Applying the Psychology of Money to Grow Financially

Paula McMillan, CPA/PFS, CFP®, CDFA®, CEPA®, CGMA

pmcmillan@stearnsfinancial.com | 336.337.9507 | https://bit.ly/Calendar_Paula





Paula McMillan, CPA/PFS, CFP®, CDFA®, CEPA®, CGMA

Wealth Advisor | Author | Presenter

Recognized thought-leader in navigating retirement readiness and the unique financial challenges of women. Helping people maximize finances and live their best lives as a wealth advisor with a specific focus on investments, taxes & estate planning.

- Created two national AICPA podcast series Retirement Readiness and Women and Wealth.
- ➤ A TEDx presenter on Retirement: Longevity and Security.
- Regularly published and quoted in national and local publications, including The Wall Street Journal, CNBC, US News & World Report, Kiplinger's, The Business Journal, The Tax Adviser, Journal of Accountancy, NCACPA Interim Report, How Stuff Works and more.



- AICPA Advanced Personal Financial Planning Conference Investment Committee Lead
- AICPA Personal Financial Specialist (PFS) Credential Committee Member
- Greensboro Estate Planning Council Board Member
- Society of Financial Service Professionals (SFSP) Board Member

- Society of Financial Service Professionals (SFSP) Board Member
- Society of Financial Service Professionals (SFSP) Foundation Board Chair
- NCACPA Triad Women's Initiatives Group Chair
- Women's Professional Forum Financial Divas Chair
- Plenteous Financial Forum Chair and Founder





First Principles

Boiling Understanding Down to the Simplest Level

...And Then Building it Back Up.



Money: First Principles - Defined

- 1. Seemingly Irrational Behavior Due to Personal Vantagepoint
- 2. Prioritize Doing What You Want, When You Want
- 3. Luck and Risk Influence Outcomes in Unpredictable Ways
- 4. Nothing is Free A Monetary and Emotional Price to Pay
- 5. Experience the Snowball of Compounding
- 6. Be Content with Enough Without Envy and Unhappiness
- 7. Getting Wealthy Vs Staying Wealthy
- 8. Showing People Your Money is the Fastest Way to Lose It
- 9. Saving for the Sake of Saving, Not to Spend It
- 10. Be Rational, Reasonable and Adaptable

Source: The Psychology of Money by Morgan Housel

L-Seemingly Irrational Behavior Due to Personal Vantagepoint

Do You and Your Not important spouse talk about or dominate money - or argue your thoughts? Money, about it? Money, Worry a long time over big Unable to save enough or painful to Money... purchases or impulsively buy the big stuff - worrying spend it? Feel you'll be ok if you work hard or compulsively if you made a mistake? try to micromanage your Unable to budget or follow one rigidly? blanning?

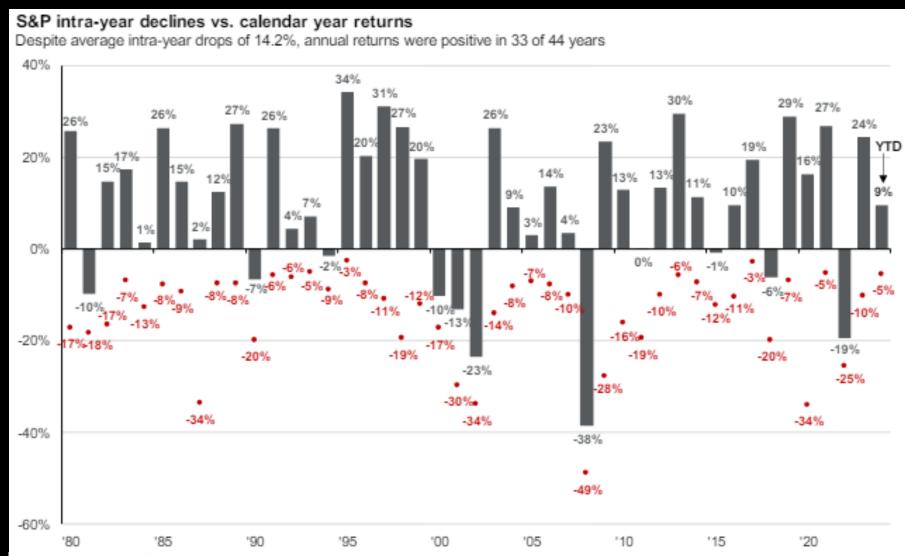
2-Prioritize Doing What You Want, When You Want



3-Luck and Risk Influence Things in Unpredictable Ways

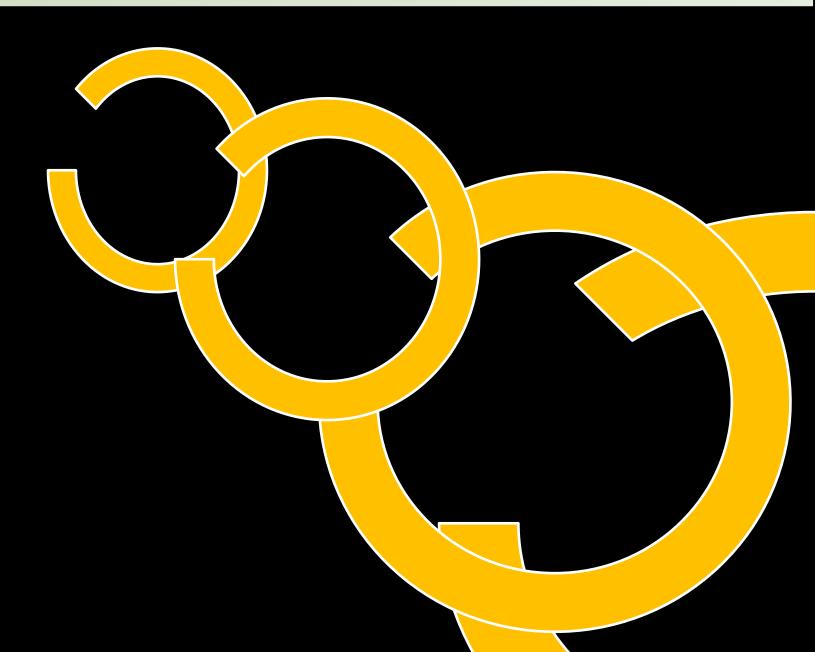


4-Nothing is Free – A Monetary and Emotional Price to Pay



Source: FactSet, Standard & Poor's, J.P. Morgan Asset Management.
Returns are based on price index only and do not include dividends. Intra-year drops refers to the largest market drops from a peak to a trough during the year. For illustrative purposes only. Returns shown are calendar year returns from 1980 to 2023, over which time period the average annual return was 10.3%.
Guide to the Markets – U.S. Data are as of May 10, 2024.

5-Experience the Snowball of Compounding



6-Be Content with Enough - Without Envy and Unhappiness



7-Getting Wealthy Vs Staying Wealthy



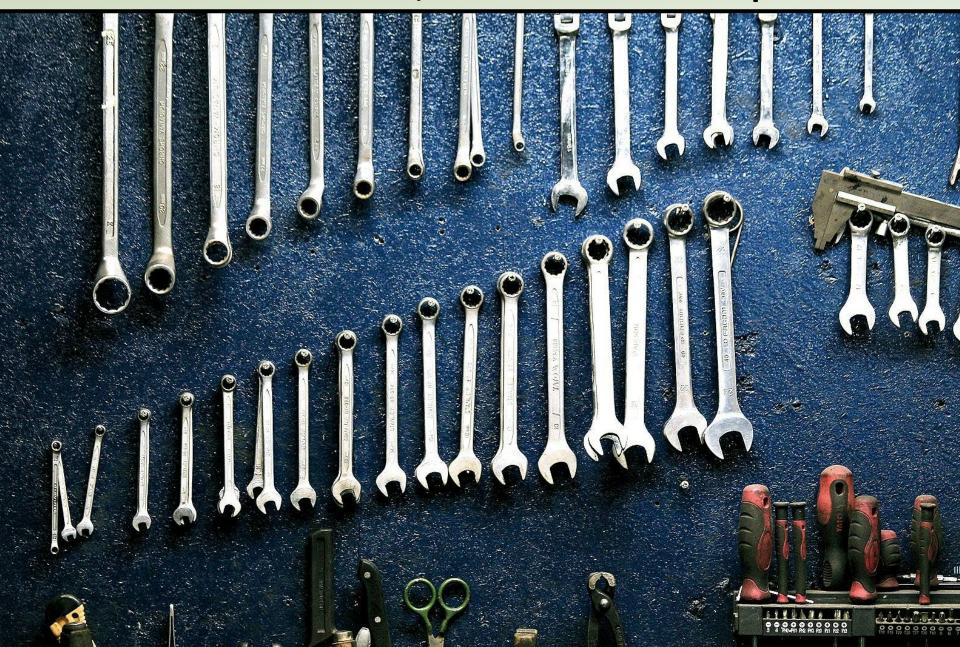
8-Showing People Your Money is the Fastest Way to Lose It



9-Saving for the Sake of Saving, Not to Spend It



10-Be Rational, Reasonable and Adaptable



Money: First Principles - Defined

- 1. Seemingly Irrational Behavior Due to Personal Vantagepoint
- 2. Prioritize Doing What You Want, When You Want
- 3. Luck and Risk Influence Outcomes in Unpredictable Ways
- 4. Nothing is Free A Monetary and Emotional Price to Pay
- 5. Experience the Snowball of Compounding
- 6. Be Content with Enough Without Envy and Unhappiness
- 7. Getting Wealthy Vs Staying Wealthy
- 8. Showing People Your Money is the Fastest Way to Lose It
- 9. Saving for the Sake of Saving, Not to Spend It
- 10. Be Rational, Reasonable and Adaptable

Source: The Psychology of Money by Morgan Housel

- What is your "Why"?
- What are your First Principles around money?
- Within them, have you found limiting or hidden money beliefs that diminish your strength and accountability?
- Does this exploration lead you to make changes (i.e. your risk tolerance/investment allocation, the way you spend your time, with whom you spend your time)?

1-Seemingly Irrational Behavior Due to Personal Vantagepoint 2-Prioritize Doing What You Want, When You Want

- What measured risks are you taking today to be available for opportunities that could arise?
- In considering your most recent top five financial successes and top five financial failures, assess why.

3-Luck and Risk Influence Outcomes in Unpredictable Ways 4-Nothing is Free – A Monetary and Emotional Price to Pay

 Do your financial plan projections reflect sustainability of assets with desired lifestyle throughout?

5-Experience the Snowball of Compounding

 Consider making daily entries into a Gratitude Journal, purposefully considering the difference between personal needs and wants.

6-Be Content with Enough – Without Envy and Unhappiness

- For more consistent goal attainment, adapt a process for creating habits that drives results:
 - Habit Scorecard
 - Good Habits + =
 - Bad Habits + =
 - Implementation Strategy

Cue	Craving	Response	Reward
Obvious	Attractive	Easy	Satisfying
Invisible	Unattractive	Difficult	Unsatisfying

Source: Atomic Habits by James Clear

7-Getting Wealthy Vs Staying Wealthy

- 8-Showing People Your Money is the Fastest Way to Lose It
- 9-Saving for the Sake of Saving, Not to Spend It

- For better decisions, adopt a decision-making framework.
 - Consider WRAP
 - Widen Your Options
 - Reality-Test Your Assumptions
 - Attain Distance Before Deciding
 - Prepare to Be Wrong

Source: Decisive by Chip and Dan Heath

10-Be Rational, Reasonable and Adaptable

Money: First Principles - Defined

- 1. Seemingly Irrational Behavior Due to Personal Vantagepoint
- 2. Prioritize Doing What You Want, When You Want
- 3. Luck and Risk Influence Outcomes in Unpredictable Ways
- 4. Nothing is Free A Monetary and Emotional Price to Pay
- 5. Experience the Snowball of Compounding
- 6. Be Content with Enough Without Envy and Unhappiness
- 7. Getting Wealthy Vs Staying Wealthy
- 8. Showing People Your Money is the Fastest Way to Lose It
- 9. Saving for the Sake of Saving, Not to Spend It
- 10. Be Rational, Reasonable and Adaptable

Source: The Psychology of Money by Morgan Housel

Thank You

Paula McMillan, CPA/PFS, CFP®, CDFA®, CEPA®, CGMA

pmcmillan@stearnsfinancial.com | 336.337.9507 | https://bit.ly/Calendar_Paula





Stearns Financial Group is a group comprised of investment professionals registered with Hightower Advisors, LLC, an SEC registered investment adviser. Some investment professionals may also be registered with Hightower Securities, LLC, member FINRA and SIPC. Advisory services are offered through Hightower Advisors, LLC. Securities are offered through Hightower Securities, LLC. This is not an offer to buy or sell securities. No investment process is free of risk, and there is no guarantee that the investment process or the investment opportunities referenced herein will be profitable. Past performance is neither indicative nor a guarantee of future results. The investment opportunities referenced herein may not be suitable for all investors. All data or other information referenced herein is from sources believed to be reliable. Any opinions, news, research, analyses, prices, or other data or information contained in this presentation is provided as general market commentary and does not constitute investment advice. Stearns Financial Group and Hightower Advisors, LLC or any of its affiliates make no representations or warranties express or implied as to the accuracy or completeness of the information or for statements or errors or omissions, or results obtained from the use of this information. Stearns Financial Group and Hightower Advisors, LLC assume no liability for any action made or taken in reliance on or relating in any way to this information. The information is provided as of the date referenced in the document. Such data and other information are subject to change without notice. This document was created for informational purposes only; the opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and do not represent those of Hightower Advisors, LLC, or any of its affiliates.