Our perception of money changes as we grow up. When we were children, money bought us candy. As adults, money still buys us candy ... but it also buys us other things, like our education.

For many, university is the first time we have to start managing our own money. But aside from purchasing the essentials like rent and food, we now have the opportunity to buy what we want, when we want it. For some, the freedom to purchase anything at any time can cause their finances to spiral out of control. Alternatively, others will stretch their money as thin as possible in an attempt to meet payment deadlines. Neither of these scenarios present an ideal financial situation, and both can have the same, discomforting effect - financial stress.

Financial stress is all too prevalent among post-secondary students, which leads many to beg the question: “what can we do to end this stress?” My answer? Education.

During our time at McMaster, we will become experts in our fields of study. However, it is uncommon for a student to become financially literate. In fact, a recent study showed that 84% of post-secondary students wished they were better educated in financial management after graduation. In an effort to deliver this type of education, the McMaster Students Union (MSU) has partnered with the Student Success Centre to bring you Dollar Daze Week, running from October 6 - October 10, 2014. During this week, students will have the opportunity to attend free workshops on a variety of topics ranging from credit card use, to financial planning, and more. On October 7, we are excited to welcome former Dragon’s Den star Bruce Croxon, along with Kevin Conchran from Enriched Academy, to TwelvEighty to tell you their secrets for money management and entrepreneurial success. That’s right, you have the opportunity to learn financial management skills from a self-made millionaire.

Financial management skills are some of the most important skills a student can learn during their post-secondary experience. At university we are often faced with stress caused by schoolwork and our personal lives. While we all deal with stress in different ways, financial stress is something that can be avoided entirely. It is my hope that Dollar Daze Week will encourage everyone to look at their financial habits a little more closely; eventually making financial stress a thing of the past.