

MAKING CENTS

PLANNING CAN BRING DREAMS TO REALITY



-John P. Napolitano, CFP®, CPA, PFS, MST, RLP®

Everyone has dreams. Maybe they are not as vivid or as fun as they were when you were young, but they're in there somewhere. It's not your fault if some of your dreams may have been shoved into the back of the closet; society has conditioned you into believing that you need to get grounded in reality and hop on the treadmill.

As a professional financial advisor, I am here to break the news that dreaming is good. Your personal dreams are merely a vision for your future. Where most people fail is in connecting the dreams to what they need to do in order to make those dreams reality.

For many financial professionals, helping a client visualize their dreams is an essential starting point. Most clients intuitively know that a financial plan has a heavy quantitative focus on cash flow, investments, tax and retirement planning, insurance and estate planning. But very few clients, until prompted, are willing to open up and share their life dreams.

Some may feel constrained by reality, but no one ever said that your current reality has to be your reality forever. For example, you may be 35 and a third grade teacher, yet have a dream that includes something that your peers might say is not possible. In fact, it may not be possible

within the limitations of the world of a third grade teacher. Those constraints may include time, money or a lack of entrepreneurial spirit in your workplace.

The task for you and a financial planner is to put your life and dreams at the center of the plan and work on exactly what you need to do to make

those dreams a reality. Once you've mapped out what has to be done, you are in a better place to decide if this compelling vision is a vision for which you are willing to sacrifice. Some of the tactics necessary to live your dream may include a second job, a new career or taking extraordinary risk in a business venture.

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In some cases, there will be many obstacles. It is best if you can think of all those obstacles now and write them down. After you've got them documented, write down all of the tactics you can deploy to either get through or circumvent them, giving yourself the best chance at making them disappear. The experiences of your advisors and family members collectively can provide great insight and inspiration for you.

Dream on, and plan until those dreams come true.

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