

Introduction

You have a choice in life. You can either live on purpose, according to a plan you've set. Or you can live by accident, reacting to the demands of others. —Michael Hyatt

All guessing. No client-centered purpose. That is how the big corporations within the finance industry operate.

This lack of purposeful planning is rampant, and it's a death sentence for most people's WealthSpan—their financial longevity and wellbeing. Why? Let me put it this way. Nobody would walk to an open field and start building a structure without a vision, blueprint, or materials. The structure would fall apart during the first storm. But that's essentially what happens in the finance industry.

I see the frustrating results all the time. People spend their entire lives saving money for a nest egg while neglecting their health and quality of living. Then they retire and, in just a few short years, they either lose their sense of purpose or their health goes sharply downhill and they pass away before living the life they had hoped for.

Working with an advisor to build that nest egg, they've picked one of five portfolio products, limited choices designed by a company looking to make the firm as much money as possible by doing the least work while still retaining the client. To some degree, this corporate thinking is intended to mitigate their own risk, but it handcuffs the advisor. And doing so can hurt the client by limiting choice, opportunity, and flexibility. Ultimately, it's a sickness of the corporate mindset. One I'd like to cure.

Instead, people need specialization based on their immediate lifestyle needs. But that's not how the industry works. There's no discussion about their purpose right now, the future, their dreams, or a desired lifestyle at all! There's no understanding of their passions or aspirations. There's no additional work protecting the client's assets and purpose from a lawsuit. There's no tax planning to optimize the longevity of their WealthSpan. It's just a cookie-cutter, one-and-done deal complete with a once-a-year (if they're lucky) check in.

That's what happened to two people I knew well, Bob and Carol. Back then, I was working at a big-name firm as a Senior Vice president wealth advisor. I had many years' of experience, and that expertise created a conflict between this couple's needs and the firm. Bob was a very successful CEO. There were certainly complexities to his portfolio and overall financial situation. I knew how to tailor their plan to their goals, but the firm wouldn't let me use the best tools to take those actions.

I wasn't allowed to help Bob and Carol pursue advanced tax strategies, take actionable steps to achieve a lifestyle, or carefully plan for their estate and legacy. As an employee, my duty was to go through my pitch, hook them into one of five portfolio options, and have one call with them a year. I was encouraged to have them sell assets they already owned—for the purposes of getting their money into one of the five portfolio products—that would create large tax liabilities. The institution just did not care.

Bob and Carol could have been living their dream life now while generating an income that would have paid for the future life they chose for themselves. Instead, they'll sit on a nest egg—a cookie-cutter portfolio that is sold to everyone—that a firm uses to collect fees and dues. They'll delay their life into a retirement, and they may just miss the boat on having truly lived with purpose.

Why are many big financial firms like this? It's a top-down approach. A small committee of ten people, most of which have never had experience as an actual financial advisor, tends to make choices for an entire company. Anybody on the board that speaks up about holding assets with large tax liabilities, advanced tax strategies, tax loss harvesting, investment alternatives, structured investments, or anything else that would benefit the client but reduce the company's residual revenue or increase risk to the institution, the institution will shoot down. It creates a culture where advisors are either afraid to speak up or glad to add bulk clients to earn a paycheck.

Bob and Carole were just a portfolio to this firm. Nobody looked at them and thought that they could benefit from a financial plan with purpose. But, if you want to live with purpose, you need a financial plan. Most people think portfolios and financial plans are the same thing, but they're not. A financial plan is much more broad and holistic, designed to help you achieve a desired lifestyle. Shockingly, only around 30 percent of investors have one.

The reason why I got into this line of work was to help people live the life of their dreams, but my managers wanted me to fit Bob and Carol into the same portfolio that everybody else had. Eight to ten different mutual funds. Moderate diversification. And giving them a "choice" of conservative, moderate, balanced, growth, or aggressive portfolio growth (aka risk tolerance). Just another tax inefficient cookie-cutter portfolio.

Choosing a percentage of risk is *not* purposeful planning. It is the illusion of planning! One meant to make the client feel like they are getting some sort of personal care and attention (even though everybody gets the same thing). What's worse, Bob and Carol were meant to leave the meeting thinking they had agency in their finances, but it's more accurate to say the firm was deciding for them.

Maximum corporate revenue. The least corporate effort. The big institutions get between the advisor and the client, and only 17 percent of planners offer their clients a proactive approach. And when they do rarely talk about purpose. It's not a system designed to help the client. That's got to change.

That's why I built my own company and financial organization that serves the client first. Independent and boutique financial planners like me can provide the vision and passion—what's needed for true financial planning and wealth management—that larger firms seem to have lost or were never interested in providing.

Now that the veil has been pulled back, I have a crucial question: What can you do to stop the system of guesswork when it comes to your financial planning?

Purposeful Planning

It's time to identify and patch up the gaps in your financial health by being purposeful, strategic, and intentional. Make your ideal life real. Push back against the cookie-cutter portfolio and plan with purpose. *Everybody* needs a WealthSpan—or intentional and lasting longevity for their wealth—built from purposeful planning in order to create a fulfilling life.

You may be a highly successful person, but that doesn't mean there isn't a gap somewhere in your finances that, down the road, could change your financial expectations dramatically for the worse. Do the strategic preventative work to ensure that your WealthSpan can give you a great life now *and* the retirement you want.

What's at stake if you don't plan with purpose? What if you aren't optimizing your taxes? What if somebody slips and falls in your driveway and sues you for two million dollars? Without the strategic and intentional planning, your financial future and expected lifestyle could be up in smoke.

Here's a real-life horror story that broke up a family. A high-net-worth family I knew never bothered to put a trust together or do proper and purposeful estate planning. Despite my encouragement, their financial advisor didn't work with them on it. All hell broke loose after the head of this family passed away. The kids, angry there wasn't an estate plan, went to court. It was a long, drawn out process. The kids all fought during the years, and, even though they all did fine—in terms of inheriting equal shares—they no longer speak to each other. It's an unfortunately common consequence—one that's entirely preventable.

Financial advisors don't get paid for helping their clients be intentional about their strategies or do proper estate planning, so maybe it's only natural that most don't bother to take necessary steps to strengthen their client's WealthSpan to avoid disasters. It makes sense, in a way. Intentional strategies add work to their plate that, from one perspective, dilutes their income. But wealth managers who foster WealthSpan and work on the same side of their clients are committed to *you*. They're going to use purposeful planning that goes beyond the basic features of traditional advice.

But proper purposeful planning is about building a fulfilled life. That concept—of living intentionally now and into the future—is what separates this book from any other financial book you might pick. It's about putting your mind at ease that you have a plan and can enjoy your hobbies now *and* when you retire. If you've planned well, it will include reevaluation milestones for changing priorities and modifications in recreational and leisure activities as your body ages.

Speaking of leisure activities in our retirement years, part of your purposeful financial planning is connected to the longevity of your health, but I'll let Caleb handle that on his side of the book. Perhaps you didn't realize that this book will discuss both aspects of your future planning and investments: your finances *and* your health. That's why I'm writing this book with Caleb; he's an orthopedic surgeon with an interest in longevity and injury prevention who can provide you with a very important medical perspective on how to make both your body and mind work best for you now and into the future. So stay tuned for that.

Purposeful planning means thinking about what your goals and aspirations are. Do you want to create a legacy? Do you want to create net worth for a nonprofit? Do you want to spend more time with your family? Do you want more time freedom? What is it that makes you happy, and how can your finances support that? A lot of people don't know the answers to questions like these. I don't want you to be one of them. Because *these* are the questions that set my mission apart from every other financial advisor that you have ever spoken with before. And that is why I am here.

The New Purposeful Planning

It's time to introduce The New Purposeful Planning. Planners who help clients manage their wealth with purpose can create financial longevity where the larger financial industry is currently leaving gaps.

I'm the creator of my organization's Purposeful Planning process. Part of this book's mission is to clue you into the strategies of purposeful planning. Think of it as your first step working with a planner who sits on the same side of the table as their clients instead of functioning as a corporate Yes Man. This new planner thinks in decades, not quarters. They simplify complexity. They lead with planning, not products. They tell the truth. They are there to give a client pushback even though it's not what the client may want to hear. They say what others won't, ask what others don't, and deliver what others can't. They are there to look at every aspect of the entire financial situation, including tax optimization and building a plan based on client goals and needs to sustain their WealthSpan.

I have two questions for you that any good wealth manager should ask. What does your ideal WealthSpan look like? What is your financial purpose? The following chapters are designed to help you start answering the complexities of those questions. Here's what to expect.

First, you'll explore the concept of WealthSpan in more detail. That will include rethinking the function of your net worth. Is your net worth simply a nest egg you're trying to get as big as possible, or is it a tool for living a fulfilled life? You'll learn that being financially present and focusing on your relationships and daily experiences, not just having an eye to the future, are keys to financial happiness.

That kind of approach will require you to rethink how you approach saving and spending money. That's when I'll switch gears to discuss a New Abundance Mindset of Finances in chapter 2. Many individuals are asset rich but cash poor, which restricts living in the now. A mindset shift can help you navigate a new approach to living your life on your own terms.

But money isn't infinite. In chapter 3, you'll take stock of your current financial situation while also setting achievable goals. After all, financial planning must account for a lifestyle that motivates action. And it needs to be realistic about goals surrounding physical, cognitive, and emotional health—especially as you reach retirement age.

With those goals in mind, the next step is to protect the finances your goals require. That's why chapter 4 will discuss asset protection strategies, such as insurance strategies, trusts, gifts, retirement accounts, titling, walling off personal assets from business assets, and more. You can build as much financial health as you want, but if you leave it unprotected, you'll have left an exploitable, fatal flaw that could ruin your plans.

Once done with the preliminary education, it's time to start making the body of your finances healthy again. That means a lot of preventative care to make your money work for you. Chapter 5 will consider how to invest to prevent the damage of market fluctuations, advanced tax strategies, and more.

One of the most important aspects of a well-functioning and long-lasting financial plan is to delegate to your WealthSpan Longevity Team. Chapter 6 will walk you through the framework of the most successful version of your financial team, positioning the New Wealth Manager as the captain working in conjunction with key professionals like trust attorneys, tax attorneys, tax accountants, insurance agents, and real estate advisors. Each will stay in their lane but clear the fog for you, working with the new fiduciary duty: transparency.

The right professionals can smooth over problems and, even better, create an engine that can dramatically increase your net worth. I'll coach you on how to hire the best people, identify when somebody is not working for you, and give you permission to fire somebody if they don't have your best interests in mind.

With your individual needs identified and a team is behind you to ensure your plan comes to fruition, you can live your life and produce income sleeping soundly and knowing both

your present and future are taken care of. But, at some point, you can expect to retire, which means you'll need to plan on generating income after you actually stop producing it. In the last chapter of "Unsplode Your WealthSpan," you will plan your retirement with purpose, letting your portfolio do the work for you.

As you move throughout the chapters in "Unsplode Your WealthSpan," there will be corresponding chapters related to your HealthSpan—your physical and emotional health and longevity—in this book's complementary Part, "Unsplode Your HealthSpan." There, your financial planning will be balanced by physical and emotional health strategies that you can use your finances to implement. Together, both parts of this book are about finding out what your individual financial and health needs are. You are unique; your plans should be unique, too.

Think of it as a Choose Your Own Adventure. You can read all the way through this part before moving onto HealthSpan, or you could go back and forth between corresponding chapters. It's up to you.

Whatever you choose, don't waste your life wishing for next week. There's a better way. It's time to make your health and wealth work together and bring them into balance so that you can live your life now *and* tomorrow.

Let Us be Your New Wealth CEO

You'll be in good hands in the chapters to come. Grounded in principles of the financial organization I built from the ground up, you'll learn practical tools and strategies on how to plan with purpose and build the right team around you to ensure a healthy WealthSpan.

I've been in the wealth-management business for twenty years. When I hear endless stories about client regret, it is always that they wish they'd lived and experienced more. My financial philosophies are geared toward helping clients create meaningful memories. And since I started in this industry before the financial crisis, I know how to shape financial

plans that can weather a storm and keep dreams alive. It was some of the best training any financial planner could receive. People like me know what volatility means.

We specialize in leadership and execution. The very nature of being a CEO has to do with finding the right path that fits your needs and helping you stay the course. These are strategies for the now, for the long run, and designed by a wealth manager that gives their clients continuous support.

We have the materials; you have the vision. Let's build something special. I want to help you do it the right way. You have the chance to build the life of your dreams with purposeful planning, and we hope to be alongside you to make it happen.

What Does “Unplode Your WealthSpan” Mean?

As you read on, you'll experience a bold new approach to deconstructing and rebuilding your WealthSpan, a purposeful plan designed to maximize the longevity of your wealth. I'll remove anything cancerous about your current financial situation and build it back stronger than before. And my cousin Caleb will help you with your HealthSpan.

About seven years ago, Caleb and I started to collaborate on this book. We come from wildly different professional backgrounds. I'm a wealth manager. He's an orthopedic surgeon (and a darn a good one). When we'd catch up, we both realized that the people we serve go up against systems not necessarily designed with their best interests in mind. Patients don't go see doctors until they're sick. Investors don't plan with advisors much at all. Too often, this creates an imbalance—where a person focuses only on their health, only on their wealth, or neither—which causes people to lose their health and wealth needlessly. Unnecessarily losing everything they've tried to work for causes a catastrophic destruction of their aspirations and plans. Their life basically explodes! And it happens all too frequently. How can that be prevented?

That's where Caleb and I started to contemplate a new and improved planning method that flips the script on traditional methods. In our view, traditional planning—for health and wealth—encourages behavior that can actually explode our lives by creating unexpected and devastating changes in our wealth or wellness. Our systems *unsplode* that. What Caleb and I mean by “unsplode” is to reverse any negative impacts that you could knowingly or unknowingly be placing on your personal success with your health and wealth. In wealth planning, we aim for long-term, compounding growth that is tax efficient. In health, the return is more years, more energy, and more time doing what matters. But we build it so that you can live a fulfilling life today *and* tomorrow. It's not good enough to only plan for the future; you have to plan for now, too.

For my part, I want to reduce and then eliminate any damage your finances have incurred because they've been in a prolonged tax inefficient, cookie-cutter “plan” not meant for your individual goals or, worse yet, not benefiting from *any* plan. It's time to *unsplode* and take back control of your financial future.

This is a book of non-negotiables. It is a book meant to help you bring balance back into your life. Use it to create clarity on what you need to be financially successful, how to cultivate happiness alongside your financial plan, and how to build your life with purpose. Look at all aspects of your life—health, wealth, family, hobbies, and everything else—and take the steps required to maximize them.

Although my chapters will focus on finances, WealthSpan also requires you to be healthy in other areas of your life. To maximize your life, you need both to be balanced. Improving your health gives you the energy to gain more wealth. Improving your wealth lets you invest more time and capital into your health. One needs the other. Therefore, utilize the entirety of this book as a tool to rethink your financial and physical health and to seek out the professionals like me that can help you rebuild both.

Let's get started!