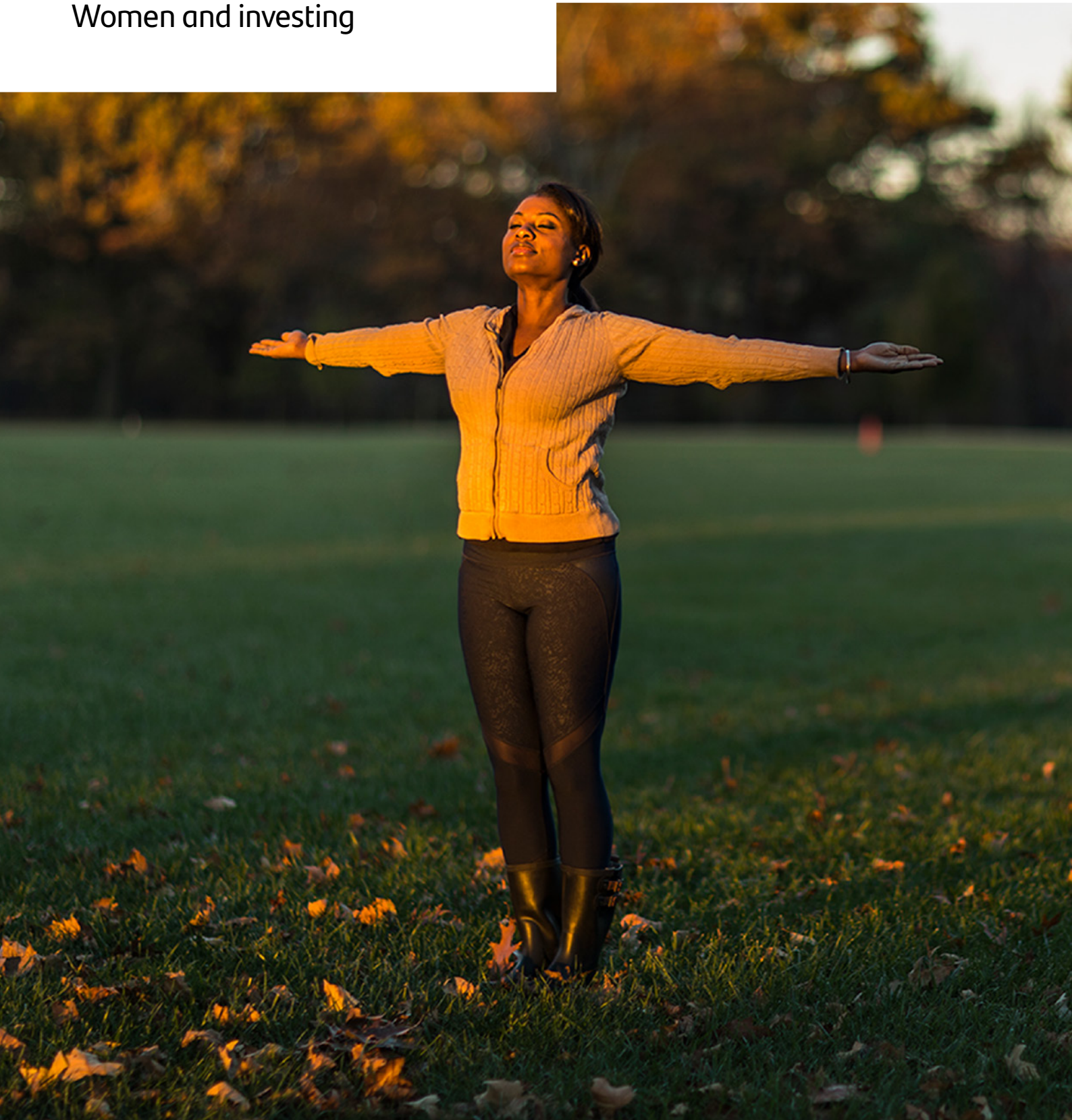


What's your money mindset and can you change it?

Women and investing





Emma, let's start with the basics. What is our money mindset and where does it come from?

"Our money mindset is a combination of the attitudes, feelings and set of beliefs that we have about money. This mindset dictates how you approach everything from talking about money to when, why and how you choose to save, spend or invest, as well as things like how generous you are towards others."

"It starts in childhood. That's when we form our attitudes and beliefs about money. And by doing what all children do, observing influential adults around them, and then making sense of their behaviour."

"Children see and hear people around them interacting with money in certain ways. They are taught certain behaviours, so they internalise that information. It becomes their reference point for how they believe the world of money works. It's how they go on to interact with it throughout their lives."

"That's your money mindset. And what happens when your early experiences of money are emotionally charged? They're likely to have left a more powerful imprint on your brain."

Is it all about how your parents and main caregivers behaved?

"How our parents or main caregivers handled and talked about money to us and around us tends to provide the strongest foundation for how we go on to approach it ourselves. However, lots of things are significant. The influence of teachers, friends, religious teaching and the media all play a part. Meaningful events like parents getting divorced or losing their job are also significant. For the tech-savvy youngsters of today, social media is increasingly playing a role too."

"Take the example of a child seeing their parents arguing over money when they were younger. They may associate money with feelings of fear, sadness or worry. As they grow up, they often choose to bury their head in the sand when it comes to difficult money conversations."

We asked Emma Maslin, 'The Money Whisperer' to explain our money mindsets and how we can change them. Emma's the money coach who helped us with our January 2023 research report **Understanding women's relationship with investing.**

In her practice as a money coach, Emma's focus is on women's emotions and feelings around money. She looks at how these can influence our financial decisions, including whether to invest.

What's a money coach?

A money coach helps people to change and improve their relationship with money at a general level. They're different from a financial adviser, who gives advice based on someone's personal circumstances about what to do with their money.

Some financial advisers may offer money coaching as part of their service. A money coach who isn't regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority can't give you financial advice.

What about if money wasn't discussed at all?

"Many of us will have experienced the embarrassment and confusion of being told 'you can't say that' when asking someone how much they earn. Or how much something expensive costs."

"The child who internalises through this experience that it's rude to talk about money defaults to avoiding conversations around money as an adult. The child who believes that showing love means spending money will default to over-generous behaviours as an adult."

Can you change your money mindset?

"First you need to understand what it is! This can take a bit of work."

"Unpacking your belief system is key when it comes to better financial health and wellbeing. That includes getting started with investing for your future. Especially if you know logically it's something you should be doing, but you feel something is still holding you back."

Some questions you can ask yourself to help uncover what some of your money beliefs are:

- What is your belief about people who are wealthy? Often we hear they are greedy or mean.
- What about people who have less money than you? Are they lazy?
- What meaning are you giving money?
- What do you believe about your own ability to earn money?
- What do you believe about your ability to save money?
- What about your ability to invest money? Maybe as a child you heard a family member lost some money on the stock market. So you now believe that investing is like gambling.
- How do you define success? Is it in some way linked to how much money you earn or is it something else?

"One thing to bear in mind, whatever comes out of those questions for you, it's important to realise that we aren't born with any of those beliefs. They aren't even our own beliefs. They make their way into our belief system, our money story through the behaviour, words or actions of those around us when we are growing up."

"Once you can consciously acknowledge your current beliefs as an adult, you can question whether they are true or not. And then you can create a new way to guide how you react to situations which present themselves in the future."

Explore more

Do you want to learn more about investing? Get inspired by other women's stories through our women and investing series. Including many articles, and our research report, **Understanding women's relationship with investing**.

If you're ready to think about investing, visit [santander.co.uk](https://www.santander.co.uk) and search Investment advice, to see how we can help you.