Personal Newsletter from Erin Dall, The Wealthbuilding Group — Harbourfront Wealth Management

SPRING 2022

Erin Dall
Investment Advisor

Jason A. DeJean
Portfolio Manager
Financial Planner

The Wealthbuilding Group

101 – 5230 South Service Rd.
Burlington, ON L7L 5K2

T: 905.333.4755
F: 905.333.4523

Click here to book a meeting:
https://www.gotomeet.me/edall

Visit our website at:
www.wealthbuilding.ca

Continue Looking Forward

Volatility has returned to the equity markets. For investors, it may feel particularly unsettling considering that extended periods of volatility haven't been seen for some time. Yet, after over two years of disruption from a pandemic, consider that the return to "normal" is expected to take time and there will be the inevitable bumps along the way.

As we try to move forward, the central banks continue to be in the spotlight. Whether or not you agree with the significant stimulus actions taken over the past two years, they have helped to avert more serious financial and economic harm. However, central bankers are now confronted with the complicated task of winding down their support in the return to normal: increasing interest rates to more "normal" levels and reducing balance sheet assets after their aggressive bond-buying programs. Adding to the current challenges? Higher and sustaining inflation, which has largely been supported by ongoing supply chain disruptions — and, more recently, global geopolitical tensions with the Russia/Ukraine war and the lockdowns in China.

Financial markets are often quick to react to these uncertainties and, with the many changes, volatility can be expected. Yet, while there are inevitable challenges, don't listen to the doomsayers who suggest that they are insurmountable. Not to downplay the unique challenges we face today, but history reminds us that every market period has had its own obstacles that make it difficult to assess future prospects. Market pessimists have always been quick to offer their prognostications. Consider that over the past 50 years:

- Annual inflation exceeded 5 percent in 13 of those years.[1]
- The stock market fell in more than 241 of those 600 months, or 40 percent of the time.[2]
- The stock market lost a quarter of its value at least seven times.[2]
- There were eight bear markets lasting a total of 77 months.[2]
- We had six recessions, cumulatively lasting almost six years.[3]

And, yet, over this period the equity markets, as measured by the S&P/TSX Composite Index, appreciated by over six percent on an annualized basis (not including reinvested dividends).[2]

Having a longer-term view reminds us that the markets have continued to progress over time, despite the many short-term uncertainties: credit and debt crises, recessions, many changing policies by central banks, wars and periods of significant inflation. During these times, don't lose sight of your own financial goals: patience, alongside careful monitoring and prudent adjustments through our support, should stand you in good stead.

For many of us, it may feel as though there has been little respite from the challenges faced over the past two years. As we move into spring — quite fittingly referred to as the season of renewal — continue to look forward to the brighter days ahead

1. www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/canada/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-canada.aspx; 2. Based on S&P/TSX Composite Index from close on Dec. 31, 1971 to Dec. 31, 2021: 1/1/72 - 990.54; 1/1/2022 - 21,222.80; 3. Based on recession data from cdhowe.org

In this issue

- Preparing for a Wealth Transfer
- RRIF: Four Things You May Not Know
- Spring Clean Your Beneficiaries
- A Rising Rate Environment

Estate Planning: Preparing for a Wealth Transfer

With over one trillion dollars of inheritances expected to be passed along over the next decade, taking action to preserve wealth across generations has never been more important.[1] Does your estate plan protect this wealth transfer? Here are some considerations:

Preventing Your Estate from Being Contested

It isn't uncommon for disputes to arise during the estate settlement process, especially for families with complex dynamics. In some cases, these disputes can escalate to litigation. While court battles are not only time consuming and stressful, they can also end up being very costly, which can significantly erode family wealth. Perhaps worst of all, they can tear families apart. The reasons are many, including outdated documentation, poorly drafted documents, poorly chosen executor(s) and lack of communication about estate plans with beneficiaries.

There may be ways to minimize this risk. Communicating with heirs about your intentions while you are alive can help to prevent surprises. Importantly, estate documents should be drafted using a reputable professional and should include specific instructions to eliminate doubt. Documents should be reviewed and updated as circumstances require. Care should also be taken when choosing an executor(s), as poor actions by executors can lead to litigation.

Helping Beneficiaries Manage a Wealth Transfer

In some cases, beneficiaries may need support to manage wealth. Young beneficiaries or those with disabilities may not be financially responsible; spouses may need help managing assets such as investments or a business. Beneficiaries may also need to be protected against potential current or future creditors, such as business partners, customers or former spouses.

One of the more common tools used to support beneficiaries is a testamentary trust to hold and manage assets for their benefit. This can help to limit access and manage assets by specifying the timing and amount of distributions to be made.

Accounting for Divorce or Blended Family Dynamics

The transfer of family wealth may need to be protected to account for a complex family structure. In some cases, the way in which assets are currently structured may not be meeting your objectives. For instance, having assets jointly held in a current relationship may unintentionally put children from a previous marriage at risk. An unintended division of assets may also occur if a current spouse becomes a primary beneficiary, when assets were intended for children from a previous marriage. In some provinces, a new marriage can potentially revoke an existing will and the instructions leaving assets to children from a previous marriage would be invalidated. As such, the advice of a lawyer who understands complex family structures can ensure that assets are passed along as intended.

If you have the desire to leave a lasting legacy, planning ahead can help protect family wealth. Given our familiarity with your financial position, we can act as a resource. We recommend the support of tax and legal professionals as it relates to your particular situation.

1. financialpost.com/personal-finance/retirement/canadian-inheritances-could-hit-1-trillion-over-the-next-decade-and-both-bequeathers-and-beneficiaries-need-to-be-ready

Plan Ahead: Four Things You May Not Know About the RRIF

While RRSP season may be over, if you have yet to reach retirement, consider the value in thinking ahead to the time when you will eventually access these funds. Here are four things you may not know about the Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF).

1. You can convert the RRSP to the RRIF earlier than age 71. The RRSP matures by the end of the calendar year in which the holder turns age 71 and is often converted to a RRIF at that time. However, you are able to open a RRIF earlier than this age. Minimum withdrawal payments will still be required, but not until the calendar year following the year that the RRIF account is opened.

2. You can hold the RRSP and RRIF at the same time. While the RRIF is usually used by an investor to transfer funds once the RRSP matures, there may be instances in which you may want both. If you need to generate pension income to take advantage of the federal pension income tax credit, you could consider opening a small RRIF at the age of 65. At the same time, you can still continue operating your RRSP to capture the ongoing tax deductions from your contributions. Consider also that you can notionally split up to 50 percent of your eligible pension income (which includes RRIF income from age 65) with a spouse (or common-law partner).

3. You are able to convert the RRIF back to the RRSP. If you've converted funds to the RRIF earlier than age 71 and realize that it's no longer to your benefit, you are able to convert it back. You may decide to do an early conversion if you retire early, take a sabbatical or have an extended leave from work, since the loss of income means you may be in a lower tax bracket or you may need funds. However, if you return to work, it may be beneficial to resume the RRSP.

4. You can base RRIF withdrawals on a spouse's age. If you have a younger spouse, it may be useful to use their age to result in a lower minimum withdrawal rate for your RRIF. Be aware that this must be done when first setting up the RRIF and before you have received any payments, so plan ahead.

Spring Cleaning? Start with Your Registered Plan Beneficiaries

When was the last time you reviewed your registered plan beneficiary designations? We often forget to revisit these designations after opening our accounts. However, failing to update beneficiaries is a common and potentially costly retirement and estate planning error that many investors make.

Here are some steps you can take to spring clean your beneficiary designations, as it relates to your registered plan accounts:

Create a list of your investment accounts. Then identify which accounts permit beneficiary designations, such as your Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) and Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA), including any accounts through your employer.

List the beneficiaries you have named for each account.

Determine if the named beneficiary is still current. It is possible that a named beneficiary is no longer alive, or perhaps a major life event, like divorce, has changed the status of an existing beneficiary. Be sure to revisit beneficiary designations following major life changes.

Consider whether a beneficiary should even be named. If no beneficiary is named, assets will pass through your estate. In some cases, a beneficiary is named instead of the estate to avoid probate fees.[1] While this may be ideal for tax-planning purposes, it can inadvertently create other issues. For example, if an adult non-dependent child was named as the RRIF beneficiary, the value of the RRIF will be paid directly to them, but the tax burden will fall back to the deceased's estate, unless a provision has been made in the will. This may cause unintended estate equalization issues.

If a spouse (common-law partner) has been named, determine if there are additional considerations. If a spouse is named as beneficiary for a TFSA or RRIF, you also have the option of naming them as "successor holder" or "successor annuitant," respectively. Generally, the successor designation permits the continued operation of the account by the surviving spouse relatively seamlessly. For the TFSA, any income earned after your death would not be taxed. For the RRIF, there would be no tax consequences to your estate.

Seek assistance. We are here to assist with any changes to your beneficiary designations on your registered plan accounts. As you review these beneficiary designations, we recommend considering the support of estate planning and legal advisors to help ensure your estate planning objectives will be met.

1. Estate administration taxes. Note: This article does not apply to Quebec residents, as the rules surrounding beneficiary designations noted in this article are not applicable under Quebec law.

Helping to Protect Investors: The Trusted Contact Person (TCP)

Protecting the financial security of investors has never been more important. With a growing elderly population and our ever-increasing dependence on technology, there has been a rise in cybercrimes.

Fact: Over 46 percent of individuals who are 60 years and older have physical and mental disabilities.[1]

Fact: Each year, one in six seniors falls victim to elder abuse.[2]

Fact: Regardless of age, we remain vulnerable to financial fraud and economic abuse. Canadians lost $380M to fraud in 2021 alone.[3]

With these increasing challenges, the "trusted contact person" (TCP) has been introduced to provide an additional preventative layer of protection to support investors. The TCP is a person you choose, for which you have given us written consent to contact under certain circumstances, such as if there appears to be something amiss, if there is suspected financial exploitation or if there are concerns about decision making.

The TCP has no authority to make financial decisions or direct transactions and assumes no liability when it comes to your account(s). The TCP does not replace or assume the role of Trading Authority that may be authorized to an investment account. As well, the TCP is different from the Power of Attorney role that is put in place to provide support in the event of incapacity.

You are able to appoint anyone you wish to be your trusted contact person. It is recommended to select someone who is trusted, mature and knowledgeable about your personal situation and support network. The individual should be capable of speaking with you, and to us, about your well-being, including potentially sensitive topics such as your physical or mental health status.

You may also consider appointing multiple trusted contacts. The person(s) nominated can change and you are able to revoke designations entirely at any time.

While there may not be a current need for a TCP, implementing this safeguard in advance can help to provide protection down the road. Even if you have appointed a Power of Attorney, having a TCP adds an additional layer of protection to your account(s). If you would like to nominate a TCP for your existing accounts, or for more information, please get in touch.

1. www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/disability-and-ageing.html; 2. www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/elder-abuse; 3. www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm

A Rising Rate Environment: Should Investors Be Worried?

Central banks continue to tighten their monetary policies in the return to normal. For many months, the media has been hyping concerns over rising interest rates. After the most recent half-percentage point rate hike by the U.S. Federal Reserve in May, the markets responded with significant volatility.

As investors, should we be worried about interest rate hikes? Here are some reasons to keep perspective in a rising rate environment:

Central banks: Good at communicating — While we may be used to the forward guidance given by central banks, it hasn't always been this way. In the past, decisions made by central bankers were often a surprise that could rattle the markets. Consider that in the 1990s, investors used to guess what the Fed would do based on the size of then-Chair Alan Greenspan's briefcase![1] The theory: if the Fed was going to change rates, Greenspan would be carrying a lot of documents so his briefcase would be wider. Today, we've been given ample warning by the central banks that rates will be rising, so much of this expectation continues to be built into the markets.

Interest rates need to normalize — Central banks have been highly accommodative for a very long time. Rates have been kept artificially low to help support economies during this challenging time. As we learn to manage the pandemic and return to normal, a natural unwinding needs to take place, which includes allowing rates to rise. However, let's not forget that even with multiple rate increases, interest rates will still continue to be very low by historical levels.

Wealth levels continue to be high — With excess liquidity in the markets, many analysts suggest that central banks can hike rates quite a bit without affecting credit conditions. Many businesses continue to be in good shape financially, with solid balance sheets and excess cash reserves, so defaults on business loans are expected to be low. Household wealth also increased at all income levels during the pandemic, and delinquency levels on consumer loans are still at record lows.[2]

S&P 500 Performance When 10-Year Treasury Yield Rises By One Percent or More

Start	End	Starting Yield	Ending Yield	S&P 500
Jul '12	Oct '18	1.5%	3.2%	127.2%
Jun '03	May '06	3.3%	5.1%	39.1%
Oct '98	Jan '00	4.5%	6.7%	39.5%
Oct '93	Nov '94	5.3%	8.0%	2.2%
Jan '87	Oct '87	7.1%	9.5%	6.7%
May '83	Jun '84	10.4%	13.6%	−1.5%
Jun '80	Sep '81	9.8%	15.3%	11.4%

https://fortune.com/2021/03/08/stock-market-today-risks-interest-rates/

Markets have historically performed well in rising rate times — Investing theory suggests that interest rates and stock prices move in opposite directions, as stock prices reflect the present value of future earnings: the higher the interest rate, the less future money is worth today. However, history has shown that markets can perform well during rising rates.[3] One market strategist determined that the S&P 500 Index returned five percent in the six months following the first rate hike of past recent cycles, despite initial volatility.[4] Other studies support positive equity market performance during rising interest rate environments (chart).

1. www.money.cnn.com/1998/09/29/bizbuzz/briefcase/; 2. www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-households-took-on-1-trillion-in-new-debt-in-2021-11644342925; 3. www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-01-23/u-s-stocks-historically-deliver-strong-gains-in-fed-hike-cycles; 4. www.ca.finance.yahoo.com/news/what-happens-to-the-stock-market-when-interest-rates-rise-115245445.html; www.forbes.com/sites/kristinmckenna/2022/01/24/how-do-stocks-perform-when-interest-rates-rise/

WEALTHBUILDING GROUP

HARBOURFRONT WEALTH MANAGEMENT

With the Compliments of...

Erin Dall
Investment Advisor
edall@wealthbuilding.ca
www.wealthbuilding.ca

Click here to book a meeting:
https://www.gotomeet.me/edall

The Wealthbuilding Group
Harbourfront Wealth Management
101 — 5230 South Service Road
Burlington, ON L7L 5K2

T: 905.333.4755
F: 905.333.4523

Please note that comments included in this publication are not intended to be a definitive analysis of tax law. The comments contained herein are general in nature and professional advice regarding an individual's particular tax position should be obtained in respect of any person's specific circumstances. This newsletter has been prepared in collaboration with J. Hirasawa & Associates and may not reflect the views of Harbourfront Wealth Management. This information transmitted is intended to provide general guidance on matters of interest for the personal use of the reader who accepts full responsibility for its use and is not to be considered a definitive analysis of the law and factual situation of any particular individual or entity. As such, it should not be used as a substitute for consultation with a professional accounting, tax, legal or other professional advisor. Laws and regulations are continually changing, and their application and impact can vary widely based on the specific facts involved and will vary based on the particular situation of an individual or entity. Prior to making any decision or taking any action, you should consult with a professional advisor. The information is provided with the understanding that Harbourfront Wealth Management is not herein engaged in rendering legal, accounting, tax or other professional advice. While we have made every attempt to ensure the information contained in this document is reliable, Harbourfront Wealth Management is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. All information is provided "as is," with no guarantee of completeness, accuracy, timeliness or as to the outcome to be obtained from the use of this information, and is without warranty of any kind, express or implied. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of Harbourfront Wealth Management Inc. The particulars contained herein were obtained from sources we believe to be reliable but are not guaranteed by us and may be incomplete. The opinions expressed are not to be construed as a solicitation or offer to buy or sell any securities mentioned herein. Harbourfront or any of its connected or related parties may act as financial advisor or fiscal agent for certain companies mentioned herein and may receive remuneration for its services. Harbourfront Wealth Management Inc. ("Harbourfront") has relationships with related and /or connected issuers, which may include the securities or funds discussed in this commentary and are disclosed in our Statement of Policies Regarding Related and Connected Issuers. This policy is included in your new client package, on our website, or can be obtained from your investment advisor on request.