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Do you have a taste for trading?

GET INTERESTED

When asked, I often tell people that the simplest thing to do is to open an account with a discount broker and start trading right away. But I've noticed that most people don't rush out and take my advice. Not everyone is self-motivated and the world of trading can seem quite intimidating: some people need a bit more encouragement or support or examples of other people like themselves who are already trading stocks. This explains the emergence of and the growing demand for platforms like Shareville in Stockholm, or e-Toro based in Tel Aviv — these are online places where we can talk about, track and share our investment portfolios in a social way. And if you want to

track your spending habits and then match your interests by investing in the businesses where you already spend your money day-to-day, New York based www.hellogoldbean.com will structure this type of portfolio for you.

GET INSPIRED

I recently met with Kristi Ross in Chicago — Kristi is the co-CEO of [dough](http://dough.com), Inc. — a financial content and technology company. [tastytrade](http://tastytrade.com) | [dough](http://dough.com) won the 2014 Chicago Business Innovation Award for their work enticing all types of individuals including women and millennials into the world of investing, and Kristi is (in my view) the queen of trading inspiration, with her co-CEO and host of [tastytrade](http://tastytrade.com) Live Tom Sosnoff being

the rock star of options trading.

On their site www.tastytrade.com you can watch eight hours a day of live, original programming. You'll find everything you need to know about options trading and the stock market. And they offer a highly visual trading platform called www.dough.com that makes investing interactive, educational and mobile. You can monitor the leading traders, learn their strategies and track your stocks — all in a social atmosphere that makes the process seem less complicated and more engaging.

GET STARTED

I asked Kristi why they started this venture in the first place. She said "We wanted to make finance fun and actionable. I wish

that I had started investing when I was much younger. But I didn't have the encouragement or the technology and easy access to do so. Financial education is empowering ... especially for women." She added, "we want to spread information to the masses for free and provide content and visual technology as inspiration to become a do-it-yourself investor. This way we can help encourage people to manage their own money, with them knowing they have unlimited content and technology resources available at no cost. Even if it is a small amount, it is the depth of knowledge they gain just by 'doing.' We want to pave the way for younger traders and make it easier to start investing at any age."

Another way to get started

is to form a trading group. An early stage Canadian company called www.myvoleon.com allows people to contribute as little as \$500 to start or join a trading group and then they watch and learn how to buy/sell stocks from the wisdom of the crowd. According to Roland Sartorius, Voleo's Chief Financial Officer, "We want to create a new generation of investors who feel informed and confident. The best way to gain knowledge and get practice is to do so in a fun and friendly investing environment."

As Kristi says, "Take it one base at a time — don't go for the homerun. Start with bite-sized pieces."

And who knows? Like eating your veggies, trading could actually turn out to be good for you!