

The “Sweet Life” Digest

Winter 2019

A Note from Brittany

“She turned her cant’s into cans and dreams into plans.”



Our planning process here at Sweet Financial, the Dream Architect, is centered around helping to ensure your finances support your biggest hopes and dreams for your future.

We have had the opportunity to share in the achievement of some of our clients’ biggest dreams, which is so incredibly fulfilling!

From dream travel destinations to that dream car to the vacation home to funding their grandchildren’s college education – the examples we’ve shared in are endless!

But what about the dreams that don’t involve something tangible? What about the experiences? What about dreams as they pertain to a very personal level of fulfillment?

What some of you may not know is that while we support our clients in their dream achievement, we do the same for our team.

Now, while I personally have dreams of completing the remodel on our home and staying in an overwater bungalow (because who doesn’t dream of warm weather living in Minnesota!), I had a dream up on the board that was more important to me than anything else.

That dream was to complete our family.

That dream was to overcome my fertility issues so that my husband and I could have three kids like we planned for since our early dating years. To complete our family by our definition.

I know some may scratch their heads wondering how Sweet Financial could help me achieve that dream or how that ties in with my financial goals.

Let me tell you – working in a company where your team feels like family...that helps you keep your eyes on your goals. Making sure that in my own financial planning that I was properly allocating funds to pay for fertility treatments – that support helped keep me focused on what mattered most to me.

When you open up and share what matters most to you, I mean what REALLY matters, the universe can’t help but try to make your dreams become reality.

Looking back on the last year I was able to finally bring my biggest dream to life with the birth of our son in October 2018.

Every single day I would walk by our team dream board in the office and would see the image I had posted up there when we were trying to get pregnant with our second child (who is now a busy, hilarious almost 2-year-old!). Every single day I got the reminder I needed of why I’m working so hard to get what I wanted.

When I would see that image, I’d remember that even during the hardest parts of my pregnancies, during the times that doctor’s bills seemed to be flying at us left and right – that everything was going to be ok because I had a plan on how we’d bring our dreams to life.

Now I sit as a mama to three beautiful babies – Jersey (5), Stella (1 ½) and Vincent (4 months) – and

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Advantages of Making a Donor-Advised Fund a Retirement Account Beneficiary

By Oliver Kollofski, Registered Representative-RJFS, Director of Wealth Services-SFS



Although designating any qualified charity as a beneficiary usually allows an estate to claim a charitable contribution deduction, naming a public charity with a donor-advised fund program as beneficiary of a tax-deferred retirement account such as an IRA or 401(k) gives clients and heirs more flexibility. A donor-advised fund is a program of a public charity that functions like a tax-advantaged charitable checking account that can be used solely for giving.

Upon death, your IRA assets can fund the donor-advised fund. It can then be distributed to charities immediately or over time through an endowed giving program. Or you can let a trusted friend or family member make the choice – a designated account successor can then make grant recommendations over time to charities they would like to support.

Traditional IRAs, 401(k)s and 403(b)s may contain after-tax contributions that are not subject to income taxes. If they do, there are special tax rules to determine what portion of a withdrawal is attributable to after-tax contributions. This article does not address those rules. Withdrawals from Roth IRAs, Roth 401(k)s and Roth 403(b)s, along with their associated earnings, are generally free from income taxes if certain conditions are met.

Source: <https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/philanthropy/donating-retirement-assets-to-charity.shtml>

Six Little Known Facts and Benefits of a Roth IRA

By Ty Totzke, ChFC®, AIF®, Wealth Advisor-RJFS

With the passing of the Tax Law & Jobs Act of 2017, the Roth IRA has become an even better opportunity to take advantage of tax advantaged retirement savings. Here are some little known facts and benefits of the Roth IRA to consider:

1. Contributions to a Roth IRA are not tax-deductible. Unlike a traditional IRA, contributions are made with after-tax dollars. It does not offer immediate tax benefits, however the real benefits are realized at the time of distribution. A qualified distribution from a Roth IRA is tax-free, also allowing you to have access to your contributions at any time.
2. You must meet the eligibility requirements to contribute to a Roth IRA. The IRS says that to be eligible to contribute to a Roth IRA for 2018, your taxable income must fall below the established income thresholds. The phase-out limits for a single filer is \$120,000 to \$135,000 (\$122,000-\$137,000 for 2019), for joint filers the phase-out is \$189,000 to \$199,000 (\$193,000-\$203,000 for 2019). Contributions must be made from earned income, which means individuals cannot use rental property income, royalties or other non-taxable compensation to make contributions to a Roth IRA.
3. You can convert other retirement accounts to a Roth IRA. The conversion rules allow you to transfer funds from a tax-deferred IRA or 401k. When converted, the amount you transfer to the Roth IRA will be added to your taxable income for the year of the conversion.
4. Roth IRAs can help meet other financial goals, in addition to retirement. Since you are contributing after-tax dollars, qualified distributions from a Roth IRA do not increase your taxable income (contributions but not the earnings). The accessibility of your after-tax contributions could help in areas such as college savings, home purchase, vehicle purchase, etc.
5. There is a five-year rule for Roth IRA withdrawals. To take a qualified tax-free distribution from the earnings of a Roth IRA, you must meet the distribution requirements. One requirement is that the Roth IRA be in existence for 5 years. The 5-year

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Navigating Your Dreams

By Bryan Sweet, CLU, ChFC, MSFS, CFS
Founder and CEO-SFS, Wealth Advisor-RJFS

Everybody needs encouragement; from the CEO, to the hourly employee, to that difficult in-law, to the down-and-outers. Everybody! Here are a few truths to realize:

Recognize the world is filled with discouragers.

That's right. The world is filled with people eager and ready to spew out words of defeat. Turn on the television or check out your Internet news source and you are certain to see and hear a litany of bad news and dire predictions. The world is filled with cynics and dream-killers.

Of course, this isn't a modern phenomenon that can be blamed on Trump, on the Democrats, on the Republicans, on the media, or anybody else in particular.

Throughout history, dream-killers have tried to shout down other people and their ideas. The danger comes when you listen and believe those discouraging dream-killers.

So let me give you a couple tips below so you don't get discouraged and keep on winning at whatever is important to you.

#1 Remember that failing does not make you a failure

Having a failure does not make you a failure UNLESS you start to think of yourself that way. If you start to think you're a messed-up, screwed-up failure, that's where you'll stay. As martial artist, actor and author Bruce Lee noted, "Defeat is a state of mind. No one is ever defeated until defeat has been accepted as reality."

That's why encouragement is so important. It holds open the possibility that the future may be more exciting, more mind-boggling than we think. It refuses to say no to an idea, even if it seems foolish. Perhaps that crazy idea is just ahead of its time.

#2 Focus on progress, not perfection.

As obvious as it sounds, failure is simply a part of the human experience. Everybody fails at something.

So there's no need to get all bent out of shape when you fail. Oh sure, it may be disappointing or even embarrassing when you fail, but it's not a disgrace that should define your worth in any way.

You don't have to be perfect and you never will be perfect. And thank God for that. If you were perfect, you would be nauseating. No one would want to be around you.

Outrageously happy and successful people know the secret lies in progress ... in getting better ... in moving forward. It does not lie in being perfect.

Instead of focusing energy on what others are doing in their lives, and being envious of what they have, try to focus inwardly and find ways to make progress in your own life and the lives of those that matter most to you.

That's why we created the Dream Architect Process – our strategic 4-step planning process that can help prioritize what is truly important to you so you can work to build your bigger future. It's your dream. We'll help you get there!



Words of Wisdom

"Encouragement is more potent than any drug on the market. It imparts something no chemical company can: real, genuine hope."

- Tommy Barnett, co-founder of the Dream Center, Los Angeles, CA.



Women Forward
SWEET FINANCIAL



Women Forward Happenings

By Lynne Burgraff, CDEA™, WMS, Wealth Advisor-RJFS, and Amber Knips, CFP®, Wealth Advisor-RJFS

The Women Forward Team is excited for the coming year and to help our members be more confident in their financial lives.

2019 started with an event close to our hearts. On February 19th, we hosted an event for Single Moms. Bryan Sweet has dedicated resources to help hardworking, Single Moms become more financially aware. It is through these resources that we are able to bring financial planning, education and empowerment to these women.

This topic hits close to home as Bryan was raised by a Single Mom who raised him in a selfless way and while he's sure she had struggles, she never made them known. A number of our Women Forward team members have also experienced in their own lives what it's like to be raised by, or in a situation of being a single mom.

At our event we were able to share our personal experiences with the guests plus give them six financial tools to help them now and in the future.

On May 7th, we will be holding a Members Only event entitled "Preparing for Life's Transitions". All women will go through some sort of transition in their life whether it is retirement, widowhood or divorce, just to name a few. This event will give women strategies to meet their transitions head on with confidence. Our members should keep an eye out for this invitation in April.

If you are not a Women Forward member, but would be interested in education, empowerment, and a little fun, it is easy to join. Either go to our website at www.sweetfinancial.com and click on the Women Forward tab to fill out a short membership form or call Marsha in our office at 1-800-658-2507 or 507-235-5587. There is no fee to be a member and you are then guaranteed to get our exclusive invitations for our events.

We are looking forward to all the promise and positivity that 2019 will bring!

Staff Training Updates

By Brittany Anderson, Director of Operations, Office Manager-RJFS

We are so excited to kick off the New Year with some amazing development opportunities for our team!

We started the year off by hosting our second annual Elite Wealth Advisor Symposium in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Bryan, alongside one of the other top advisors at Raymond James, and event coordinator Callee Becker, brought in talent from across the United States to speak to a group of financial advisors to help them become better business people, grow their practice and help more people. Ty and Oliver were also able to attend and see the incredible line-up of speakers. It was 2 ½ days of growth and comradery, and we feel honored to have been able to coordinate such an event to help other financial advisors be the best version of themselves.

In February Bryan was able to attend his first Genius Network event for the year where he is surrounded by the world's most successful entrepreneurs, where they spend two days focusing on growing their business in order to help more people along the way.

As a team, we are continuing our quarterly book club where we all read a designated book and have a productive discussion on topics that enhance our core values of teamwork, honesty & integrity, excellence and client focus. If you stumble across any books that fit those topics we would love to hear some client recommendations!

Simplify Life for Your Heirs: The Benefits of Holistic Planning

By Bryan Sweet, CLU, ChFC, MSFS, CFS
Founder and CEO-SFS, Wealth Advisor-RJFS

Many people put off retirement planning because they think it's hard, complicated, and expensive.

"I'm old, I'm tired. I just want to be done with work and finally relax." Have you heard people say this? Perhaps you even have some friends, or acquaintances who have a negative attitude about retirement.

But it doesn't have to be that way.

Retirement is more than the numbers. It's both math and mindset.

The financial part is simple.

For example, if you say you will need \$5,000 a month in retirement once you are no longer receiving a paycheck, then in less than a few minutes we can probably tell you how much money you need to have saved by the time you retire.

But that is way too basic.

What are you going to do with that \$5,000? What type of life experiences do you want to have over the years, and why are they important to you?

Or even better yet, have you thought about the legacy you want to leave? Or what happens with your assets when they are passed to your heirs?

If you don't ask yourself these types of questions, to really understand why you are working and building wealth now, you're potentially setting yourself up for a dull and boring retirement, and potentially a mess for the next generation—and who wants that?

Why do we push this conversation so much?

We have found that if something has a deep personal meaning to you, you will be more likely to make the changes necessary in your habits and lifestyle to achieve that goal.

Often times we hear that our clients' why in starting the wealth planning journey is because they don't want to leave a mess for their heirs.

The list below represents what we frequently hear as the ideal wealth plan for any given individual.

- No probate at time of passing
- No professional fees (ie: attorney's, outside consultants, etc)
- Little to no tax obligation for their heirs
- Tax obligations used for charitable gifts
- Consolidated and streamlined process so that when they do pass their families are dealing with the paperwork once vs having to do the same process multiple times

Now what if we told you that by working through our Dream Architect planning process, we could potentially check every single one of those concerns off? What would that be worth to you?

The Answer: You can't put a price on living your ideal life while helping to ensure your heirs are taken care of.

Any opinions are those of Bryan Sweet and not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James. Expressions of opinion are as of this date and are subject to change without notice. Any information is not a complete summary or statement of all available data necessary for making an investment decision and does not constitute a recommendation. Investing involves risk and investors may incur a profit or a loss. You should discuss any tax or legal matters with the appropriate professional.

Personal Notes

Konnie Francis-Seifried -

Last April brought a new addition to our family, a 1 ½ year old English Bulldog, Carter. He brings an interesting dynamic to everything that's for sure but it's been fun. He loved watching the boys soccer games last fall. When the weather turned cooler it meant a few other things changed along with it. Max turned 18 in November and is now half way through his senior year of high school. Jackson, my baby, turned 16 in December and has his own car! That is unbelievable to me. Where does the time go? With Winter also comes basketball and hockey season for the Francis-Seifried clan. Basketball is my favorite so I try to make it to all of Jackson's games while Steve travels in the opposite direction to watch Max play hockey. This helps pass the time in the Winter months for us then in Spring we circle back around and both the boys shoot for the High School Trap team so we are all back together again for that. Morgan will graduate from Winona State in May so we will look forward to that and are excited for her to start the next chapter in her life.



Amber Knips -

It has been a busy couple months in the Knips household, Rogan Dale Knips arrived earlier than expected on December 28th weighing in at 8#'s and 22 inches long. Big sister Blakely is so in love, he is the first thing she asks about when she wakes up, and is always there to rub his back when he is upset. We are so blessed!



**Congratulations
Amber & Jared!**

New & Notes

Pack Up + Go Travel. Do you spend weeks dreaming of weekend getaways? Love traveling but loathe planning? Do you like surprises? Pack Up + Go plans 3-day weekend trips around the United States. All you have to do is tell them your budget and fill out a quick survey. They'll take care of your travel + accommodation arrangements - all while keeping your destination a surprise. Bryan, Mary Beth & family had a blast going to Philadelphia on their weekend getaway last Fall! Visit www.packupgo.com for more details.

Checks Payable. It is preferred that all checks received by our office, from clients, or any other party, be made payable to Raymond James & Associates. We will accept third-party checks, however, these checks must be made payable to match the registration on the Raymond James account. We cannot accept checks made payable to a specific Financial Advisor, nor can we accept checks made payable to Sweet Financial Services. If you have any questions at all, please contact our Concierge Services Team.

SFS Annual Report. In January we mailed out our first ever Sweet Financial Annual Report. We have received so many positive comments from our clients on this piece so we want to extend a big thank you to everyone who reached out. If there is anyone you know who would benefit from learning more about the services we provide and ways we can help them, we would be happy to mail them a report on your behalf.

Exciting New Tool. In order to create efficiencies for our clients and here at Sweet Financial, we would like to introduce a new, easy to use scheduling software! **Calendly** is a simple, easy to use, scheduling software, which will allow you to schedule an appointment with your Wealth Advisor. You will receive a personalized link to your email sent by Sweet Financial, which you will click on, and it will bring up a calendar for you to schedule your appointment. While this is still a new feature in our business, we would love to hear feedback from you on ease of use and of course general comments and questions. We look forward to seeing you soon!

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I know that without putting my dream in front of me every single day that it would have been harder to get through the most difficult times.

Remember this when you think about what is most important to you. By having a visual reminder of what matters most to you, your brain is going to subconsciously start working on how to make your dream come true.

Oprah said it best when she stated, "The biggest adventure you can take is to live the life of your dreams."

To find out how you can get your own personalized dream board, simply reach out to our Director of Client Experience, Jessica Salic, and she can share with you on how to get started!

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clock begins ticking on the first day of the tax year which the contribution is made. The five-year rule also applies to monies converted to a Roth IRA.

6. There are no required minimum distributions (RMD) during the life of the Roth IRA owner. The IRA requires a minimum amount of income be taken from tax deferred savings, such as a traditional IRA or 401k, once the owner reaches age 70 ½. A Roth IRA owner is not required to take such distributions, however, this privilege disappears upon death of the owner. Heirs to the Roth IRA, must begin tax-free distributions from an inherited Roth IRA over their lifetime.



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