

BUSINESS

Dad's tragic death prompted Coast businessman James Fitzgerald's new finance book

Gold Coast businessman James Fitzgerald went from 'financial mess' with \$140,000 in debt to owning six properties. Find out his life-changing money tips.

Melanie Whiting, Gold Coast Bulletin

 Subscriber only | July 31, 2021 12:00am

GOLD Coast businessman James Fitzgerald and his wife own six investment properties and will never have to worry about money for the rest of their lives.

But the real estate expert, investor and author didn't have his idyllic life handed to him.

In fact, his current financial position is a far cry from the household he grew up in, where money was a constant source of anxiety.

"It was always feast or famine for my parents," Mr Fitzgerald said.

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"There were short periods when the family finances were healthy and in control, but always a series of poor choices and inept money management by my dad, a three-time bankrupt, would land my parents back at square one."

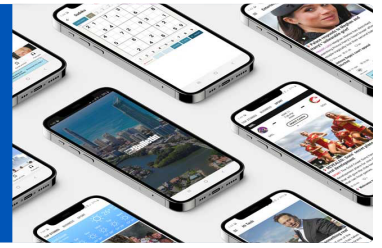
In 2019, Mr Fitzgerald's Dad was hit by a train while wandering along the tracks on his way home from a night out. He was 59.

Alcohol and a 30-year sleeping pill habit fuelled by lifelong anxiety over money ultimately contributed to his death, Mr Fitzgerald said.



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“It was a vicious cycle and one that weighed heavily on him emotionally as the breadwinner, costing him relationships and ultimately contributing to the fact he is not with us today.

“I felt it important to be honest about my family’s darkest moments, but also share what we

know about overcoming financial challenges.”

Besides being a terribly painful period, the tragedy also served as a light-bulb moment for the Nerang businessman, prompting him to write a book, Bulletproof Investing.

“Bulletproof Investing is my dad’s legacy,” he said.

“He was my best friend and biggest fan and I know he would want us to find purpose from our pain.”



📷 James Fitzgerald recommends investing in high growth areas, such as Coomera.

The book is a personal, cautionary story with straightforward tips and tools for anyone navigating the current global uncertainty.

It aims to help people gain control of their money – something Mr Fitzgerald knows plenty about after he racked up \$140,000 in debt by his early 20s.

“I graduated university in a financial mess. It impacted my self-esteem, my mental health and at the time, the debt seemed insurmountable.

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“My turning point was a part-time job at my uncle’s firm and it was there I realised how little I knew about managing money, despite having studied accountancy.”

Mr Fitzgerald is now managing director of the JLF Group of Companies that has bought and sold more than 2000 blocks of land in 10 years.

All proceeds from Bulletproof Investing will be donated to Financial Basics Foundation, a non-profit organisation that provides free financial literacy resources to Australian teachers, and the Toogoolawa School, a not-for-profit school for disadvantaged boys, of which Mr Fitzgerald is chair.



📷 James Fitzgerald recommends investing in high growth areas, such as Pimpama. Pictured is an artist impression of Pimpama Railway station.

JAMES FITZGERALD’S TIPS FOR INVESTING IN THE GOLD COAST PROPERTY MARKET:

- * The best bargains are to be had in land;
- * Coomera and Pimpama are key areas to invest in at the moment;
- * Focus on areas of high growth in terms of population;
- * Now is the best time to enter the Gold Coast property market to live or as an investor, if you can afford it.

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