The Exhaustive, Final, Definitive, Last-Word, No-Need-to-Search-Any-Further

Guide to Surviving a Flawed System & Retiring with Confidence

by Wayne Fisher
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About the Author

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“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery
(1900 - 1944)

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Dedicated to
Deborah S. Fisher

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Introduction

For over 26 years I have owned a financial services business in Northern California. I have focused on the needs of retired people and those soon to retire. Due to the last two market crashes, many of the people I get to visit with are seeking advice and shelter after losing a considerable portion of their life savings to unprotected stock market downturns.

Most people have a pretty good idea of what they want to do during retirement. The proper financing of this new journey is where the difficulty lies. The majority still have their life savings tied up in the Wall Street status quo: high-commission, low-performance funds. The same positions that failed them in the last two market crashes. They have no controls in place, no tactical plan, no safety net, no hedge, no stop-loss provision, no exit strategy and no tax considerations. What they do have is 100 percent excessive, unnecessary risk with a stark absence of planning.
Losing a significant portion of your retirement savings close to or during retirement is often a fatal blow to the plans you have made for your retired years. You simply cannot recover the lost savings—savings it took you most of your life to earn—in a short time period. The need for income from your savings further impedes the chance of recovery, since it's hard to replenish a pool of money that is now the source of your monthly income. It’s like trying to fill a bucket with a hole in it.

But most retirees didn’t know any other way.

The stock market has long been America’s default method of retirement saving, its domination so unchallenged and enduring that Wall Street hasn’t had to bother reselling itself to new generations or reinventing itself for changing times. That may not be your father’s Oldsmobile, but this is his 401k. Retirement planning, or the lack of it, has remained virtually the same across generations. Had airplane manufacturers made as few advancements in air travel over the past 113 years of flight as Wall Street has made in retirement planning, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner would be made of sticks and cloth and would require hand starting.
Nobody keeps better statistics than Wall Street, so you might say they remember everything but have learned nothing.

Typical market-based investments owe their dominance as retirement-savings vehicles more to the American public’s unawareness of alternatives than to a preponderance of happy outcomes. In fact, devastating economic reversals are common among those who play the market unprotected near or into retirement. People hit by such setbacks can no longer afford to pursue the plans they made for their golden years, nor realize the retirement lifestyle they once anticipated. Their futures are drastically altered, their stories desperate and sad. Wall Street ignores the more conservative, alternative investments; they just don’t generate enough reoccurring revenue.

I hope writing about some of these stories as cautionary tales will do some good. Most people I meet with are insecure in their financial circumstances and frustrated with the ups and downs of their portfolios. They often respond to market downturns and crashes not by trading in the real source of their misery, but by bouncing from
one broker to another. This does little good: they are just rebuying the same investment products under different-colored labels. And they are still taking direction from someone who is not licensed to give advice and whose business model does not include retirement planning. The financial tools and investments that retirees need are simply not in a broker-dealer's inventory. Putting a retiree's money in the broker’s own proprietary funds solely because they pay higher commissions benefits whom? Recommending a fund because of bonus commissions (revenue sharing) is just how the business works. It’s perfectly legal. It’s just not very beneficial for the investor.

But today millions of people are jumping off Wall Street’s greed-is-good rollercoaster in favor of practical, common sense investment alternatives, as well as new and better ways to help protect their securities-based (stock-based) investments. They can now enjoy their retirement years. If you’ve jumped off, good for you. And if you haven’t yet, this book is for you. Its pages are full of heartache, yes, but also full of hope.
There are better ways to manage your retirement savings and income. My goal is to help you find your way.

I won’t kid you. Nothing in this book is top secret. But much of the information and direction you’ll find here isn’t easy to come by in the financial-services industry. Why are most retirement savings still being invested in the very products that failed in the last two market crashes? Because it is very profitable for the sellers—just not very beneficial for the consumer. And most people simply don’t know about the alternatives to this flawed system. So, what does a good alternative to Wall Street look like? Just this: the choice of investment vehicles and financial tools that have weathered the storms, protected principal and produced reasonable gains, all while leveraging a sustainable income. The proper choice for you should take into consideration your circumstances, goals and timeline, plus a planning and saving method that considers every aspect of yourself and your needs—all integrated into a flexible, comprehensive retirement game plan.
Why have so few retirees been shown what you are about to learn? Because licensed advisors, who are indeed licensed to provide financial advice and alternatives, are few and far between.

As you get older, the game changes. You need to eliminate the gambling feature at the heart of your retirement investments. You must get this right the first time—unless you think this retirement is only a practice run for your next retirement.

I left the broker-dealer world a long time ago because it didn’t offer what my clients needed. Wall Street is a flawed system driven by chance and luck, all at a very high price tag. The cycle changes with the wind and, bam, that’s the end of people’s dreams. There goes the Winnebago, and here comes a reverse mortgage.

Having a solid, well thought-out game plan gives you control and peace of mind. You don’t have to be a financial victim. You can be an economic survivor, and you can indeed survive this flawed system and retire with confidence.
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Surviving a Flawed System & Retiring with Confidence

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