



Discovering goals work sheet

Use this worksheet to help you home in on your true goals. Conceptualizing goals is the first step to take before figuring out how to use investments to realize them. Ask yourself the following questions in the order presented when you have a few minutes of free time.

From life-planning pioneer George Kinder, author of "Seven Stages of Money Maturity."

1. If you had all the money that you needed for the rest of your life, what would you change? (This list may be long.)

Once that list is complete, consider this question:

2. If the doctor told you that you had a rare ailment and you'll be perfectly healthy for the rest of your life but would mysteriously keel over after five or 10 years, how would your life become different? (Material things might give way to things of greater meaning.)

Next, consider this final question:

3. Once again the doctor comes out and says that you have a rare ailment and you only have 24 hours to live. What did you miss? What did you not get to do? Who did you not get to be?

The answer to this third question should be addressed with a financial planner.

Don't worry if your responses have very little to do with what you would traditionally discuss with a financial planner. If you want to heal your relationship with your 9-year-old daughter, you can find ways to work fewer hours, suggests Kinder.

If you feed your true desires, your productivity increases. One of Kinder's clients was able to cut a 55-hour to 60-hour work week by 15 to 20 hours, and his production level only decreased by 1 percent or 2 percent. So even though he reduced his work hours by one third --increasing time that he could dedicate to family -- his productivity was hardly affected.