

Nest – Nest Egg –Empty Nest

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The nest is used as a metaphor for our home. Today's economy pushes people to think of their house as an investment rather than a place to raise a family. It provides collateral and the illusion of stability when it is used for other purposes other than a being a home: for credit, capital, or their financial plan for retirement. Due to the fact that it takes money to have a home and raise a family, it is no surprise that people use the term "nest egg" to describe their investments and capital. The common phrase empty nesters describes the situation when the children have left the home, and the parents now have more freedoms, either in terms of time or money. It may result in an improved financial situation due to the fact that there is no longer a need to provide for children.

The nest egg has come to symbolize a financial largesse that has been grown by the family for future use. This phrase refers to the age-old practice, which was documented from as early as the 14th century, of putting a real or china egg into a hen's nest to encourage her to lay another. Yet the connection between this and 'savings' isn't obvious. Perhaps it may be that the egg put into the nest was saved for later, after the hen had laid one of her own, adding to the value. The use of 'nest-egg' to refer to savings can be found in documents as early as 1686.

In this series, the nest egg is being re-defined as investment in the human capital; the raising of a solid citizen who will go out and make positive contributions to society. An empty nest is a full nest. The children have grown, they are to be able to go out in to the world and add value.

The financial nest egg is being challenged in this work. The 80-20 rule, or Pareto Principle, is a micro-economics model that developed out of studies of Italian society in 1906, when an economist discovered that 80% of the land was owned by 20% of the Italian population. The 80-20 rule became a common used reference in many situations, and still referenced today in modern economics. After the financial meltdown of the American housing market and the impact on the global market that followed, the nest egg was damaged severely. People who were poised to retire comfortably invested in retirement funds were blindsided by the market crash, and plans changed. The 80-20 rule has a role in how sickness can throw all plans off track. The retirement fund is established, the person has a vision related to how life will play out, and then becomes sick, and the plans is thrown away. The nest egg is gone. The nest is empty.