

Work Is A Blessing

Every so often a thought gets delivered in a way that really catches you. Such was the case regarding the title of this issue, the 100th issue of Wit and Wisdom. This perspective about work was delivered during a presentation at the Milken Institute in Santa Monica last fall. The gentleman delivering the concept was Arthur Brooks, the CEO of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), a conservative think tank in Washington, DC that operates solely on the basis of donations made to the Institute.

For those familiar with the community of Santa Monica, it was unlikely that there were many AEI donors in attendance that evening. Still, it was fascinating to watch Arthur take the audience gently by the hand and lead them through his personal journey from life as a college dropout in Seattle, to being a concert orchestra French horn player in Spain, to his days as an economics professor at Syracuse University, to becoming CEO of AEI, and finally to his current mentoring relationship with the Dalai Lama, for a better understanding of "the pursuit of happiness." He truly had the attention and respect of an audience that might not have been predisposed to that reaction to him or his message.

Happiness

Wanting to learn more I purchased Arthur's most recent book, "The Conservative Heart". Not far into the book, Chapter One in fact, he breaks down the research on happiness and it turns out that 48% is genetic, 40% is impacted by life events and the remaining 12% is made up things we can choose, control or influence. From there, 4 values seem to drive this 12%: faith, family, community and meaningful work.

Whistle While You Work

Walt Disney is a significant employer in the local area. Over the years innumerable catchy tunes have been developed for their various productions, some for the self-proclaimed "happiest place on earth". So let me ask, do you wake up happy on Monday mornings? While there is certainly gray in this area, work seems to occupy one of two positions in each person's psyche, either drudgery to be endured or a blessing for them and the people they serve. Is it possible for you to do the emotional equivalent of "whistling", as you employ your talents and capabilities at work? (My apologies if this tune is now caught in your mind!)

Love What You Do

To give you another sense of how societies around the world view work, consider the quote: "If you love what you do, you'll never have to work a

day in your life." Even in this statement, which would seem to promote the idea of finding meaningful and rewarding employment, the word "work" is presented in a negative light. Work, it would seem, is a four-letter word.

Different Choice, Different Result

Easy and simple are not always the same. Choosing to view work as a blessing is very simple AND can be very hard. If it is too hard, is it possible that you may need to find a different way to employ your talents? Or do you simply need to view the work you do differently?

One dear client arrived about two years ago, very much wanting to retire. After working through the retirement cash flow projection, things looked a little tight and we mutually agreed to keep tabs on things. After getting to know the client, stories came out that suggested this professional actually enjoyed the work they did and the clients they served. It was the idea of having to work for money that was the real sticking point. It left an opening allowing me to suggest that this person choose to view work as something that helps people they enjoy and as an expression of their God-given talents. The result was a renewed vigor and enjoyment of "work!" This, as you might imagine, also had a wonderful impact on this person's financial planning projection.

Bottom Line

Theodore Roosevelt once said: "Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." If you can manage to make work a blessing in your life, you will have significantly improved your chance for happiness. Not only will 40 or so hours of your week be far more fulfilling, but there is also a chance that your financial happiness will also improve. Please let us know how Tasia and I might help you with this life planning and financial planning effort.

Your Feedback

I would love feedback on this newsletter. Future issues may include a host of good ideas, insights, specific steps to take financially, life insights and of course "Wit and Wisdom". Most importantly, I'd like it to be of value to you and to encourage an exchange of great ideas and insights. Please send your feedback to:

Colin S. Mackenzie, CFP®
Cetera Advisor Networks LLC, Member FINRA/SIPC
301 E. Colorado Blvd, #400
Pasadena, CA 91101
mackenzie@ceteranetworks.com

www.cmackenzie123.com
(626) 795-8896