

AGENT'S SALES

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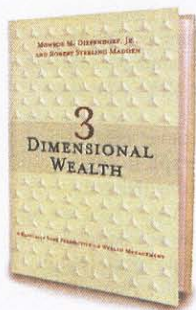
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Living in a 3-Dimensional World

BY AMY BELL



Bob Dylan once said, “What’s money? A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.” Unfortunately, in today’s money-obsessed world, people typically measure their success not by their level of happiness or the difference they are making, but solely by their financial wealth.

These days, while it is difficult to find a person who defines wealth as something more than money, it’s practically impossible to find a financial advisor who offers a deeper meaning of success and wealth. However, Monroe M. Diefendorf, Jr. and Robert Sterling Madden are two certified financial planners who are breaking the mold. In their inspiring book “3 Dimensional Wealth” (3 Dimensional Wealth Publishing, 2005), Diefendorf and Madden strive to

“replace preconceived notions of wealth with a broader definition.”

Although Diefendorf and Madden deliver their views in fairly pious tones at times, “3 Dimensional Wealth” successfully offers a fresh perspective about wealth management. As this interesting book grows in popularity among consumers, financial advisors should be prepared to help their clients redefine their wealth as something much more than money. According to Diefendorf and Madden, “The journey begins with your understanding of the concept of wealth as it relates to three dimensions of your life: personal, financial, and social.”

Up close and personal

According to Diefendorf and Madden, “Personal wealth is all about who you are.” In order to discover what it is that makes you tick, they say you must ask yourself questions like, “Why do I exist?”, “Where did I come from?”, and “What happens when I die?” Once you have answered these questions, you should identify what is important to you in life. Whether it’s your family, health, career, spiritual well-being, or the attainment of wisdom, these “pillars of importance” will help you define not only who are, but also who you want to become. As you begin to visualize

what kind of future you want, you will be well on your way to reaching your personal goals. After all, as Diefendorf and Madden write, “The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

Show me the money!

The aspect of wealth that we obsess about the most is without a doubt the second dimension: financial wealth. Our obsession with financial possessions isn’t too much of a surprise considering that “of the three dimensions of wealth, financial wealth is the most tangible and most easily quantifiable.” However, Diefendorf and Madden look at financial wealth in broader terms than typical financial advisors, claiming that “a key question many one-dimensional financial planners fail to ask clients is “What’s important about money?” Of course, Diefendorf and Madden encourage consumers to work with a qualified financial advisor to devise a strategy that will help them reach their personal financial goals.

Becoming a social butterfly

The third dimension Diefendorf and Madden discuss is social wealth. Because it “can be passed on physically, socially, morally, or spiritually, and it makes the world a better place,” social wealth has

to do with making your mark. To understand your social goals, Diefendorf and Madden say you must ask yourself not only if you want to make a difference, but how you want to make a difference. You should then rank the social causes that interest you the most. For example, are you interested in serving others, cultivating a family legacy, committing yourself to a cause, mentoring or counseling? Diefendorf and Madden say that one of the most effective ways to determine your social objectives is to “write your own obituary as you would like to be remembered.”

This is just a handful of the innovative wealth management perspectives offered in “3 Dimensional Wealth.” In this intriguing book, Diefendorf and Madden present a revolutionary method to define success using the three dimensions of wealth: personal wealth (who you are), financial wealth (what you have), and social wealth (how you can make a difference). “Each dimension by itself can lead to success but not necessarily significance,” they explain. “Integration of the three wealth dimensions, however, achieves significance.”

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