

Please, it's only RM5

ON my recent visit, I noticed that my getting-more-affluent relatives have been wasting their food.

A wrongly made sandwich would be ignored and ended up in the bin. Sometimes two of the same brand milk bottles are opened at the same time and then thrown out when expired. Fruits which a little shrivelled also went in the way of the regular trash. After a salad has been made, the leftover half a chunk of cabbage and three quarters of a bunch of parsley were also thrown out.

Probably 10% of the items in the refrigerator gets chucked out four times a year.

The air conditioner is left on when they go for a short jaunt out ("It's too hot, I need the room to cool down sufficiently before I come home"). Other forms of wastage are leaking taps, washing clothes too often, over-stocking the pantry and purchasing groceries from a higher end supermarket.

And yet the parents complain about the lack of funds for their child's education. I know these all seem insignificant because the wastage is only a little money. I am also guilty of this. Just yesterday I went to a restaurant and the bill came to RM30.80 for two people. What I wasted was one bowl of rice (RM1.50) and one pot of tea (RM5.00) which would have been enough with just one glass (RM1.50).

Perhaps the small money wasted every day



Small amounts of wastage can accumulate to become very significant.

Amelia Hong is vice-president of Success Concepts Life Planners

can amount to something. Take my example of wasting the RM5. If we manage to not waste it every day and put that away in a 6% growth vehicle, what will happen? This over a 17-year period will become RM50,000. It may not be a lot but it surely makes the situation of the lack of education fund less dire.

Watch out for small things, accumulated over time; they can become something significant. Do not underestimate the value of a few small ringgit. It's worthwhile, especially with the recent price hikes that require us to relook into our financial habits.

Perhaps we should be more mindful of our small purchases so that we are able to make our money last longer.



Illustration by HAFIDZ MAHIPAR