

## SMORGASBOARD INVESTING?

Many people walk through life trying to be good stewards and prudent investors finding on the eve of retirement that they basically acquired a huge pot luck of various investments that were all supposed to work to retirements end. Are assets earmarked for actual use and need or did you “buy” based on returns with the hope of making retirement decisions later?

What comes to mind is a dining room table with my parents discussing the checkbook, bank statements, CD’s, etc. By the time the last of 7 siblings came along, they were trying to save as much as they could and THANK GOODNESS FOR 401(k) plans or they may not have saved much at all. What I have come to realize is my parents consistently shopped for the best interest rates available, the best “5 star” performing mutual funds, or the hottest technology stock during the tech bubble or the next best energy stock. Should I buy gold? Should I buy a gas? Should I buy more real estate? Following trends like a Hollywood scarlet follows the fashion scene. I realized that they were selecting investments “shooting from the hip”. As a result, they had short term investments for long term needs and long term investments for short term needs. Very little time was ever spend on educating themselves or educating me and my siblings, as to the paramount question...why are we saving and investing at all?

From a women’s perspective, we need to take control. It’s a harsh truth that instead of taking charge of our own financial futures, many women leave money matters to the man in our lives or ignore the importance of planning altogether. Couple this with the fact that women face different life challenges and financial risks than men, due to life expectancy and demographics. We need to be educated and prepared. Understanding your assets now can help prevent financial crises down the road. Becoming educated and prepared doesn’t have to be difficult and does not require you to be an expert. There are resources available. You can turn to financial professionals who are certified in the dynamics of investing from a women’s perspective. I happen to be one of those professionals that can help you understand how investing works and help you reach your dreams.

The typical American walks into our office, hopefully

closer to age 40 than age 65, looking for advice about planning for retirement needs. By this time, they have a smorgasboard of assets and investments and not sure what to do or if it will even meet their needs in retirement, having never defined their retirement lifestyle. Often frustrated and confused finding themselves in the **“Investor’s Dilemma”**, certainly not at peace with doubt creeping in as the years roll by. Too much emphasis has been placed on performance, chasing yields, trying to do the right thing but not focused on the end game.

If this sounds like your dilemma, take charge now before it’s too late. Find a financial coach that will help educate you on the different investments and the multitude of retirement options. What is your number? What is the actual yield on your entire portfolio that is needed to not run out of money and maintain your lifestyle to your age 100? Do you believe taxes will be higher, lower or the same in the future and the effects this will have on your income? What about your future health care needs? The fact of the matter is, you must do active planning now or the majority of your money is going in one of two areas, the government or the health care system. Ready to get started or keep wandering? ■

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