Living in a Consumer Society

The amount of money that you make does have an influence on your overall happiness, but the way that you choose to spend that money has been shown to have a bigger impact. We live in a society that believes that more is more. People are constantly buying bigger and better things and we feel pressure to keep up.

**Impulse Buying**

Many of us purchase items without considering the consequences of that purchase. Impulse buying can be related to anxiety or unhappiness and being aware of these feelings when we get to make purchases can be helpful in controlling those impulses and giving into the temptation of the society that we live in. With time, the joy of purchasing a new item fades and we look for ways to feel that joy again including making our next big purchase.

**What Motivates Impulse Buying?**

**Living in the Moment vs. Saving for Later**

We've all heard the dangers of living beyond one's means and spending more than you can afford, but it is also possible to become too frugal. A growing numbers of Americans are said to have been saving all their money for long-term financial goals and avoiding any kind of purchase that might be viewed as impulsive or wasteful. Normally, it's really good to have this kind of discipline, but some researchers believe that our happiness depends on splurging every once in a while as well. Studies have shown that "oversaving" could lead to increased regret later in life, when one looks back at all the opportunities they may have missed.

**Finding the Balance**

The challenge of living in our consumer society is finding that balance between impulse spending and spending enough to keep yourself happy and avoid regret later in life. One way to do this is to be aware of the emotional investment that you have in the purchases that you make. How will this purchase make you feel in the long and short-term?

Planning and saving for the future is important, but it's okay to stray from our budget every once
in and while to give us the satisfaction of the life experiences and opportunities that we have because of our hard work.

Want more info? Check out these articles:

- **Living in a Consumer Society**
- **Consumption and the Consumer Society**
- **Consumed by Our Consumer Society**