crazy, weird idea, or really out of the box, make a spreadsheet.

**I** Introduction 32:38

There he goes again,

**T** Terri 32:39

Or do a presentation at the Christmas party on your spreadsheet,

**K** Kevin 32:44

there you go,

**T** Terri 32:44

and your Christmas buying strategies, how you can save next year, guys.

**K** Kevin 32:50

That one was for you Becky.

**T** Terri 32:51

the gift that keeps on giving. Becky's like, why are you dissing my spreadsheet?

L Liz 33:03

Okay, cool. Well, there was one last money saving tip that we did want to share. And that was kind of the ability to save money while you're spending. So a lot of times people utilize purchase rewards tools. Or if you have a particular like sometimes store cards will do this, where if you have a loyalty program, any dollar you spend, you get a percentage back or something like that. Credit cards offer some of these deals. So there's like a lot of ways you can kind of like, utilize the tools to your advantage and kind of get a little bit of money back when you're spending it. Almost like your your gift card what you were talking about with Target card or any of those gift certificates. Yeah, yeah. So there's a lot of cool savings out there too, that you can kind of like find a way to minimize the dollar amount that you're spending.

T Terri 33:52

I know that we were talking about that a little bit before Lizzie is that we do have that available within our own debit card, right?

L Liz 34:02

Yes, yes, we do.

T Terri 34:03

We have the purchase rewards. You can go in to activate any of those rewards through your online or mobile banking, right. And then you just activate the the reward and then when you you use it more than I do. So when you buy something from the retailer. Then that's when you get your discount or it comes back to you in your debit.

L Liz 34:26

Yeah, it'll come back to you in your account. So it'll show up in your purchase rewards balance and stuff. But there's a lot of like vendors that you can search through for everything from you can buy for yourself, or you can buy for others whether you want. Like there's those like the meal plans, like a meal kit, like they have some of those companies in there.

K Kevin 34:41

Like HelloFresh

L Liz 34:48

Yeah, kinda like that. Yeah. So they got some of those kinds of things. If you want to give like wine, they have a lot of like wine companies. So like you can purchase wine and maybe give

some bottles to your friends or drink yourself

**T** Terri 35:01

Like ten bottles for yourself.

**L** Liz 35:03

But again, like if you're gonna buy these kinds of gifts, utilize your debit card and get some cash back for it. So that's another way that you can save.

**K** Kevin 35:12

And that's an all year thing.

**L** Liz 35:13

Yeah,

**K** Kevin 35:14

Yeah, it's not just for around the holidays. Yeah, it's an all year thing and the cool thing that I appreciate that you mentioned the searching through, but sometimes they'll suggest merchants for the stuff that you're already purchasing.

**T** Terri 35:27

Right? Yeah.

**L** Liz 35:30

So if you're looking for something in particular, there'll be like, Hey,

**K** Kevin 35:32

Have you considered

**L** Liz 35:34

Yeah, exactly.

**T** Terri 35:35

So we have that purchase rewards program. But, you know, in full disclosure, you know, a lot of other credit unions and I'm sure banks have the same thing. So, you know, whether you bank with us or bank with an, you know, another financial institution, just look online, or like, look inside online banking, or your mobile banking app, for anything that says purchase rewards or something like that.

**L** Liz 35:59

Yep. And again, if you're going to be utilizing those cards anyway, or those payment tools anyway, you might as well get something back for it. So look into all of those look, look into your, you know, collection and see what you can find, because you might you might find some good savings there.

**K** Kevin 36:14

Yeah, very true.

**L** Liz 36:15

Well, I guess we're out of time. But, Kevin, you want to close this out?

**K** Kevin 36:18

Absolutely. I'll close out with one quick question. Fruit in the stocking or no?

**L** Liz 36:24

I would say no.

**T** Terri 36:26

Well, it depends on the fruit, right. Not a banana. and not a strawberry.

**K** Kevin 36:31

No. So I should clarify. And we're ending apple or orange? or a pear?

**T** Terri 36:38



Terri 36:36

A pear is a little like, but I don't know about pears because they get mushy. Well, what about you?



Kevin 36:45

Usually it's an orange because it fits in the bottom easy, and it's got the tough skin on it. My good. All right. Nice. That's it for this segment. Segment of an orange.



Terri 36:59

Alright, I think that's about it. Right? We thank you all for joining us and listening today. We hope that your holiday shopping is pleasurable, and that we've shared some tips that might actually save you some money this year. So thanks for listening, everybody. Take care. Bye.



Liz 37:17

Bye.



Kevin 37:17

Bye.



closing 37:18

That wraps up this episode of The Making Money Personal podcast. If you've enjoyed today's show, we would love to hear from you email your thoughts about this show or any other ideas at [tcupodcast@trianglecu.org](mailto:tcupodcast@trianglecu.org). Thank you to all of our subscribers and if you haven't yet, please hit that subscribe button wherever you listen to podcasts so you don't miss out on any new episodes or money tips. Thank you for listening and have a great day.