

Test AMZ User
AMZ Financial
1000 Any Street
City, ST 10000

August 2009

MESSAGES from the Masters

Are You an Optimist or a Pessimist? by Chris Widener

I have been giving some thought lately to optimism and pessimism. Basically, these are attitudes. Attitudes that shape and formulate our entire existence. I mean, have you ever met a happy pessimist? Of course not.

In short, our optimism or pessimism is this:

The way we interpret the past
The way we experience and view the present
The way we imagine the future

Have you given much thought about how your attitude, whether you are an optimist or a pessimist, affects you?

What is optimism? It is a belief that things in our past were good for us, even if that means they were hard and taught us lessons. It is also the belief that things will be better in the future.

Here are some contrasts between optimism and pessimism and how they affect us:

Optimism breathes life into you each day
Pessimism drains you

Optimism helps you to take needed risks
Pessimism plays it safe and never accomplishes much

Optimism improves those around you
Pessimism drags them down

Optimism inspires people to great heights
Pessimism deflates people to new lows

There is only one way that optimism and pessimism are the same and that is that they are both self-fulfilling. If you are an optimist, you will generally find that good things happen to you. And if you are a pessimist, you will find yourself in the not-so-good situations more often than not.

So can a person just become an optimist? Yes! We can choose to look at the world any way we want to. We can choose to look at the world and think the worst, or we can tell ourselves the good things about each situation. As you find yourself beginning to view the world through the eyes of an optimist, you will reap the rewards listed above, and so will the people around you.

Have you ever met a successful pessimist? Become an optimist and see your world change before your eyes!

Test AMZ User
1000 Any Street
City, ST 10000
(512) 555-1212
oquinn@fsonline.com

About Our Firm...

- Take your time.** This is an emotional time...not the best time to be making important financial decisions. Short of meeting any required tax or legal deadlines, don't make hasty decisions concerning your inheritance.
- Identify a team of reputable, trusted advisors** (attorney, accountant, financial/insurance advisors). There are complicated tax laws and requirements related to certain inherited assets. Without accurate, reliable advice, you may find an unnecessarily large chunk of your inheritance going to pay taxes.
- Park the money.** Deposit any inherited money or investments in a bank or brokerage account until you're in a position to make definitive decisions on what you want to do with your inheritance.
- Understand the tax consequences of inherited assets.** If your inheritance is from a spouse, there may be no estate or inheritance taxes due. Otherwise, your inheritance may be subject to federal estate tax or state inheritance tax. Income taxes are also a consideration.
- Treat inherited retirement assets with care.** The tax treatment of inherited retirement assets is a complex subject. Make sure the retirement plan administrator does **not** send you a check for the retirement plan proceeds until you have made a distribution decision. Get sound professional financial and tax advice before taking any money from an inherited retirement plan...otherwise you may find yourself liable for paying income taxes on the entire value of the retirement account.
- If you received an interest in a trust,** familiarize yourself with the trust document and the terms under which you receive distributions from the trust, as well as with the trustee and trust administration fees.
- Take stock.** Create a financial inventory of your assets and your debts. Start with a clean slate and reassess your financial needs, objectives and goals.
- Develop a financial plan.** Consider working with a financial advisor to "test drive" various scenarios and determine how your funds should be invested to accomplish your financial goals.
- Evaluate your insurance needs.** If you inherited valuable personal property, you will probably need to increase your property and casualty coverage or purchase new coverage. If your inheritance is substantial, consider increasing your liability insurance to protect against lawsuits. Finally, evaluate whether your life insurance needs have changed as a result of your inheritance.
- Review your estate plan.** Your inheritance, together with your experience in managing it, may lead you to make changes in your estate plan. Your experience in receiving an inheritance may prompt you to want to do a better job of how your estate is structured and administered for the benefit of your heirs.

Please contact my office if we can be of assistance.