

# IndUS BUSINESS JOURNAL

VOL. 6 No. 10

May 15, 2006

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www.indusbusinessjournal.com

## Start redefining your wealth into three dimensions

What is wealth? Type in the word "wealth" into your favorite Internet search engine and look at the results. There are a host of subject matters ranging from personal finance,

to business, to banking, but the unmistakable common thread for all the subject matter is the word "money" or "finances." Typically wealth is defined as a measurement of one's financial status. Many associate the term wealth with money and possessions and lots of it. While financial assets, money, property and possessions

can be a component of wealth, it is important to look at wealth in the much broader spectrum.

If our modern day society put just 10 percent of their effort towards passing on our family values as it puts towards passing on its financial valuables, we would find a future generation better prepared to face the uncertainties of the 21st century. Look at your life today. Consider the pressures that you face. There is a necessity to do more in less time — to be more efficient. There were days in the past (and not too long ago) that "snail mail" (the U.S. Postal service) was an

adequate response time in business. Now those without constant e-mail are handicapped. We seem to be more uptight and stressed out with daily life. The nuclear family is disintegrating — single parent families are growing in number. The extended family is scattered throughout the country. No longer do we have "significant others," like grandma and grandpa, right next door. The "normal" family is dysfunctional. And families are just "too busy" to communicate their vision and values from one generation to the next. Our families have lost their heritage and the legacy we once received from our forefathers is becoming extinguished. Is there anything that can be done to stop this trend?

I believe a new understanding of wealth — a three-dimensional redefining of wealth, can help you to negotiate through life's transitions.

First, let me attempt to frame a healthy understanding of wealth. The parameters are as extreme as the east is from the west. There are those who believe that wealth is evil. On the other extreme, there are those that feel net worth is a measure of a person's self-worth. Their measurement is primarily in financial terms. The truth is somewhere in the middle. Financial wealth is good, for the right purpose. Without the commodity of money, commerce becomes slow at best. In our global society, money is the lubricant that keeps the worldwide economy going. But after many years as a financial planner, I have come to the conclusion that wealth has

relatively little to do with money.

Those who feel money, the creation and accumulation of it, is life's ultimate reward have created the "impossible dream." When financier, John Paul Getty was asked how much money is enough, he replied, "Just a little more." We have been created with a God-size vacuum that we strive to fill with possessions, relationships, titles and degrees. Only God can fill a God-size vacuum.

A healthy perspective of wealth encompasses more than just the financial aspect. This is only one dimension.

Unfortunately, most training, education, degrees and designations that we, the community of financial professionals receive, focus solely on the financial elements of life. Granted, the central nervous system of our daily living is financially based. And finances can affect the quality of one's "whole" life. But without a proper appreciation for the "big picture" and an all-encompassing perspective of one's wealth, life will be less than what God intended it to be for you.

I have come to the conclusion that wealth has three specific components: personal (who you are), financial (what you have) and social (how you make a difference). Each dimension is a measure of wealth in its own right. "Three Dimensional Wealth" is the total measurement of one's life. By synchronizing the dimensions of your wealth, that is, shaping and aligning all three dimensions, your life will be more satisfying and fulfilling with lasting significance. If each dimen-

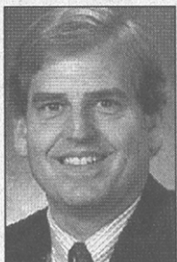
sion of our wealth has value then we must explore methods to perpetuate our "total" wealth.

Your values, beliefs, and convictions are three of the most powerful assets that you possess. No one can take your personal wealth away from you. A poor stock market or a burst real estate bubble will not affect this part of your balance sheet, the way "Three Dimensional Wealth" views it. There is growing evidence, especially among the financially wealthy, that charitable giving will enhance one's social wealth. How is it possible that giving away financial wealth actually increases your total wealth?

In the book, "3 Dimensional Wealth," we have outlined six paradigms to help you redefine how to look at wealth: Inwardly focused is out. Outwardly focused is in; Balance sheet accounting is out. Balanced life accounting is in; Spend, save, then give is out. Give, save, then spend is in; Instant gratification is out. Future gratification is in; Ownership is out. Stewardship is in; One dimensional wealth is out. "Three Dimensional Wealth" is in.

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### GUEST COLUMN



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