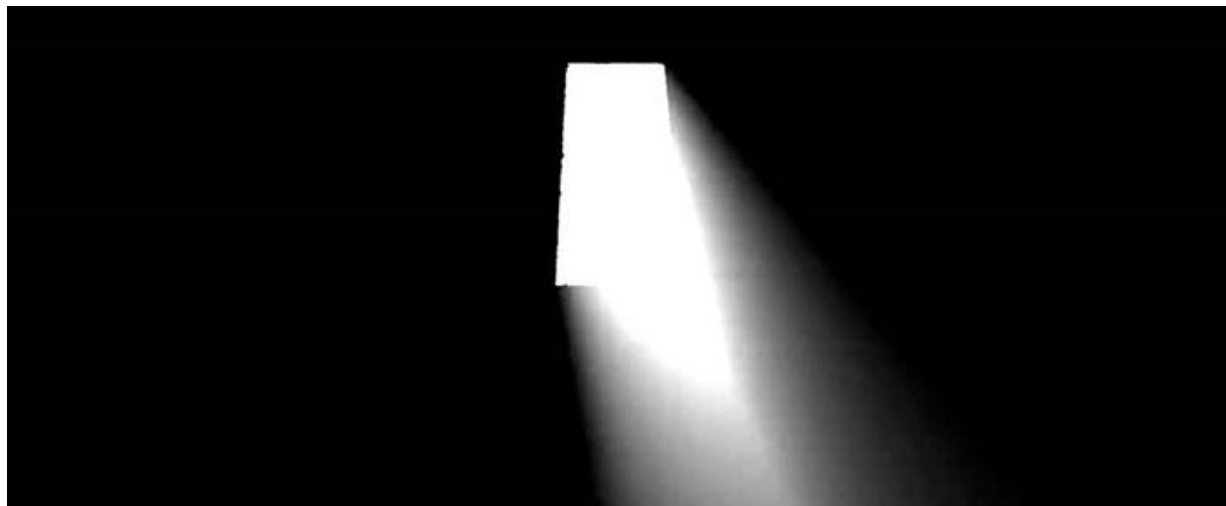


FROM THE ARCHIVES: WILL'S FIRST BLOG

I dug into some of my old blog posts recently, to get inspiration and avoid repeating myself, which is happening more frequently these days, just ask my family! It's very satisfying to revisit these and I decided to share again in case you missed it the first go around.

Peace,
Will



In the Shadow of Money

First Published: April 29, 2021

I was a young English major in college, and I once told myself, "Maybe I will find a muse around me and she and I will write a famous American novel!" I wasn't exactly sure where muses come from, so to that end I took a creative writing class from an author who once won the National Book Award. I thought it would be a great opportunity to launch my new career and he and I would connect deeply (that's what great writers who found their muses do I thought) and he would then launch me into a similar writing path as him...done. Well, after submitting my first manuscript, several weeks later I was set to meet with him in an old academic building that had his office at the very top. It was a 150-year-old structure that was beautiful with its traditional formality.

I immediately felt smarter when I walked in old Engel Hall. His office was a dusty unwelcoming attic and that's being generous. In retrospect, maybe it was a belfry; if I actually knew what a belfry was. The room was small and dark. I made my way to meet him but back in my college basketball days as I entered his hideaway office I could barely fit through the tiny door and all I saw as I peeked from under the door frame was a skinny distinguished writer sitting in his stiff upholstered office chair and waiting for me to enter. I looked and right across from him was a short metal chair as basic as a rusty hammer – my chair. He seemed quite cold; I thought it was just my nerves. He had a dimly lit floor lamp and it had way more warmth than his face did as we locked eyes. I shrugged it off and thought, "Well he just wants to jump right in and start publishing." He handed me the document and the first comment I saw was "so many, many words flopping around like wet fish!" A few pages later a softer critique said, "your writing makes my teeth hurt". Well, I finished that meeting and quickly dropped my idea of author stardom and realized I am no writer. So, as I walked back to my dorm, I daydreamed about becoming a Rock 'N' Roll star just to temporarily heal my bruised ego. (More on that later.)

So, I never published a great American novel. Now, as a way to overcome that long ago failure I am going to write blogs instead (in our current world a novel and a blog are almost the same thing – right?!). In these upcoming blog posts, I am going to share some of my perspectives on money and the impact of it within my life. The great part about blogs and the internet in general is you really don't have to write well to post something. You just have to be opinionated and if nobody reads them it really doesn't matter! However, I am hopeful that you might connect with some of the future material.

I'll begin my first shared lesson in this inaugural blog with a question I heard right when I started this financial planning career in 2007. It was in a training session and the suggestion was to ask prospective clients a single question when you are getting to know them, "What was money like for you when you were growing up?" I connected with that question in a meaningful way and started using it right away. I heard some amazing views and more often than not folks acknowledged that the shadow of money from their young lives still loomed over them as adults – for better or worse. In my case, my mother and father have left a large imprint on my money story and this is where my future writings will start. After I complete the story of my money life with my parents, I will set the stage of the light and dark part of money from my life within some of the major events we all share. For example, college, first car, first job, marriage, children, career, travel, starting a business and even having fun all have finances directly connected to them. These life events can be both joyful and painful, clear, and confusing, successful and broken. I am anxious to share my path within these milestones and both the light and dark feelings connected to these money events. I think this combination of both light and dark informs the essence of how I approach financial planning and helping others.

I want to leave you with one of my favorite things – a great song. If you look hard enough into this song you can hear the songwriter daydream about doing something else and in another place. My guess is he wasn't thinking about money when he created it but every time I hear this song I think, "That's really cool... how the hell would one pay for that in real life?" (my wife and kids hate when I ruin things with that question... I can't help it!)

[Watch and listen here.](#)



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