

Backtalk

Allan Houston teaches the business game

By *Tennille Robinson*

Though he has retired from the professional basketball court, NBA shooting guard Allan Houston remains a team player. Houston's Business Education & Development program (www.allanhoustonfoundation.org) offers aspiring entrepreneurs training, education, and mentorship.

Your sentiments are probably shared by a lot of everyday people, so in terms of financial worries, what is a big concern of yours?

I don't like to use the word "concerned." You want to be prepared. You want to make sure that you've measured in your risks. I try to be guided by something other than my own motives. I'm trying to see where God is taking me and what he wants to do with my finances, because it's all his anyway.

You readily admit that you've made some financial missteps in your lifetime. What was your biggest mistake?

Not doing proper planning or having the proper team. I've gone into things without having done my research or having that plan in place. You can't just minimize your mistakes. It may take some bumps, and it may take a different form, and a different timing than you expect, but I believe that when you're blessed with something to do, you have to be prepared and have the will to do it.

Looking back, what big-ticket purchase do you remember making during your days of playing ball?

I think it was a car. It was an SL two-seater convertible. And looking back, it was really dumb because I was in Detroit. I mean, where was I going to drive it? I couldn't drive it but two or three weeks out a year. I spent so much money on that for no reason. Sometimes, when you're young and you come into some money, you don't think.

I'm sure many people have helped you along the way, but what's the one best piece of advice you've ever gotten in terms of managing your career or finances?

That's a tough one. Of all the things my parents have told me, [it] was just not to be absent. Whether it's being an athlete or anything you're trying to be involved in, if you want to do it--do it. It takes a lot of work and a lot of energy, but you have to be in control.