



## Ken King column: Some deals are worth waffling on

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Have you ever noticed how easy it is to rationalize your spending habits?

There is nothing like something free, reduced, on sale or marked with a clearance sign to get the old shopping adrenalin going.

I was walking through a store the other day, and as a good consumer, and following my own advice, I was checking out the sale and clearance aisles in the store. As I browsed the shelves of bargains, I found one of those things I couldn't live without, a waffle maker.

Up to that point in my life owning a waffle maker had never crossed my mind, and I would have never considered purchasing one at full price. But this hidden jewel was too good to pass up. It was the display model, without the box or manual for only \$9. I was going to save 80 percent; that's right 80 percent.

I pondered the purchase for all of 30 seconds. I had better grab this before someone else gets it. What a good deal this was. My wife, children and grandchildren love waffles. I could now make them all Belgian waffles. I would be a real hero, and it was ONLY \$9. Too good a deal to pass up. So, get me to the checkout. DEAL DONE.

I headed home the proud owner of a Belgian waffle maker, no box or instructions but after all it was just a waffle maker. As soon as I got home, I told my wife about my "bargain of a lifetime." Her first question wasn't when are we going to have waffles, but "No box?" I quickly told her the story of my find, and promised her fresh waffles the next morning.

I dashed to the store and picked up some waffle mix and non-stick spray for the waffle maker. Ready for the next morning's major event — homemade waffles.

The next morning I whipped up the waffle mix, sprayed the waffle maker, dumped in the batter, closed the lid and watched the steam come out of the maker as it cooked.

About then I started to wonder how long I was supposed to leave the waffle in. There was a green light and a red light on the maker. The red one was on when it had heated up, so the green one must be to let the cook know when it is done. Right? Wrong.

I think I went through a box of mix that morning before I had a successful waffle. By the time I did get a waffle, my wife had given up on me and had eaten cold cereal. I sat alone as I ate my waffle, reflecting on the value of my purchase.

So the morals of the story:

n Just because something appears to be a deal, it may not have any value.

n Don't try to impress your wife with a waffle maker.

**Need answers to your financial questions? Write Ken King, executive director of Family Service Association, at 1930 N. Eighth St., Sheboygan WI 53081 or e-mail him at [ken.king@excel.net](mailto:ken.king@excel.net). Family Service Association is a United Way agency that helps people improve their financial stability and quality of life by providing education, counseling, advocacy and financial management programs.**

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