

JAN
FEB
2023



IN THE KNOW WITH



R.D. SMOTHERS
— WEALTH MANAGEMENT —

NEWS YOU CAN USE

RENDER TO CAESAR THAT WHICH IS CAESAR'S

You have heard that before, right? I believe it is what the legislators had in mind when they first passed the Required Minimum Distribution bill into law. The Required Minimum Distribution rule, commonly referred to as the RMD, is a rule that demands that you take a pre-determined amount of money out of your retirement account at a certain age. Currently, at the age of 72 and every year thereafter the IRS requires you to pull this RMD money from the account, whether you need it or not.

This simple rule poses a problem for people who have plenty of income to meet their expenses each year. They are forced to take money out of an account that, like this year, may be experiencing losses. They are also forced to show this money on their income taxes as ordinary income, in the year they take the distribution. This causes a potential "double whammy" for many investors who are being forced to pay taxes on an investment they didn't want to sell in the first place.

One common move for many investors is to place this money back into a brokerage account and give the money a chance to continue growing in the stock market. While this is an

effective strategy for those who may need money later in life, there may be a much more efficient strategy for those looking to pass this money to a loved one when they die.

With careful consideration of tax laws and your personal situation, we can place those eligible RMD dollars into a certain type of life insurance account that will multiply the money and pass a significantly larger amount to a beneficiary-income tax free! The RMD money funds the life insurance account that one day (when the client passes away) becomes a large, tax-free inheritance for their loved ones of their choosing.

Another consideration to think about is that if the money is to be left to a charity, we can structure the insurance account in a way that can help allow you to deduct the premium amount as an itemized deduction on your taxes, passing very little of the RMD through as actual income for that year... it could be beneficial for both the donor and the 501(c)(3) receiving the money!

Call us for more information if you are taking RMD's, not needing the income, and have a goal of leaving money behind to someone or something you love and care about.

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DALE SMOTHERS RICP, MBA
President and Founder



THAT TIME OF YEAR

Mental Hacks to Make Resolutions Stick

Most of us are quitters when it comes to resolutions (the second Friday of January is National Quitters Day). However, you can help your resolutions stick with some surprisingly simple brain hacks based on neuroscience.

Habit Stacking

Adding a new, minor change to a current routine lets us fold some new behavior into the things we're already doing, making it easier to keep up the new habit.

Example: "Stack" a new habit of donating to charity or contributing extra to a savings account when you're paying your monthly bills.

Gamification

Games are fun. Turning your resolution into a game with built-in rewards for "winning" makes our resolutions more tangible and provides a clear path forward.

Example: Download an app that gamifies your goals. If you want to get in better shape, use a step counter or a fitness tracking app.

Keystone Habits

Some habits can inspire bigger changes in our lives because they make us feel better or improve our productivity. Focus on one behavior (a "keystone" habit) that can create a major ripple effect of positive change in your life.

Example: Getting more sleep and exercising regularly are keystone habits that can trigger other good behaviors, like eating healthy or trying to quit "bad" habits like smoking.

Group Habits

Groups — even just one other person — can motivate us and create a sense of accountability. Join a group that practices the new behavior or shares the new habit you want to adopt.

Example: Start or join a neighborhood group for walking or bicycle riding.

Whether trying to pick up a new habit or drop an old one, changing our behaviors can feel challenging. However, with the right strategies and support, we can successfully launch any new habit we set our sights on.

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THE GOOD LIFE

Simple Life Upgrades

These simple life upgrades have the potential to transform the way you experience and enjoy life. Give them a try today!

1. Go Outside

Simply being outside can be good for your mind and body. As little as 20 minutes outdoors can relax you and lower your blood pressure, heart rate and stress levels.

2. Say No to Things That Drain You

Saying no to activities that drain us can open up more opportunities for happiness. Delegate what you can. Say no to any extra favors. Consider setting up some boundaries for your time, like “off limits” days for certain activities.

3. Volunteer

Supporting the causes and communities you care about can give you a greater sense of happiness, purpose, pride and accomplishment. Consider your skills, interests and time as you choose volunteer opportunities. Try out a few options to determine which organization and opportunities will be a good fit. And remember, volunteering should be fun instead of draining.



4. Nurture Your Relationships

Beyond making us happy, the emotional support we get from the people we care about can help us to make better choices and adopt better habits. Connect with at least one person you love every day and find small ways to show you care by giving a thoughtful compliment or anticipating a loved one's needs.

Living better doesn't mean we have to make radical changes. With a few simple upgrades, we can reshape how we experience life every day and stay in touch with what we need to be happy and live better by staying connected to the people we trust.



HOW TO ...

How To Move to a New Country

Many dream of retiring to a foreign country, whether sun-drenched beaches in the Caribbean or rolling Scottish highlands. With the added complications of immigration, overseas shipping and more, a transcontinental move takes considerable planning and preparation. Avoid some of the hassles using the following tips.¹

Avoid Culture Clash

Spend some time getting familiar with the culture, customs and laws of your new homeland.

Hire International Movers

Some companies specialize in international moves, but, like any major purchase, you'll want to do your research and compare quotes from several reputable companies.

Consult a Professional

An immigration professional will help make sure you have the specific documentation you need to move to another country lawfully.

¹Debbie Wolf, Lexie Pelchen. July 25, 2022. "Your Ultimate International Moving Checklist." <https://www.forbes.com/home-improvement/moving-services/moving-to-another-country-checklist/>. Accessed Sept. 30, 2022.



DOLLARS & SENSE

Stash That Cash (Anywhere But Your Mattress)

Have you heard the story about the contractor renovating a bathroom and finding more than \$180,000 stashed in the walls?¹ In times of economic uncertainty, people often rush to pull their money out of the market and convert it into cash. This is where we get the phrase “mattress money” — cash that’s been stashed somewhere other than a bank. While this might seem like a good idea in the short term when the markets are low, it can have costly consequences.

What happens when your wallet gets stolen? Credit and bank cards can be canceled and replaced, but any cash you might have had is gone for good. The same is true for money stashed in your mattress, in a wall, under the floorboards or buried in a tin can in the tomato garden. If your home is broken into or damaged in a fire or other natural disaster, that cash is likely not protected by renters or homeowners insurance. It’s just gone.

Your money is almost always safest in a federally insured institution. Here your money is typically protected for up to \$250,000 per person. Moreover, even when interest rates are low, you still earn dividends when you keep your money in a savings account.¹ A pile of cash just hiding somewhere in the house isn’t doing anything for you (except possibly attracting trouble).

Aside from turning your mattress into a glorified piggy bank, what should you do when the market is too volatile for your risk tolerance? The first thing to do is not to panic. Making hasty, emotion-driven decisions will likely hurt you more than the market in the long run. It’s almost always a good idea to consult a financial professional before making significant adjustments to your portfolio. You especially want to be aware of any potential tax consequences associated with moving money around. Finally, know that you have options. Depending on your income needs and risk tolerance, there are ways to build up your savings without relying so heavily on the stock market.

For instance, you might decide you want to move a portion of money into less risky investments such as a fixed index annuity (FIA). Designed to meet long-term needs for retirement income, an FIA is essentially a contract between you and an insurance company offering various guaranteed payout options. In exchange for paying a premium, you receive certain fixed interest crediting options that compound tax-deferred until you begin making withdrawals.

Another alternative you might consider is a multi-year guaranteed annuity (MYGA). A MYGA is the annuity version of a certificate of deposit (CD). For the duration of the

annuity contract, you are contractually guaranteed a set return. They’re generally shorter contracts than FIAs (though not always), and, like an FIA, you don’t lose any money if the market goes down.

Which is better, a FIA or MYGA? It all depends on your goals. If you’re looking for a short-term investment, a MYGA is likely better. If a long-term investment with a future income stream is needed, a FIA is preferable.²

Whether accumulating a few extra dollars with a high-interest savings account or money market account or switching from stocks to bonds, the most important thing to remember is to choose a vehicle that puts your money to work for you in ways that physical cash can’t.

Annuity guarantees rely on financial strength and claims-paying ability of issuing insurance company. Annuities are insurance products that may be subject to fees, surrender charges and holding periods which vary by carrier. Annuities are not FDIC insured.

¹ OnFocus. June 3, 2020. “Why You Shouldn’t Hide Your Money in Your Mattress.” <https://www.onfocus.news/why-you-shouldnt-hide-your-money-in-your-mattress/>. Accessed Sept. 30, 2022.

² Stan Haithcock. March 28, 2022. “Annuity Comparison FIA vs. MYGA.” <https://www.stantheannuityman.com/annuity-comparison-fia-vs-myga>. Accessed Sept. 30, 2022.

Retirees Report Increased Sense of Purpose Following Pandemic

When COVID-19 first made headlines, few could have predicted its far-reaching impact on nearly every aspect of our daily lives. While long-lasting physical, mental, social and economic effects won't be known for years to come, one positive outcome can already be found amongst older Americans.

The pandemic has been eye-opening for many people — just look at the “great resignation” of 2021 — as they reevaluate how and where they want to spend their time. For older Americans in particular, this has translated into a renewed search for purpose in retirement and a drive to volunteer, give back and otherwise find ways to benefit their communities.

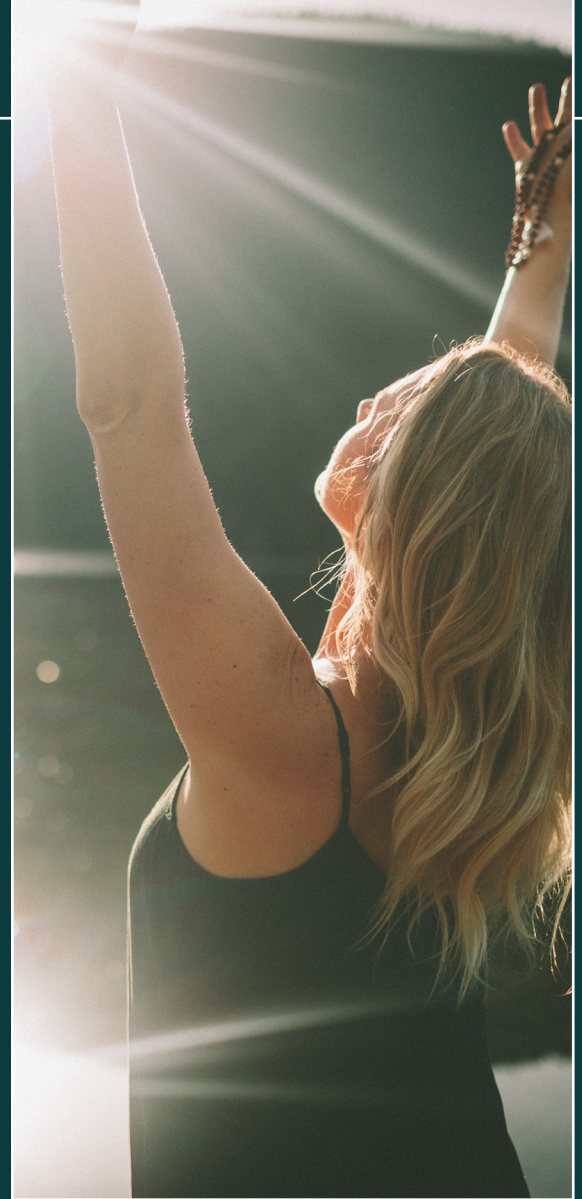
A new study by Edward Jones and Age Wave revealed that approximately 93% of retirees “believe it’s important to feel

useful in retirement, and 87% agree that being useful actually makes them feel youthful.” Furthermore, “retirees indicate they are willing to contribute 238 billion hours of volunteer time over the next two decades.”¹

Retirees also report higher levels of optimism, gratitude and “greater empathy and compassion for people who are struggling in ways that they are not”¹ due to the pandemic.

At a time when many are still struggling to regain their equilibrium, a little extra compassion can go a long way.

¹ Edward Jones. June 14, 2021. “Post-Pandemic, Retirees Overwhelmingly Report Purpose as Key to Successful Retirement, Edward Jones and Age Wave Research Finds.” <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/post-pandemic-retirees-overwhelmingly-report-purpose-as-key-to-a-successful-retirement-edward-jones-and-age-wave-research-finds-301311221.html>. Accessed Oct. 3, 2022.



		4		5		1		
			3	8		6		
	8							4
9		3	1					7
			9	3	8			
2					5	3		9
4							2	
		6		4	7			
		2		1		5		

BRAIN GAMES

Sudoku

Game Rules

Fill in each square with one of the numbers 1 to 9 such that no number repeats in any row, column or 3 by 3 box. Grade is Easy

SHIFT GEARS INTO THE NEW YEAR

FIVE TIPS FOR STAYING TRUE TO YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

If your Christmas tree makes it further into the new year than your resolutions, you aren't alone. A study by Strava found most people call it quits on these annual ambitions by Jan. 19, aka "Quitter's Day."¹ Without proper planning, it's easy to fall back into old routines and bad habits.

Follow these five strategies to give your resolutions the best chance at success:

1. SET SPECIFIC GOALS

With any resolution, specificity is key. Determining exactly what you want to accomplish will help you track progress and stay accountable to your vision. For example, instead of "lose weight" or "save money," think "lose 15 pounds by June" or "save \$500 each month."

2. TAKE BABY STEPS

Rome wasn't built in a day, and your resolutions won't be fully realized on Jan. 1. Exercise patience and know that, often, easing into a new routine or way of thinking can be the difference between achieving your ambitions and throwing in the towel.

3. GET AN ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDY

When it comes to sticking with a resolution, there's strength in numbers. Ask someone you trust to lend an ear to monthly or even weekly progress updates — and offer the same opportunity to them as they work toward their own goals.

4. BE MINDFUL OF THE BIG PICTURE

As Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson illustrates with his legendary 15,000-plus-calorie meals, it's OK to enjoy the occasional cheat day. Straying from your resolution only becomes an issue when it goes from temporary to a trend. Beware the snowball effect.

5. CELEBRATE YOUR MILESTONES

Small victories are victories nonetheless. Acknowledging and relishing these wins as you move toward a bigger goal can serve as valuable pit stops along your journey, so refuel on motivation and get mental maintenance that can help you cross the finish line.

¹Shivali Best. The Mirror. Jan. 2, 2020. "Day that people most likely to give up their New Year's resolutions — and it's very soon." <https://www.mirror.co.uk/science/day-people-most-likely-give-21199904>. Accessed Sept. 21, 2022.

AROUND THE OFFICE

BELOW:

WELCOME ABOARD: Let's welcome JB Piatt to the RDS Wealth Team! JB has been an intern with us for quite some time and we are so excited to have him on board as our Planning Support Specialist!



RIGHT:

OFFICE EXPANSION: The office remodel is almost complete and Brooke is finally able to settle into her new home! There is still work to do, but it is starting to feel a little more like her own space.

TOP RIGHT:

WE ARE GROWING: Welcome Carlie Hazel to the RDS Wealth team! Carlie is our Client Relations and Marketing Coordinator, and we know she will play a pivotal role in our clients experience in our firm!



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RECIPE

QUICK VEGETABLE BEEF SOUP

Vegetable Beef Soup only needs one pot and 30 minutes on the stove. Ground beef, frozen vegetables, tomato sauce, beef broth, and a couple surprise ingredients make this vegetable beef soup so delicious & easy to make!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb lean ground beef
- 1 small onion finely chopped
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 ¼ c. beef broth
- 1 can (15 oz) tomato sauce
- 1 ½ c frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 ½ c frozen corn
- 1 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp molasses

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Place frozen vegetables out on the counter to thaw slightly. This ensures that they will cook within the simmering/cook time of the soup.
2. In a large soup pot, over medium-high heat, cook & crumble ground beef, onion, garlic powder, and dried basil until beef is no longer pink. Drain.
3. To the same pot, add the beef broth, tomato sauce, slightly thawed vegetables, soy sauce, and molasses. Stir together and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce heat to medium-low and let simmer for 15-20 minutes. Stirring occasionally.

Serves 5 people (1 ¾ cup each)

BRAINGAMES

ANSWER KEY:

6	9	4	7	5	2	1	8	3
1	2	7	3	8	4	6	9	5
3	8	5	6	9	1	2	7	4
9	4	3	1	2	6	8	5	7
5	7	1	9	3	8	4	6	2
2	6	8	4	7	5	3	1	9
4	1	9	5	6	3	7	2	8
8	5	6	2	4	7	9	3	1
7	3	2	8	1	9	5	4	6



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UPCOMING DATES

JANUARY

- 1 New's Years Day
- 16 MLK Day
- 17 Social Security Event
- 19 Social Security Event
- 24 Social Security Event
- 26 Social Security Event

FEBRUARY

- 14 Valentine's Day
- 20 President's Day
- 22 Ash Wednesday



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