

PFPG
Fee-Only AdvisorsPORTLAND
FINANCIAL
PLANNING
GROUP, LLC

In This Issue

[Protecting retirement assets](#)

[Cognition and financial skills](#)

[Fighting about money?](#)

[Making end-of-life matters easier](#)

[PFPG news](#)

Contact Us

Web: www.pfpg.com

Email: info@pfpg.com

Phone: (207) 771-8821

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Protecting retirement assets

An investor who rolls over a lump-sum distribution from an employer-sponsored retirement plan to an IRA has a wealth of advisors to whom she may turn. Some are fiduciaries (registered investment advisors like PFPG), meaning that the advisor is required to put the client's best interest first. However, many don't qualify as fiduciaries. The Labor Department, after four years of strenuous opposition from the financial services industry, has proposed rules intended to protect investors by requiring that the fiduciary standard be expanded to include brokers who advise clients about their retirement money. The new rules won't eliminate the ways in which brokers are paid, but will require them to enter into a contract putting the client's interests first and to disclose currently hidden conflicts of interest. For more information, check out the Department of Labor's FAQs on "Conflict of Interest Rulemaking." The DOL is soliciting input from the public before submitting the final proposal. If you have an opinion, speak your mind at Regulations.gov, "Your Voice in Federal Decision-Making" before July 6.

Cognition and financial skills

While many people continue to handle their finances with ease well into their later years, even people with healthy brains tend to experience cognitive decline. According to one study (crr.bc.edu/briefs/what-is-the-age-of-reason/), which analyzed participants' propensity to make financial mistakes, a person's financial decision-making ability peaks at age 53, or, more generally, in their 50s. With that in mind, what are some indications that a loved one may require assistance with their financial affairs? Warning signs include increased difficulty with everyday math matters (calculating tips, managing bills), decreased understanding of financial concepts, and making investment or purchasing decisions that seem out of character. The *New York Times* article "As Cognition Slips, Financial Skills Are Often the First to Go" offers some prudent suggestions for older adults: simplify your financial life; keep financial and estate planning documents up-to-date; and assemble a "tribe" of family members, friends and professional advisors to step in and help as needed. Relying on a tribe, rather than a single individual, provides checks and balances to mitigate the risk of elder abuse, which is all too often carried out by an initially trusted relative or professional advisor acting alone.

Fighting about money?

It's not unusual for couples to come to loggerheads over finances (or not talk about them all). Typical scenarios that can lead to conflicts include couples with differing financial goals, spending/savings priorities, philosophies about providing financial support to adult children, concepts of "equitable" estate plans (especially in blended families) and instances where one spouse controls the family finances. Since money attitudes and behavior patterns are rooted in childhood

experiences, it can be illuminating for couples to identify and share with each other the messages received about money and how they affect today's behaviors and priorities. Read the *Wall Street Journal* article "How Couples Can Resolve Their Biggest Fights Over Money" for some tips about how to start a conversation about money beliefs, and find out how several couples came to grips (not blows) over their own areas of conflict.

Making end-of-life matters easier

Experiencing the loss of a family member is difficult enough, but for the executor of the deceased's estate, it can be even more challenging. EstateExec.com is an online tool which organizes assets, tracks accounts, and creates an inventory of belongings. The executor has the option to share the information online with an attorney and other heirs, making communication among family members quick and transparent. If you've already created an estate plan, consider making your executor aware of this resource.

Another difficult (and often avoided) task is conveying your end-of-life wishes to your loved ones and doctors in person and in writing. The Conversation Project provides a free kit that will guide you gently through the process step-by-step by helping you think about your wishes and needs and suggesting ways to set the stage for a personal conversation. There is also a section designed for the needs of parents of seriously ill children.

PFPG news

We were delighted that PFPG received Community Financial Literacy's 2015 Commitment to Service Award in honor of our provision of continuous financial support to this nonprofit since 2009. CFL offers financial literacy courses and one-on-one financial counseling for refugees, immigrants, asylees, and low-income individuals and families in Greater Portland and Lewiston/Auburn.

This July, Debra and her husband, a healthcare improvement consultant, will be part of a Mayo Clinic-sponsored Global Brigades medical team going to Nicaragua for a week. Brian is yet again participating in the *Trek Across Maine* on his bicycle June 19 - 21 to benefit the American Lung Association. Click here to sponsor Brian or learn more about the Trek and its mission. Tom will be making his own trek across Maine in his convertible.

Happy summer!

Thomas Rogers, CFP®
Brian L. Dietz, CFP®, CFA®
Debra Yoo
Teri Coviello

Information contained in this newsletter does not serve as the receipt of, or as a substitute for, personalized investment advice from Portland Financial Planning Group, LLC. At any time you may request a copy of our current written disclosure discussing PFPG's services and fees.