



Leading an Intentional Life Amidst Change & Uncertainty



Happy New Year! What a year 2021 was (didn't we say that about 2020??) and now **here we are with continued uncertainty, changing plans (travel, birthday parties, you name it), and other unknowns (inflation? rising interest rates?).** I was recently

reading an article in the *Wall Street Journal* about how many of us are facing "decision fatigue" (i.e. Should I stay home or go to X? Should we travel? Should we send our kids to school?) We are worn out and then there is the "Great Resignation"- a mass, unprecedented time of people changing jobs and careers. Even our team of Certified Financial Transitionists here at Omega isn't immune to the impact of change and uncertainty and the fatigue that can go along with what's going on outside the Omega bubble. **Life can seem out of control and unpredictable and yet,**

we at Omega believe it's possible to be intentional amidst change and uncertainty. Below, are some ideas gathered from various sources that you might find useful, plus some wisdom of our own...

From the book "How to Change" by Dr. Katy Milkman (NY Times bestselling author and Wharton Business School professor):

- **Use "milestone moments" like the beginning of the year to look forward and create a "fresh start".**
- **Be skeptical of your gut reactions and tap the wisdom of 5 people** who don't have a stake in whatever you may be contemplating in terms of change.
- **Leverage other people to help with decision-making and see what opens up** (whether it's meal planning, travel planning or something else).

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- **Keep in mind that many decisions can be reversed** (thank goodness airlines have at least temporarily waived change fees! That has been a life saver for our family with all the school changes.)

And in some cases:

- **Stop agonizing over a decision...just do it!** Feel free to reach out to us creative folks at Omega. We bring different perspectives and often have a Plan B or C...it's the nature of our business to work through the obstacles and find creative ways to make our clients' dreams a reality.

Each year as we meet with you, our deeply valued clients, we ask you to go through a short reflection exercise (What's important now? What do you want to let go of? What do you want to take on?) to look back and then forward towards both **personal and financial goals for 2022. This year, we encourage you to dream big!** Yes, there may be obstacles. Yes, the end result may be different. **The key is having hope and**

feeling like you are making progress...intentional progress. That can soothe the decision fatigue blues, give you an extra spring in your step and generally help us overcome the hopelessness that can come with feeling like things are always changing or out of control. The key is to not "overly attach" to the outcome and to be focused especially on the "journey" or progress you make, not just the "destination" or goal itself.

2022 will inevitably hold a number of twists and turns for all of us. Be sure to check out the Planning and Investment columns for what we think is ahead and we'll see what actually materializes! In the meantime, we look forward to hearing your goals, hopes and aspirations for the year ahead looking for ways to supporting you in achieving them.



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President and Founder

"Health is Wealth"

Over the past 2 years, **I think it has become clear that health and wealth are more intertwined than we sometimes think. Good health can help protect and build wealth. Being ill can be costly, especially with any kind of long-term illness.** Investing in annual, preventive care is important. Having good insurance to protect us in times of health challenges is also a critical part of many of our wealth plans. **It's been widely reported that many Americans have delayed routine screenings, and non-emergency procedures as a result of the Covid crisis.** Hopefully, you can catch up on any delayed health screenings and procedures in 2022 as we get past this latest Covid variant crisis. **It's also a good time to check in on your entire "wellness" gameplan:**

- Do you have the "best" **health insurance** package for your needs?
- If available, do you have sufficient short & long-term **disability insurance** to replace your income in case of a prolonged illness?
- Have you considered **long-term care insurance** for your post-retirement care needs?
- Is your **healthcare Power of Attorney** up to date?
- Do you need to "invest" in any **new health resources** (a personal trainer, a gym membership, a nutritionist) to help keep you healthy in 2022 and beyond?

Here's wishing you the best health possible since your health is part of your wealth!

Planning Updates



by Kathy Frakes, CFP®

Benjamin Franklin is credited with saying: "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." **Many of you are thinking of changes in your own lives: retirement, moving, changing jobs.** As we explore living an intentional life amidst continued change and uncertainty in this quarter's newsletter, **I wanted to provide some information regarding taxes in various states. One of the things that COVID has shown, is that many jobs can be done remotely. Have you ever considered living somewhere else?** Granted **the decision of where to live now, or in retirement, has many factors but one consideration is the taxation in a particular state.**

We've assembled the analysis below from www.kiplinger.com for each of the states in which Omega has clients.

We found it interesting to note that **several states still have estate taxes and Maryland has BOTH an estate tax AND an inheritance tax. Texas has no income tax but high property tax rates.**

We've also included two graphics from the Tax Foundation in this newsletter: (1) Does Your State Have an Estate or Inheritance Tax? And (2) Does Your State Tax Social Security Benefits? **As you consider your options of where to live or work, we will be happy to discuss the many factors, including taxes, to consider.**

We are still waiting for the Federal government to pass legislation that may include some of the Federal tax changes. We will keep you posted!

	ARIZONA	CALIFORNIA	COLORADO	CONNECTICUT	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE BOTTOM LINE	Most Tax-Friendly	Tax-Friendly	Most Tax-Friendly	Least Tax-Friendly	Most Tax-Friendly
INCOME TAX RANGE	Low: 2.59% High: 4.5%	Low: 1% High: 13.3%	Flat 4.5% (local taxes may also apply)	Low: 3% High: 6.99%	Low: 4% High: 8.95%
TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
TAX BREAKS FOR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
STATE SALES TAX RATE	5.6% (avg. combined state & local rate is 8.4%)	7.25% (avg. combined state & local rate is 8.82%)	2.9% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.72%)	6.35% (no local taxes)	6%
MEDIAN REAL PROPERTY TAX	\$617 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$729 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$494 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$2,139 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$564 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value.
REAL PROPERTY TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ESTATE OR INHERITANCE TAX	None	None	None	Estate Tax	Estate Tax

	FLORIDA	GEORGIA	ILLINOIS	INDIANA	MARYLAND
THE BOTTOM LINE	Tax-Friendly	Tax-Friendly	Least Tax-Friendly	Not Tax Friendly	Mixed Tax Picture
INCOME TAX RANGE	None	Low: 1% High: 5.75%	Flat 4.95%	Flat 3.23% (local taxes may also apply)	Low: 2% High: 5.75% (local taxes also apply)
TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY	No	No	No	No	No
TAX BREAKS FOR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
STATE SALES TAX RATE	6% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.01%)	4% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.33%)	6.25% (avg. combined state & local rate is 8.83%)	7% (no local taxes)	6% (no local taxes)
MEDIAN REAL PROPERTY TAX	\$830 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$875 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$2,165 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$810 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,057 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value
REAL PROPERTY TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ESTATE OR INHERITANCE TAX	None	None	Estate Tax	None	Both

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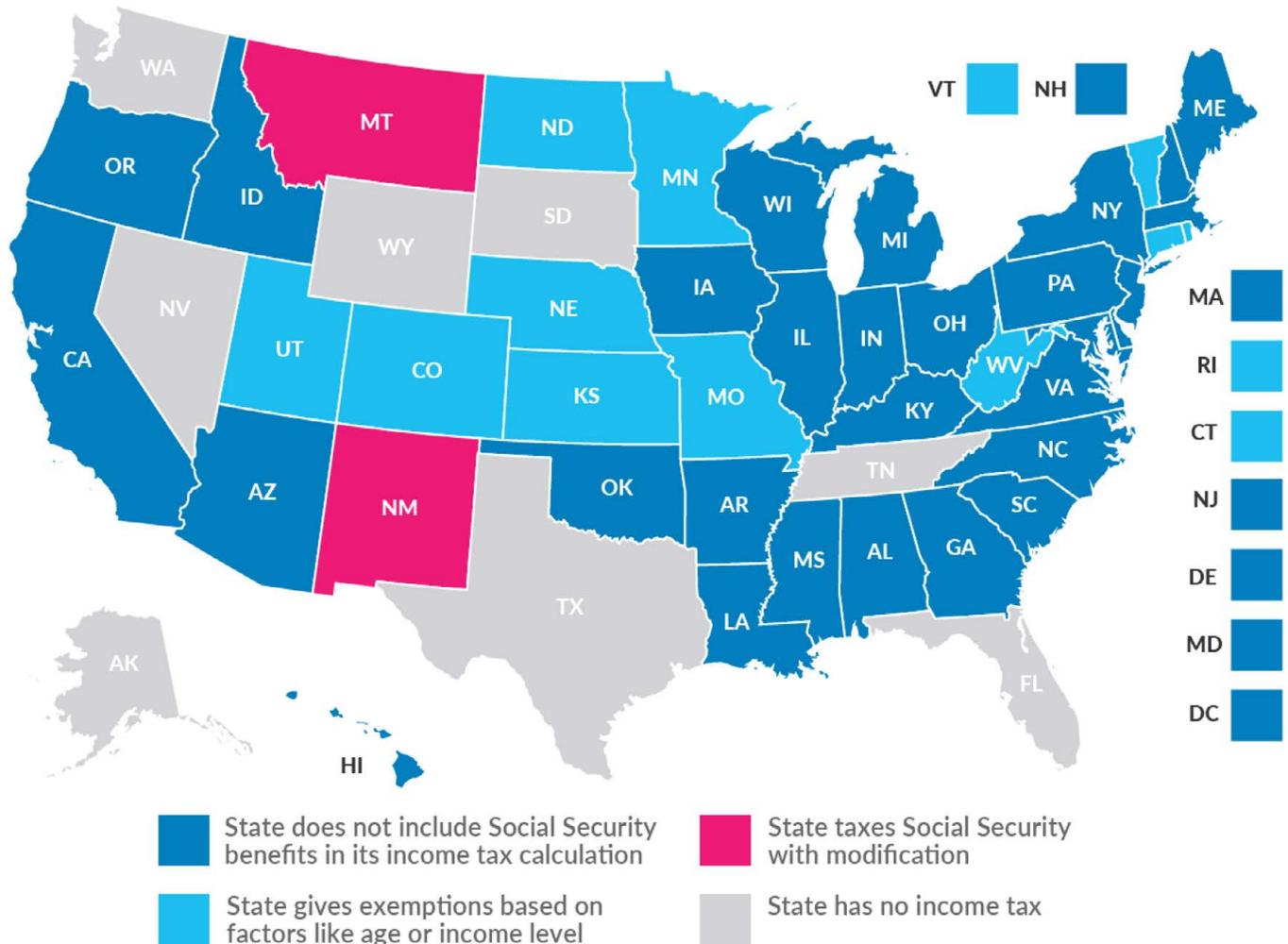
	MASSACHUSETTS	MICHIGAN	MINNESOTA	NEW HAMPSHIRE	NEW MEXICO
THE BOTTOM LINE	Not Tax-Friendly	Not Tax-Friendly	Not Tax-Friendly	Not Tax-Friendly	Not Tax-Friendly
INCOME TAX RANGE	Flat 5%	Flat 4.25% (local taxes may also apply)	Low: 5.35% High: 9.85%	None	Low: 1.7% High: 5.9%
TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
TAX BREAKS FOR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
STATE SALES TAX RATE	6.25% (no local taxes)	6% (no local taxes)	6.875% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.47%)	0% (no local taxes)	5.125% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.84%)
MEDIAN REAL PROPERTY TAX	\$1,170 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,448 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,082 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$2,050 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$776 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value
REAL PROPERTY TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ESTATE OR INHERITANCE TAX	Estate Tax	None	Estate Tax	None	None

	NORTH CAROLINA	OHIO	OREGON	PENNSYLVANIA	TEXAS
THE BOTTOM LINE	Mixed Tax Picture	Not Tax Friendly	Mixed Tax Picture	Not Tax Friendly	Least Tax-Friendly
INCOME TAX RANGE	Flat 5.25%	Low: 2.765% High: 3.99%	Low: 4.75% High: 9.9%	Flat 3.07% (local taxes may also apply)	None
TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY	No	No	No	No	No
TAX BREAKS FOR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
STATE SALES TAX RATE	4.75% (avg. combined state & local rate is 6.98%)	5.75% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.22%)	0% (no local taxes)	6% (avg. combined state & local rate is 6.34%)	6.25% (avg. combined state & local rate is 8.19%)
MEDIAN REAL PROPERTY TAX	\$773 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,478 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$903 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,499 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$1,892 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value
REAL PROPERTY TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ESTATE OR INHERITANCE TAX	None	None	Estate Tax	Inheritance Tax	None

	UTAH	VIRGINIA	WEST VIRGINIA
THE BOTTOM LINE	Mixed Tax Picture	Tax-Friendly	Mixed Tax Picture
INCOME TAX RANGE	Flat 4.95%	Low: 2% High: 5.75%	Low: 3% High: 6.5% (local taxes may also apply)
TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY	Yes	No	No
TAX BREAKS FOR OTHER RETIREMENT INCOME	Yes	Yes	Yes
STATE SALES TAX RATE	4.85% (avg. combined state & local rate is 7.18%)	5.3% (avg. combined state & local rate is 5.75%)	6% (avg. combined state & local rate is 6.51%)
MEDIAN REAL PROPERTY TAX	\$575 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$804 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value	\$571 in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed home value
REAL PROPERTY TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS	Yes	Yes	Yes
ESTATE OR INHERITANCE TAX	None	None	None

Does Your State Tax Social Security Benefits?

State Tax Treatment of Social Security benefits, 2021



Source: Bloomberg Tax; state statutes.

ATTENTION MARYLAND TAXPAYERS!

The State of Maryland announced on January 19th that the filing and payment **deadline for 2021 Maryland individual income taxes** has been extended by three months – to **Friday, July 15, 2022**. This is an automatic extension, that is, you don't have to file any paperwork to take advantage of it. Please note that **the Federal income tax deadline is April 18, 2022**. You can see the Maryland Comptroller's full news release [here](#).

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Where should you retire?

We've seen several lists published by various sources touting the **"Best States in Which to Retire"**. We thought we would **share the common themes:**

- **No/Low tax on social security income**
- **No/Low tax on retirement income**
- **Strong social programs and support for retirees including opportunities to volunteer**
- **Balance between the cost of living and the services provided**
- **No/Low state estate and/or inheritance tax**
- **Food security**

Other factors to consider include:

- **Proximity to family**
- **Climate preferences**
- **Proximity to cultural events and/or sporting events**
- **Availability of healthcare within your insurance network**
- **Look at property taxes in the local area—often states without income tax make up some of the lost revenue by having higher property taxes.**

The following states made the top 10 of both Credit Karma's and Kiplinger's lists of best states for retirement:

- Florida
- Hawaii
- New Hampshire
- Virginia

Note: Maryland didn't make it on the top 20 for Kiplinger but is #10 on the Credit Karma list.



There is a new Legacy Contact setting in Apple's iOS 15.2 that allows you to name who can access the data stored in your Apple iCloud once you die. As Joanna Stern from [The Wall Street Journal](#) states in her article from December 14, 2021: *"This isn't just about making it easier for your family to access some PDF from the accountant. It's about making sure your photos, videos and more—the record of your memories and life stories—get passed to the next generation."* Note that Google and Facebook, now known as Meta, have similar features on their products. You can check out her article that includes instructions on how to use it here: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ios-15-digital-legacy-iphone-11639488636>

Investment Outlook



by Jared Jones, CFP®, CIMA®, CeFT®

Q1 Investment Column

2021 will go down as a very good year for the U.S. stock market. It was a year that saw a relatively uninterrupted upward march in the S&P 500. Despite an average intra-year decline of 14% over the last 40 years, 2021 only saw a modest 5% pullback in the early fall only to see a rally closing out the year. **The S&P 500 finished the year up 28.8%. However, a well-balanced portfolio may not have performed quite as well as you'd expect, and it's a good time for me to bust out my favorite investment chart:**

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	10 Years
EM 19.1%	Small Cap 41.0%	REITs 30.4%	REITs 2.4%	Small Cap 26.6%	EM 37.3%	Cash -1.7%	Large Cap 31.2%	Large Cap 18.3%	REITs 40.5%	Large Cap 16.4%
Int'l Stocks 18.8%	Mid Cap 35.2%	Large Cap 13.5%	Large Cap 1.3%	Mid Cap 20.5%	Int'l Stocks 25.1%	Bonds 0.1%	REITs 28.9%	EM 17.0%	Comdty 31.1%	Small Cap 14.4%
REITs 17.6%	Large Cap 32.3%	Mid Cap 9.4%	Bonds 0.5%	Comdty 12.9%	Large Cap 21.7%	TIPS -1.4%	Mid Cap 25.8%	Mid Cap 13.5%	Large Cap 28.8%	Mid Cap 13.9%
Large Cap 16.0%	Int'l Stocks 21.4%	Bonds 6.0%	Cash -0.1%	Large Cap 12.0%	Mid Cap 15.9%	Large Cap -4.6%	Small Cap 22.6%	Small Cap 11.4%	Small Cap 26.8%	REITs 11.5%
Small Cap 15.7%	EW 10.7%	Small Cap 5.5%	Int'l Stocks -1.0%	EM 10.9%	Small Cap 13.1%	REITs -6.0%	Int'l Stocks 22.0%	TIPS 10.8%	Mid Cap 24.5%	Int'l Stocks 7.9%
Mid Cap 15.2%	REITs 2.3%	EW 4.0%	TIPS -1.8%	EW 10.0%	EW 12.6%	EW -7.2%	EM 18.2%	EW 7.8%	EW 16.3%	EW 7.5%
EW 11.0%	Cash -0.1%	TIPS 3.6%	Small Cap -1.8%	REITs 8.6%	REITs 4.9%	Small Cap -8.6%	EW 17.5%	Int'l Stocks 7.6%	Int'l Stocks 11.5%	EM 4.7%
TIPS 6.4%	Bonds -2.0%	Cash -0.1%	Mid Cap -2.5%	TIPS 4.7%	Bonds 3.6%	Mid Cap -11.3%	Bonds 8.5%	Bonds 7.5%	TIPS 5.7%	TIPS 2.9%
Bonds 3.8%	EM -3.7%	EM -3.9%	EW -4.7%	Bonds 2.4%	TIPS 2.9%	Comdty -13.1%	TIPS 8.4%	Cash 0.4%	Cash -0.1%	Bonds 2.8%
Cash 0.0%	TIPS -8.5%	Int'l Stocks -6.2%	EM -16.2%	Int'l Stocks 1.4%	Comdty 0.7%	Int'l Stocks -13.8%	Comdty 7.6%	Comdty -4.1%	Bonds -1.8%	Cash 0.4%
Comdty -2.1%	Comdty -11.1%	Comdty -18.6%	Comdty -28.2%	Cash 0.1%	Cash 0.7%	EM -15.3%	Cash 2.0%	REITs -4.6%	EM -3.6%	Comdty -3.8%

Funds: EEM, VNQ, MDY, SLY, SPY, EFA, TIP, AGG, DJP, BIL

From this you can see U.S. stocks of all sizes finished up 20+% for the year. Further down the 2021 column you see international stocks returned about half the amount of U.S. stocks, and at the bottom of the list, EM or emerging market stocks lost 3.6%.

The biggest takeaway from the quilt in my eyes is that both cash and bonds did not help anyone's performance numbers in 2021 – bonds finishing -1.8% and cash -0.4%.

Based on the above a normal question might be – *“shouldn't I just invest the vast majority of my money in the U.S. stock market, and maybe have some in bonds for safety?”*

If you're a normal reader of OWM's communications, you already know where we're heading. **Diversification is the most critical element to long-term success.** Unfortunately for this chart, 2008 is becoming ancient history and no longer appears. If 2008 returns did show, you would see -37% for U.S. Large Cap stocks. We'll discuss risk later, but this is a critical factor when we're designing portfolios. All it takes is one downturn and selling to erase years of outperformance.

A simple way of explaining diversification and performance is you miss both the homeruns and the strikeouts.

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As shown in the chart on page 8, this is captured in the EW, or equal weighted, box which shows performance if all the boxes were equally balanced in a portfolio. In reality, your portfolio isn't equally weighted so here are some benchmark returns for 2021 based on standard allocations. You can see all balanced portfolios returned a bit less than what you may expect if just looking at the S&P 500.

Morningstar Asset Allocation Benchmarks	Equity	Fixed Income	2021 Returns
Morningstar US Conservative Target Allocation	22.50%	77.50%	3.61%
Morningstar US Moderately Conservative Target Allocation	40.00%	60.00%	7.19%
Morningstar US Moderate Target Allocation	60.00%	40.00%	12.37%
Morningstar US Moderately Aggressive Target Allocation	77.50%	22.50%	15.56%
Morningstar US Aggressive Target Allocation	92.50%	7.50%	19.69%

Additionally, I want to spend some time on the element of risk to further explain why diversification and particularly bonds are important. **This table shows the risk level of each asset class in the chart measured by Riskalyze. The scores are measured on a scale of 1-100.**



Asset Class	Riskalyze Score
REITs	91
Emerging Markets	90
Commodity	90
Small Cap	88
International	86
Large Cap	73
TIPS	30
Bonds	24
Cash	2

It's believed that risk tolerance is normally distributed (think of a bell curve from high school statistics). **This means that most people will find that their risk tolerance scores fall somewhere between 30-70 out of 100 and the average would be around 50.** Anecdotally, this is true for clients of OWM. With that in mind, the need for safer assets like bonds for most people becomes clear. **It would be impossible to ignore bonds and have a portfolio with a risk score close to 50.** It also shows why the classic 60% stock/40% bond portfolio is so prevalent. A 60% large cap and 40% bond portfolio would have a risk score of 53.

For most people, a portfolio of solely stocks will be well outside of their risk tolerance comfort zone. **If a year like 2008 were to happen again and your portfolio is an 85 when you're comfortable with a 65 the odds of you selling and locking in losses are increasingly high. For that reason, we feel that no matter the year bonds always have a place in a well-diversified portfolio.**

Looking Ahead to 2022...

2022 is already lining up to be an interesting year. At this point, the biggest questions I/we? have are around interest rates/inflation and if companies can meet earnings expectations.

The Federal Reserve learned from previous experiences that it is best to telegraph their actions well in advance of actually taking action. As such, they begun to view inflation as a threat and have clearly stated they are going to take measure? to address concerns. **Currently it's believed that the Fed is eyeing three interest rate hikes of 0.25% in 2022, the first of which could come as early as March.** It will be important to keep an eye both on inflation and the markets/economy to see if we can get all 3 increases in this year. There are number of forces at work in the economy and any number of them could prevent us from seeing all 3.

The other big thing I'm watching is how earnings for company's fare. **2021 was a record year for earnings, but with headwinds like omicron and supply chain constraints, it will be interesting to see if companies can meet expecta-**

tions. Currently, earnings growth is predicted around 9-10%. If stock prices are to remain high by valuation metrics, then there needs to be sufficient earnings to justify those prices. Maybe add something about the issues in Asia that may lead to continued supply chain disruptions?

Lastly, I would be remiss without pointing out this is a mid-term election year. That's important to note not only because of the political implications but also because of the Fed's agenda. They will work to avoid appearing to favor one political party over the other and that might impact the timing of any rate hikes.

Overall, our expectation at this point is that 2022 may be a "positive but muted year for the stock market." With this rising interest rates we would expect another down year in the bond market, but hopefully, we have proven why they remain important to your portfolio.

As always, we plan to keep a close eye on these events and others as they develop. We plan to be sharing our thoughts as things unfold.

2021 Year to Date Performance as of 12/31/2020 by Index:

Benchmark	Benchmark Returns YTD	Category
Dow Jones Industrial Average	+20.95%	U.S. Large Cap Stocks
S&P 500 Index	+28.71%	U.S. Large Cap Stocks
Russell 2000®	+14.82%	U.S. Small Cap Stocks
MSCI EAFE Index	+11.26%	International Stocks
Barclay's Global Aggregate Bond	-1.54%	Intermediate Term Bonds

What Happens When Rates Rise?

It can sometimes be confusing to understand how bond values change as interest rates rise or fall. In short, they have an inverse relationship. When rates rise, bond values go down because now whatever the rate on that bond is, is not as attractive as a bond at a newer, higher rate. Conversely, when rates fall, bond values go up. **Depending on the type of bond investment you own, they may be more or less impacted by rising interest rates. And the longer-term your bond investments are (in years), the bigger the move in returns as rates increase or decrease. Also keep in mind, that the Federal Reserve only controls short-term rates. The bond market itself is driven by expectations of the US economy and inflation.** Here's a simple look at the pros and cons of different bond investments in a rising rate market:

Bond Funds/Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs): will lose some value as rates rise but monthly income is invested back into new bonds within the fund and that can lessen the impact of rate increases as long as you are reinvesting the income from those funds/ETFs.

Individual bonds in a static bond "ladder" (which is a series of bonds with different dates which, as they mature, the proceeds are invested into newer, higher yielding bonds): you may or may not make money as the bonds sell, but the "loss" will tend to be relatively small and then you can use those proceeds to buy more, higher yielding bonds.

Individual bonds in an actively managed bond portfolio: here, a portfolio manager is regularly analyzing the bond market for opportunities to sell bonds and reinvest into "better", higher-yielding bonds. Again, some of your bonds may make money at maturity, others may take a loss (we can use those to offset stock gains!) and then once again, we have the opportunity to buy into higher-yielding new bonds.

In all cases, the impact of rates, as well as gains or losses that you may have upon the maturity of the bond or the sale of the bond will depend on how long the maturity of the bond is...the longer the maturity, the bigger the impact.



Happy New Year! With help from both our investment partner SEI Investments and The National Security Institute, we would like to provide you with some *2022 Security Resolutions* to follow, along with tips to avoid phone phishing attacks, which have been increasingly popular in the past few years.



While you're promising to get to the gym more often in 2022, or maybe contribute a bit more to your 401(k), here are a few security resolutions to add to your list:

- **I resolve to** go through all my passwords and change them, making them longer, stronger, and unique. After all, many of them are old or mild variants of other passwords.
- In fact, **I resolve to** finally explore these digital password managers that create super-strong passwords and remember them for you. I have so many accounts that now may be the time. (see *Books & Resources* section for more info.)
- **I resolve to** save a few trees and boost my security by going online-only for my bank and investment account statements.
- **I resolve to** procure all three (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) of my free credit reports—and to do so for my children while I'm at it. These reports can serve as early indicators of fraud (see *Books & Resources* section for more info.)
- **I resolve to** stop emailing work to my private email account. It's a convenient way to get some work done over night or on weekends, but it's a breach waiting to happen.
- At work, **I resolve to** be alert to signs of insider threat (people working weird hours, seeking access to new projects or programs, etc.) and to report these red flags when I see them.
- **I resolve to** examine my social media accounts to make sure I'm not "oversharing" in a way that could help hackers guess my login info.
- **I resolve to** start using two-factor authentication wherever I can.
- It never hurts to be tidy, so **I resolve to** neaten up my work areas—both in the office and at home—and securely store any sensitive hardcopy documents.

Source: https://images.insight.seic.com/Web/SEIGlobalServicesInc/%7Bd336b30e-2beb-4aaf-bf9b-c09ed7b0136c%7D_ADV_HF_2201_2022SecurityResolutions.pdf

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Phone Phishing: Attackers Turn Their Attention to Mobile Devices



As smartphones are used more in business and even government settings, phishing attacks designed for these devices are more common—and the stakes are higher. You may think of phishing attacks targeting your phone as a nuisance, obviously bogus text messages that you delete without a second thought. But according to research from cybersecurity firm Dragos, several newer hacking groups are specifically targeting employees of firms in such crucial sectors as utilities, manufacturing, and government. Indeed, according to another report from Lookout, the energy sector has seen a massive 161% increase in mobile phishing attacks targeting the energy sector since the second half of

Why do newer attacks often focus on mobile devices rather than email inboxes? Experts point to two major reasons:

1. Most large organizations now have in place solid anti-phishing technology that prevents many attacks from reaching employees.
2. Multiple studies show that while workers have become accustomed to email phishing threats and are thus on their guard when working through new messages, they are far more trusting when they receive text messages on their phone.

What you can do?

At their core, mobile phishing attacks—like their email- or voice-based counterparts—are social engineering scams. That means you can take several precautions to avoid putting company data at risk:

- Reset your expectations. Understand that even a legitimate-looking text message that appears to have come from your manager or another co-worker could be a scam.
- Take your time. Any phishing gambit, especially one that arrives on your smartphone, will attempt to rush you to take some action without thinking it through. Instead, pause, take a deep breath, and consider calling the supposed sender to confirm.
- Consider apps. There are several anti-malware apps that can spot potential incoming spam and malware sent to your mobile device: <https://www.comparitech.com/identity-theft-protection/best-spam-call-blocker-iphone/>

Source: https://images.insight.seic.com/Web/SEIGlobalServicesInc/%7Bc625d1cd-4447-4bac-bebc-c566df6ec569%7D_ADV_HF_2201_PhonePhishing.pdf



It's Time to Put Yourself First...

Often as a business owner, we have to make sacrifices, “go last”, or generally not put our own interests anywhere close to first. And yet, putting your personal needs last, over the business’ needs can leave you burned out, resentful and just generally not as productive as you might otherwise be. So, let’s make 2022 the year you put yourself first! What might it look like to do that?

- **Taking time to think through your personal needs and then build the business plan and your duties around that.** Taking time off- get it on the calendar NOW even if you don't know what you will do, **blocking out “strategic thinking time”** are a couple of ways to start to protect your time and energy, even if it means adjustments to the rest of your team’s schedule, meeting with customers/clients, or other people’s duties and roles.
- **Determining your financial needs from the business in terms of monthly cashflow, savings into your retirement plan and other investment accounts, insurance to protect you and your family,** etc... Then build your business budget from there.
- **Restructuring your role in the business so that you are doing what you do best,** not picking up all the extra duties that someone else could do better and less expensively.

As always, **we at Omega stand ready to brainstorm with you, run personal financial planning numbers to help you get a clear sense of what you need from the business and just generally support you in getting the most out of being a business owner...including more free time and money to feed your soul and your wallet!**

OWM TEAM UPDATES



Meet our newest married team member...Jared Jones! Jared and his wife, Lauren, were married in a fun celebration on November 13, 2021 (finally, after a long Covid-inspired engagement). Jared and Lauren are settled in Arlington not too far from the office and are enjoying this next stage in their lives. **CONGRATULATIONS JARED AND LAUREN!**



Meet our winter intern from Hollins University (an all-female college from which we welcome an intern each winter), Elizabeth Brown! Elizabeth is a senior studying business: finance and economics. Elizabeth has always wanted to make a difference in this world by supporting people financially. Elizabeth plans to pursuing a career devoted to finance. As a determined individual she is very grateful to receive this opportunity. Elizabeth is very eager to learn more about financial and life planning, here at Omega Wealth Management. Welcome and thank you for being with us, Elizabeth!

DON'T FORGET - Important Dates and Reminders

Monday, January 17th - Martin Luther King Day (OWM Closed)

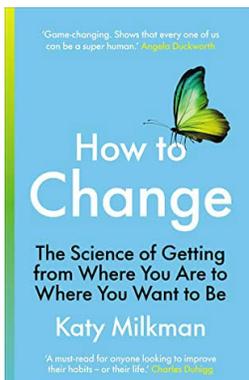
Tuesday, January 18th - Estimated Taxes Due for 4th quarter

Monday, February 21st - President's Day (OWM Closed)

Sunday, March 13th - Daylight Savings

Friday, April 15th - Good Friday

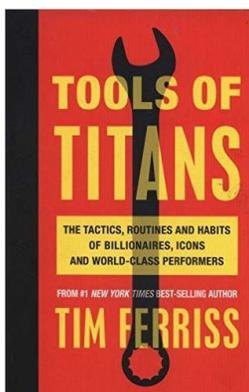
BOOKS & RESOURCES



How to Change

by Dr. Katy Milkman

A NY Times recommended book for 2022 for anyone looking to make a change in their lives but struggling to overcome inertia and the inevitable obstacles that many of us face.



Recommended by John:

Tools of Titans

by Tim Ferriss

The front cover of the book explains the summary well: "The Tactics, Routines, and Habits of Billionaires, Icons and World-Class Performers."

LastPass...

Lastpass (Password Manager)

Is this the year that you need to get your passwords out of a little paper book and get them saved electronically? Then Lastpass may be for you. If you are single or are the only person in the couple that handles the finances, be sure to share your access with a trusted family member or friend in case of emergency. **Website** - <https://www.lastpass.com>

Free Credit Report: www.AnnualCreditReport.com

TransUnion: www.transunion.com

Equifax: www.equifax.com

Experian: www.experian.com

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