



# FINANCIAL DIRECTIONS

It's more than your money.  
It's your future.

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## Financial Planning: You're Worth It

By Erik Milam, CFP®, RLP®

My philosophy of financial planning has been significantly shaped by my own life experiences. I was born with cerebral palsy and a severe speech impediment. Multiple surgeries, years of speech therapy, and hard work allowed me to achieve a better quality of life than anyone imagined for me. I went

from a child who could barely walk to playing on a state championship football team; from being hardly able to answer the phone to making frequent motivational talks to schools, church groups, businesses, and sports teams. The physical difficulties in my life have taught me some valuable lessons that can apply to personal finances.

Like our physical abilities, we can improve our financial abilities with consistent effort. Even after my surgeries, I still walked with a limp and had trouble speaking. These real limitations held me back in many areas of my young life. Stretching, lifting weights, and running enabled me to become someone who could run 5 miles. Daily exercise and eating healthy today will effect my body at

age 65. The same principal is true for my finances. Commitment to your financial plan or simply saving a few extra dollars toward a goal can be extremely beneficial to your future. Both physical and financial

health require daily commitment towards clear goals.

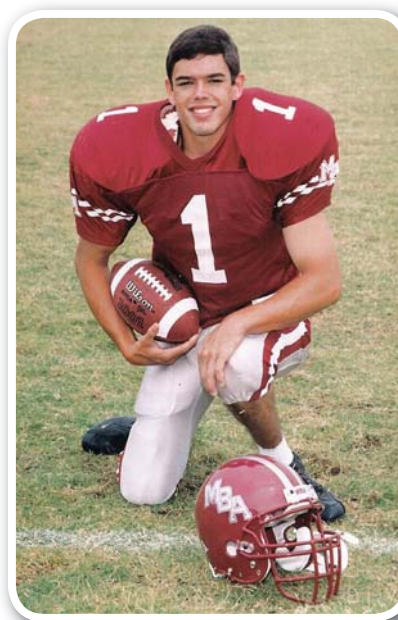
“We all face adversity; it is part of the human experience.”

Attitude and beliefs are

important. I broke my foot wrestling in the eighth grade and gave up on my athletic dreams. I felt it was too dangerous for me to play sports in high school. My attitude changed near the end of my sophomore year and I stopped limiting myself. With the support of my parents and coaches, I played football my junior and senior years. Playing football was painful at times. For

one week, I walked on crutches to rest my feet during the day so I could practice in the afternoon. My positive attitude and beliefs allowed me to stay committed to the team and myself.

In my seven years as a financial planner, I have seen that our ideas about money drive behavior. Often these messages are a result of unconscious beliefs we learned growing up.



TRUSTCORE®

**Main Office:**

105 Westwood Place, Suite 400  
Brentwood, TN 37027-1015

www.trustcore.com  
Phone: 615-377-1177

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For example, a person who got the message that there will never be enough money might work 80 hours a week at the expense of important relationships and a balanced life. Another person may feel uncomfortable receiving a large inheritance so he spends frivolously and neglects his own financial health and legacy. Statistics show that 60% of family wealth in America is lost by the second generation and 90% of family wealth is lost by the third.<sup>1</sup>

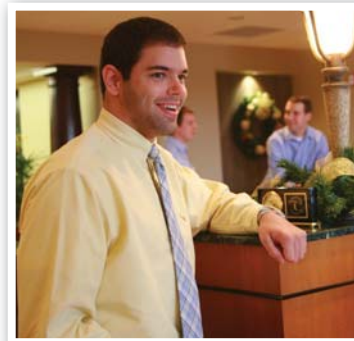
As a society we do not like to talk about these statistics and the complex relationship between people and money. Financial planning visionary Dick Wagner once told to me, "Money is the most powerful secular force in the world and yet there is no word in the English language to define man's relationship with it." To ensure the accomplishment of our financial goals, we must understand our financial abilities, limitations, and attitudes about money.

The most important lesson I have learned from cerebral palsy is that we all face adversity; it's part of the human experience. The broad term cerebral palsy vaguely describes my particular circumstance and does not define me. To me, what is meaningful is how cerebral palsy affects my quality of life and how I choose to respond. Money is no different, we all experience money and financial adversity in different ways. Just as the term cerebral palsy lacks real significance, money has no intrinsic meaning. Money is important because of what it represents to each of us

individually. It has value because your life goals depend on it. Financial planning becomes truly meaningful when strategies and plans allow you to overcome the obstacles between you and your goals. Financial strategies such as investing, retirement plans, and estate planning are about more than money, they are the means to achieving important objectives. Life-focused financial planning creates a clear awareness of goals and the resources required to achieve a more meaningful and enjoyable life. I love that my clients come to my office to discuss what is most important to them and we find ways to bring their dreams into reality.

My orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Neil Green, did not just make my legs more flexible and capable, he changed my life. I hope my clients feel that our work together not only increases their financial abilities, but also changes their lives for the better.

<sup>1</sup> Perry L. Cochell & Rodney C. Zeeb, *Beating the Midas Curse*, 7.



**Erik Milam**  
(615) 369-1423  
erik.milam@trustcore.com

## Financial Planning Committee Helps TrustCore Stay On Top



Standing left to right: Darryl Edmonds, Barbara Richards, & Bob Sinclair. Seated left to right: Marie Carter, Owen Walker.

TrustCore recently announced the formation of the Financial Planning Committee. The committee's mission is "to continually strengthen the foundation of our core planning client services by providing education, resources, collaboration, and training to our planners and staff." Members include Darryl Edmonds, Barbara Richards, Bob Sinclair, Marie Carter, and Owen Walker.

The new committee parallels the Investment Committee that has been in place for several years. That group's purpose is to provide TrustCore planners with

the tools they need to objectively select and monitor investments that fit clients' goals and objectives. Members include Craig Reed, Mickey Jacobs, Jane MacDonald, Mark Richards and Chris Goff.

These two groups help insure that TrustCore works continually to offer excellent resources to our planners so they can provide superior service to their clients. The talent and depth necessary to support these committees draws from the variety of experience, education and credentials represented by the planners of TrustCore.

## Homegrown Financial Planners

The financial planners at TrustCore have different backgrounds and their own approach to working with clients. However, they do have one characteristic in common — they are good at helping people.

### At TrustCore we know talent when we see it.

When we recruit young professionals we look at attitude and personality. We can teach them the technical side of planning, but they first need the desire to help people and offer exceptional

client service. Our young professionals come to TrustCore with the right attitude to make great financial planners; they just need to fine-tune the process and delivery. We take them through our planning department to develop their technical knowledge, learn the process from seasoned planners and get comfortable working with clients.

We asked three of our financial planners, who went through this department to share their experiences. This is what they said.



**Cliff Taylor**

(615) 369-1421

[cliff.taylor@trustcore.com](mailto:cliff.taylor@trustcore.com)

“Going through the planning department allowed me to get my feet wet before jumping in as a full-fledged financial planner. For me it was like a mentoring program. I was able to observe the unique styles of different planners and take advice from each of them to develop my own style. After leaving the planning department, I continued my mentoring program by joining the practice of Bob Sinclair, ChFC. Bob and I work together as financial planners, which benefits everyone involved. As a team we are able to add increasing value to our clients using Bob’s Strategic Wealth Journey Process. This arrangement has allowed me to gain experience and increase my knowledge by working with a senior planner and his clients. I am grateful to TrustCore for creating this process and career path. It has given me the training and confidence to be successful in my career.”



**Kemp Maxwell**

(615) 369-1439

[kemp.maxwell@trustcore.com](mailto:kemp.maxwell@trustcore.com)

“Spending a couple of years in TrustCore’s planning department helped me ease into becoming a financial planner. Typically, I spent part of my week training, earning my certifications and assisting TrustCore’s financial planners with client service and materials preparation. I spent the rest of the week building my own practice. Many of the financial planners at TrustCore have specialties in investment strategies or estate planning. By working with all of them, I received a broad range of experience I could not have gotten elsewhere. Working in TrustCore’s planning department helped me develop the knowledge and confidence I needed to be successful in my own practice.”

“I received a broad range of experience I could not have gotten elsewhere.”



**Mark Richards**

(615) 369-1420

[mark.richards@trustcore.com](mailto:mark.richards@trustcore.com)

“While working in TrustCore’s planning department I learned the ins and outs of financial planning. Working with seasoned planners and their established clients gave me experience in assisting people in every stage of the financial life cycle. While working in the planning department, I also was able to complete the Personal Financial Planning (PFP) program at Belmont University. TrustCore allowed me to gain both the academic knowledge and practical experience to be successful in my career. Today, I run a joint financial planning practice at TrustCore with my mother, Barbara Richards. Having different backgrounds and experience we are able to provide our clients with a comprehensive approach to financial planning, and our clients enjoy the extra attention they receive from working with two planners.”



**Ehren Congdon**

(615) 369-1434

[ehren.congdon@trustcore.com](mailto:ehren.congdon@trustcore.com)

## New at TrustCore

Ehren Congdon recently joined TrustCore as a financial planner. He is a Licensed Insurance Agent and a Registered Securities Representative of TrustCore Investments, Inc.

Among Ehren’s clients are many medical and dental professionals. The financial plans he creates with them reflect the changing landscape for healthcare professionals in compensation, taxation and risk management.

He works with each client to create and meet professional, individual and family financial goals. He believes the planning

process, is not only about clients advancing and protecting their wealth but an expression of their compassion and love. Through planning and foresight his clients provide not only for their families during their lifetime but also through a lasting legacy.

Ehren is active in the community, serving as chairman of the fundraising committee for the Green Hills Rotary, and as Finance Committee co-chair and Stewardship Council member for McKendree United Methodist Church. He is also active with the Nashville Civic Design Center and Meals on Wheels.

Securities offered through TrustCore Investments, Inc., member SIPC®. Insurance offered through TrustCore Insurance Agency, Inc. Planning services offered through TrustCore Financial Services, Inc. All individuals mentioned are registered representatives of TrustCore Investments, Inc.

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US POSTAGE  
PAID  
MAILER'S  
CHOICE  
37210

105 Westwood Place, Suite 400  
Brentwood, TN 37027-1015

