



Is Quality of Life an Afterthought?

By Anthony J. Ogorek, Ed.D., CFP

People seek out the services of a financial advisor or a medical professional for a variety of reasons. Most of the time patients seek out their doctor because they want to feel better. In other words, they are looking for a better quality of life. What is fascinating is that financial advisors hardly ever speak with a client who says that they are looking for a better quality of life.

They may be wondering how many more years they have to work before retiring. Some people are looking to make more money, or to be relieved of the administrative burden of managing their financial situation. However, the bottom line is that it is rare for a prospective client to tell us that they are looking to improve the quality of their life, and are hoping that we can help them to achieve that goal.

The whole point of making money is to secure a better quality of life. It is a fool's errand to sacrifice decades of your life working in an unfulfilling job, just to secure a retirement for a relatively few short years. Unfortunately, our emphasis on the "means" can create resentments that last well into retirement.

The flip side of the coin is someone who loves what they do. Chances are that if you love your profession, you will become very proficient at it. There is, however, a danger that the love of a career or profession can morph into a singular outlook on life. If all you do is work, there is precious little time available for pursuits that will broaden your life, in addition to providing an alternative to your job should you decide to retire in the future.

As we take on more responsibility, it is important to periodically evaluate whether we have some semblance of balance in our lives. If we don't take enough time for ourselves, it is doubtful that we will be very good at helping others. Money, viewed properly, can help us to achieve our unique balance in life. If we view the accumulation of money as an end in itself, quality of life will always be an afterthought.

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