

## Ideas for generational financial stability

### Teenagers

The generations preceding you have benefitted from governmental extravagance and short-ranged policies. They are now leaving you to pay the bills and suffer the consequences. This isn't just or fair. But you can't change it. The issue becomes how will you ethically provide yourselves with a satisfying financial future in the K-shaped economy and a likely Engels' Pause.

Competition for decent jobs is likely to become more fierce. Be realistic. You are unlikely to become a wealthy entertainer or professional athlete. Your best chance is to develop marketable job skills. Multiple job skills would be preferable because life-time careers are becoming rare. The best job skills are those most difficult to attain. Otherwise, everybody would do them.

Considering college? Google "best college degrees for jobs" or something similar. However, be aware that millions of other teenagers are doing the same search. You'll need to compete to get into the best schools. The most coveted degree programs accept more applicants than they intend to graduate and trust competition to weed many out. Once in, you'll need to compete to stay in. Programs that aren't competitive aren't that valuable. Developing your academic competitiveness starts in high school.

Many blue collar jobs pay more than those requiring a degree. Google them. But remember that other teenagers are also Googling. You'll need to be competitive even to get into the best training programs. Cognitive problem-solving and interpersonal skills are both important. Start developing those abilities by challenging yourself to do projects that require new skills. Think of skills as tools in your toolbox. Developing new skills is an ability itself that has lifetime benefits.

### Adults

For the middle class, the way you manage money is as important as how much money you make. The most financially successful adults will create a long-range financial plan. Investment companies advertise their willingness to help you do so. As long as the firm is rated as a fiduciary—required to act in your best interest—their advice is well worth considering.

Investment firms are certain to advise you to build a nest egg. The sooner you start the better. And you will need more money than you likely realize. Experts report that retired couples on Medicare will need \$315,000 to \$350,000+ to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses not including long-term care. Helping your children with their education or training for a promising financial future is also costly. Our government seems reluctant to make Social Security and Medicare solvent. What about the Social Security Trust Fund? There isn't one except on paper. The government issued to themselves treasury securities and then spent the money. The government's escalating \$39 trillion debt makes unlikely that they will cover you at current levels.

Your retirement years can fulfill a lifetime of yearning if you have money available. Don't delay making some tough decisions and stick with a well-known fiduciary. Fortunately, many resources offer tips on saving money on day-to-day expenses to build a nest-egg. Avoid protection plans or insurance on any item you could afford to lose. Interest payments soak people who can least afford them. We recommend a commitment to not purchase any depreciating asset on credit. Being in debt is like

pushing a car uphill. Once you crest the hill by being out of debt, the car rolls freely and gains speed. So can your finances. Stringent steps are painful at first but payoff for a lifetime and generations beyond.

Many conscientious people want to do good with their savings. Charitable organizations always want the money now. Consider opening your own give-later fund. The charitable organizations will still be needing money once you've got that metaphorical financial car rolling downhill. You'll also have a better understanding of what will be your actual long-term financial needs. The charitable organizations are likely to get more money once your investments have grown.

## Seniors

As a teenager, I rolled my eyes as my grandparents and widowed mother told me stories about the difficulty of their lives during the Great Depression. I don't know whether they tried to motivate me or just gain a little respect for what they endured. Regardless of their intent, the stories made an impression on me and affected my future for the better.

The point is that seniors can influence resistant younger people either by their personal example or by knowledge of the financial perils ahead. The last thing most seniors want to do is nag their descendants. Nevertheless, somebody needs to impress on following generations the challenges before them.

Some seniors have accumulated a nest egg or inherited money. This is time to use the money well. Lifestyle experts advise us to accumulate experiences rather than things. You can enjoy experiences over and over in memories. Gift yourself some experiences. When your likely health and care are covered, you can invest in your children and grandchildren or charitable organizations. One of the best ways to collect experiences is sponsoring yourself to do charitable work.