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# They want it all — and now they have a plan

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By: Radhika Panjwani

**January 11, 2008 02:09 PM** - It was all about health, wealth and happiness. *Empowering Women*, a speaker series organized by Sun Life Financial that was held yesterday at the Living Arts Centre, offered more than 300 women strategies to achieve physical, financial and emotional well-being.

The session featured three speakers — Sherry Torkos, a health and nutrition specialist, Kelley Keehn, a financial expert and Linda Edgecombe, a life perspective specialist — all of whom offered insights for women to kick-start the new year with a commitment to improving their lives.

"Everyone is looking for one answer," Keehn said. "Money is a lot like weight-loss - eat less, exercise more, same thing with money; save more, spend less than you make."

"But we're saving less than we ever have; there's something psychological going on that we've to address," she continued. "Why do we overspend? What I talk about is the psychology of money — how we think, feel and our beliefs about money." Keehn said women feel more guilty about spending compared to men, and she demonstrated it by asking the audience if they felt any guilt over any recent purchases. The majority of women admitted they did.

She suggests anybody suffering from a "financial hangover" from overspending during the holidays ask themselves what their attitude to money is.

Edgecombe, through humour, wit and wisdom, urged women to do something new and different to empower their lives. Edgecombe's job as a life perspective specialist includes motivating people into taking a hard look at their lives.

"If you've been saying the same story for 20 years, sisters, it is time to create a new story," Edgecombe told the audience. "Life is not about the stuff you have, it is about the story you have to tell."

"If I have been given any gift in the world, it would be that I look for the quirky," she continued. "All of us have good times and tough times, and even in the tough times, we've to shift the perspective and look at the big picture."

Pharmacist, author and certified fitness instructor Torkos' prescription for a healthy life includes proper nutrition, exercising, adequate sleep and stress management.

"As a traditionally-trained pharmacist with a complementary background in natural health, nutrition and fitness, my goal is to bridge the gap between the two worlds and in doing so, help people along their journey to optimal health," Torkos said.




Liz Campbell, director of marketing for Sun Life Financial, wanted to deliver the message of overall health and well being.

"We're interested in women as a market," said Campbell. "Women play a very important role in financial decisions. We're interested in a woman's financial and physical health and we know how important it is to them."

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Staff photo by Nikki Wesley  
 Kelley Keehn was talking money and personal finances during the Empowering Women Speaker Series last night at the Living Arts Centre.

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