



A DIVISION OF FIRST WEST CREDIT UNION

BUILD BEYOND WEALTH

Living an enriched life
with the right financial advice.



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Introduction

In this white paper, we look at the future of financial advice and how getting a second opinion on your investments will help you build beyond wealth for an enriched life.

Financial decisions impact every part of our lives and working with a professional can help with sound, research-based advice that support your overall goals.

When asked, nearly 60% of investors agreed that their portfolio performed better with financial advice where emotions were left out of the equation, according to a MagnifyMoney survey.¹

The same survey reported that those that work with a financial advisor have an easier time refraining from emotional or impulsive investing decisions.¹ When building a financial plan, emotions can play an important role in your motivations to help define goals and ensure your values are being reflected.

A financial advisor can then ensure your future investment decisions continuously align with those goals. Having clearly defined priorities and working with a financial expert who understands you will keep you on track during downturns and fluctuations in the market and away from impulsive decisions. It is important to work with a professional that not only grows your savings and future plans, but also helps avoid potential pitfalls from risks such as inflation and market volatility. They will create a plan that reflects your values and goals to build a resilient and stable future.

When was the last time you checked in on the alignment of your investments with your values? Have you re-evaluated your priorities due to the pandemic or other major life events? And, most importantly, have you asked for a second opinion to make sure your plan is right for you?

Building your wealth is a journey and it starts by defining what wealth means to you.



How do you define wealth?

DID YOU KNOW?

58% OF CANADIANS SAY THAT THEY HAVE RE-EVALUATED WHAT IS TRULY IMPORTANT IN THEIR LIVES BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC.²

The word “wealth” means different things to different people. The definition is personal and is entirely up to you.

Traditionally, the definition of wealth has been viewed as the accumulation of economic resources such as hard assets and money. It was valued based on the total market value of everything a person owned: tangible and intangible assets after removing any debts. Tangible assets are physical assets, including cash, vehicles, property, etc. In contrast, intangible assets are non-physical assets that represent potential value such as patents, trademarks, copyrights, etc. Total wealth was a math equation that resulted in an output that boiled down to one question: how much money do you have?

A Charles Schwab survey puts a dollar value on wealth around the world somewhere between \$2 and \$12 million dollars.³ The range is determined due to the cost of living in various places. Some people measure their wealth by their income and some on their net worth. Some people don’t measure their wealth in dollar figures at all.

People are recalibrating their priorities and defining wealth differently. Wealth can be measured in time, sense of freedom and independence. Wealth can be defined as the ability to have greater control of your life — make your own decisions, maintain work-life balance, build a family or create a legacy. Now, more than ever, wealth is being defined by values rather than dollar figures.

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU DEFINE A WEALTHY LIFE?

DOES THE RICHNESS OF YOUR LIFE GO BEYOND YOUR BANK ACCOUNT?

- Personal Control
- Health
- Family
- Hobbies
- Emotional Wellness
- Estate Planning
- Children
- Time
- Freedom
- Relationships
- Charitable Giving
- Caregiving
- Owning a Home
- Career
- Values
- Spouse and Partner
- Aspirations
- Flexibility
- Physical Wellness
- Legacy
- Ambitions
- Entertainment
- Serving on a Board
- Education

Coming out of the global pandemic, there is a heightened awareness among Canadians to build their financial resilience. Despite government support programs during the pandemic, approximately 340,000 households said they were “financially vulnerable,” according to the October 2020 edition of the Seymour Financial Resilience Index.⁴ The research also reported that only 28% of Canadian households felt that they were already financially resilient. Among those that reported being financially resilient, they stated that the financial institutions that they work with have helped them improve their financial well-being.⁴

In order to improve your financial well-being and build a life based on your values, it’s important to partner with a financial advisor to create a plan that reflects your life goals and priorities, as well as define the financial milestones to support them.



SOME QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK YOURSELF TO DETERMINE IF YOU ARE BUILDING YOUR WEALTH IN A MEANINGFUL WAY INCLUDE:

- Do I review my values and priorities every year?
- Do I discuss the shift in my financial and personal well-being goals with my advisor?
- How do I define success and does my advisor know this about me?
- Is my portfolio built to reflect my values and wealth goals?
- Have there been any significant life events that have changed the way I see the world and my future?

Asking yourself these important questions will help to keep you on the right path towards a meaningful and wealthy life.



You and financial advice

Staying true to your values and making room for your life goals doesn't mean you have to sacrifice on financial returns. Financial advice is a goals-based conversation. Your advisor should be taking a holistic, goals-based approach to your investment portfolio. This means that every aspect of your life and the goals you want to achieve need to be a part of your financial plan. Each financial strategy is different and should reflect the life that you are creating.

As your goals, motivations and behaviours shift, the strategy that your advisor takes with your portfolio, and the tactics they recommend may also shift. Throughout your financial journey, your definition of wealth might change—your focus might adjust from asset accumulation to maintaining your health, working fewer hours to spend more time with your family, taking back control of your schedule or planning for a new type of retirement.

ARE YOUR PRIORITIES CHANGING?

The pandemic has highlighted many people's desire for a healthy work-life balance and caused many to readjust their timelines for major life events. According to the Harvard Business Review, between April and November 2020, employees' satisfaction with work-life balance dropped significantly,⁵ and a survey by Randstad Canada indicated that almost half of all employed Canadians are likely to look for a new job in 2022.⁶ Ipsos Reid, on behalf of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, found that nearly 25% of Canadians delayed retirement plans due to the pandemic.⁷

The pandemic has raised a lot of questions about how Canadians are living their lives and spending their time. Trends are showing that Canadians are reevaluating their priorities. **Are you?**

Living an enriched life

DID YOU KNOW?

WHEN IT COMES TO ACHIEVING GOALS, NEARLY HALF OF CANADIANS AGREE THAT WHEN YOU SHARE YOUR AMBITION WITH SOMEONE, IT IS MORE LIKELY TO HAPPEN.²

Getting financial advice is important. Getting the right financial advice is essential.

Expert financial advice has your best interests at heart. Valley First advisors base their advice on relevant research and investment products, the use of innovative digital solutions and most importantly, local market knowledge paired with insights from deep personal relationships with members.

However you define wealth, a financial professional can help you achieve your goals. 67% of Canadians agree that the pandemic has made them re-think their relationship with money and an advisor can help make the appropriate shifts to your portfolio in order to reflect your shifting priorities.⁸

With the right advice, your values will be reflected in your plan, you'll create healthier money habits, and you will reach your goals.

Are you getting the financial advice that's right for you?

DID YOU KNOW?

IN A RECENT SURVEY, NEARLY 80% OF CANADIANS REPORTED THAT THEY FIND IT CHALLENGING TO REACH THEIR LIFE AND FINANCIAL GOALS. OF THOSE SURVEYED, THE TOP CONCERNS CITED WERE DIFFICULTY MANAGING EVERYDAY COMMITMENTS, TIME CONSTRAINTS, AND NOT KNOWING WHERE TO START.²

With a financial advisor on your team, they will remove the guess work, ask the right questions and outline a plan so you can feel confident that your investments are working hard while you're busy living your most accomplished life. Understanding what you care about allows an advisor to act as an extension of you to manage any conflicting priorities throughout your life stages, translating their expert knowledge into sound financial advice for you.

Choosing to work with an experienced and objective partner will help you stay on track to meet your long-term and short-term goals, no matter where life takes you.⁹

The financial environment and our lives are changing and becoming more complex. The quality of financial advice and the service that professionals offer to their clients is more important than ever before. The bottom line is, working with a financial advisor will help you feel more secure about your future.



What should you expect from your financial advisor?



No matter what your wealth goals are, your plan should be unique and tailored just for you. You should expect your financial advisor to:

KNOW YOUR CURRENT FINANCIAL GOALS

This means asking questions continuously and getting to know not only you, but your family.

SET SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

Everyone has different aspirations for their lifestyle, retirement and estate planning. Thinking through your goals is important so that a clear path can be mapped out to meet your objectives.

UNDERSTAND YOUR CHALLENGES

A personal relationship is the best way to know the types of concerns you have and plan for the unpredictable events that might arise.

BE THERE DURING UPTURNS AND DOWNTURNS

The market and economy go up and down. There is also a cadence to your life. Some periods will be better than others, some more stressful and some carefree. Keeping you on track for your short-term and long-term goals is a key responsibility of your financial advisor. Their research and education will help to guide you through all the ups and downs.

PROVIDE IN-DEPTH AND RESEARCH-BASED ADVICE

The markets are complex and there are many financial products that can help you reach your goals. Your financial advisor should provide you evaluations of potential investments and explanations of how they will help you reach your goals.

ADJUST YOUR PLAN WHEN NEEDED

Things change. Constantly. Your financial advisor should adjust your plan if things in your personal life change, the markets make significant adjustments or if there are major world events. It is also a good idea to get a second opinion from time-to-time. This will give you peace of mind and confidence that you are on the right track.

KEEP YOU FOCUSED

No matter what is going on, you and your financial advisor have created a plan to follow. When relevant information about the market arises, they will let you know and help guide your financial decisions based on facts and careful research instead of emotions.

ENSURE YOUR FINANCIAL PLAN IS THRIVING

Your advisor should be asking questions about your life and circumstances regularly. You should also be asking your financial advisor questions about your investments, their investment strategy and your financial plan.

Clear financial advice with plans made for you

DID YOU KNOW?

A SURVEY EXECUTED BY ENVIRONICS RESEARCH AND CONDUCTED IN 2021 FOUND THAT 65% OF CANADIANS SAID AN ADVISOR HELPED THEM STAY ON TRACK TO ACHIEVE THEIR INVESTMENT GOALS, COMPARED TO 39% IN 2019.⁸

Increasing complexities require a second set of eyes. When it comes to staying on track, getting a second opinion on your investment plan could ensure you are on the right track, avoid unseen risks and strengthen your portfolio's resilience. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the global health crisis, shifts in the economy and costs of goods rising are all influencing how Canadians are planning for their futures.¹⁰ Due to the pandemic, 42% of Canadians reported that they put a large ambition on hold.² With the right advice and the right plan, you may not have to.

Finances impact almost every part of our lives. A financial advisor is a trusted partner that looks at the entirety of your life so that your goals and aspirations remain at the forefront – even when your life changes.

If you have only worked with one financial advisor (perhaps the same one your parents partnered with), are a do-it-yourself investor, or are just starting to look for professional advice - getting a second opinion will strengthen your confidence in your investments.

Your goals and ambitions are too important to put on hold.



Get straight forward advice

OUR ADVISORS ARE READY WHEN YOU ARE.

From giving advice that goes beyond investments, analyzing your risk tolerance, employing tax strategies, understanding your needs, to being transparent and delivering open communication, the right financial advisor will set you up for success. By focusing on answering your questions, identifying solutions and ultimately executing a strategy that is right for you, you will gain control and confidence in your financial future.

Getting the right advice can make all the difference. We can help you thrive by returning real value and comprehensive solutions.



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