

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

Top 5 Healthy Life Hacks to Have an Awesome Morning

The Truth About the 2020 Election and the Stock Market

Do Your End-of-Year Tax Planning Like a Pro

Did You Know?

A Number of Importance

THE 11TH HOUR OF THE 11TH DAY OF THE 11TH MONTH

Veterans Day comes every Nov. 11. It's a national holiday that recognizes veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces and honors those both living and deceased. Historically, the day marks Armistice Day and the end of the Great War: World War I. But what is the significance of the number 11?

The armistice was signed at 5:45 a.m. in France, but it took effect at 11 a.m. that same morning — which happened to be Nov. 11, 1918. The armistice originally lasted 36 days but was extended month after month. This led to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, when peace was officially declared.

Later that year, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed that Nov. 11 would be known as Armistice Day to honor those who fought in the Great War. This lasted until 1954, when President Dwight Eisenhower signed a proclamation turning Armistice Day into Veterans Day.



Why Veterans Day and the Number 11 Go Hand in Hand

The change was made in order to recognize all veterans who had honorably served their country. By 1954, the U.S. had fought in more wars — specifically World War II and the Korean War — and hundreds of thousands more Americans had served.

Unsurprisingly, there was some political drama surrounding the day. In 1968, Congress made Veterans Day a federal holiday under the Uniform Holiday Bill. The idea was to increase the number of three-day weekends in the year. Veterans Day became a holiday that would fall on the fourth Monday of October, a far cry from Nov. 11.

However, in 1978, Veterans Day was restored to its original Nov. 11 date. But why?

The answer is simple. It's a number that sticks with you. When the clock strikes 11:11, you always take notice. By that same notion, we all remember the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Because of this, we'll never forget the end of the Great War, nor will we forget those who served.

DESIGN LIFE'S Journey

NOVEMBER 2020

IT'S THANKSGIVING TIME! *Let's Focus on Our Blessings*

Happy Thanksgiving month! When I sat down this month to write our newsletter, I couldn't help but think about all of the ways Thanksgiving will be different this year. Just like we had to find fun and innovative ways to celebrate Halloween last month, we'll have to adjust our usual plans for Turkey Day, too. So why not make the whole month a month of Thanksgiving?

As Americans, we have so many things to be grateful for. Just look around you right now. As citizens of this county, we have innumerable blessings, and I don't just mean our freedoms. Even things we take for granted, like running water, electric lights, and the internet, are small miracles.

I know I am very fortunate and I'm grateful for all I have. And while I always look forward to the holidays as a reason to be with family, I know that probably won't happen for many of us this year. Yet, there is much we can do. I encourage you to focus on all you have and be thankful. Here's a friendly challenge to help you be more thankful: For the next 30 days, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, write down three things you are grateful for each day. It's bound to make your outlook rosier.

One of the things I'm most thankful for this year is the trust and loyalty of my clients, friends, and business partners. I'm so grateful to be able to work with you, and I'm honored that you've chosen me to walk alongside you on your journey. We've created some incredible friendships this year while working together, and I've enjoyed every moment. There are others reading this newsletter who I look forward to getting to know better in the near future. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this publication and find value and entertainment in its content.

As the leaves turn colors, it is a great time to start reflecting on the current year. Remember your victories and challenges. Remember how you felt and who was with you along the way. Spend time celebrating your accomplishments — both big and small. This helps build your momentum and confidence for the future. Make note of your progress, for it will set the foundation for your future. Ponder the possibilities and envision what you'd like to accomplish in the next 12–18 months.



"I'm so grateful to be able to work with you, and I'm honored that you've chosen me to walk alongside you on your journey."

Now I am going to ask you to add another task to the challenge I gave you above. As you write down the three things you are grateful for each day, also include some reflection time on both your personal and business situation and jot down your accomplishments. At the end of the month, count all the achievements you noted in this month's challenge (sales goals, weight loss, improved personal relationships, etc.). Don't forget the accomplishments you might have taken for granted or dismissed as unworthy of milestone status. Remember, the small milestones are what make the BIG ones possible. Now compare the progress you made against the goals and expectations you set at the beginning of the year. Give yourself kudos for a job well done and evaluate areas that need improvement. Then determine what changes must be made to make 2021 a fun and successful year.

I've given you this challenge because I know many have been tested by the pandemic. Next year is just around the corner, so I thought, why not get everyone thinking ahead to a prosperous 2021? This challenge is the first step in a planning process called Vision Day, which we will discuss in more detail next month. Many successful CEOs use this process and even ordinary people like you and me have found it can supercharge their year.

Thank you so much for being part of my journey. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving month!

-Deb Matz

Top 5 Healthy Life Hacks to Have an Awesome Morning

Getting your day started with coffee isn't always enough. Sometimes, you need to give yourself an extra boost, especially when you have little energy or trouble focusing. For an awesome start to your day, here are five tips to get you going right off the bat.

WAKE UP 5 MINUTES EARLY.

What's the power of five minutes? It can be more than you think. Spend this time doing simple breathing exercises or a quick meditation so you can get focused for the rest of the day. If that's not your style, you can prepare a quick to-do list for your day ahead. Either way, it's always nice to have a little extra time for yourself without losing too much sleep.

START WITH GREEN TEA, THEN COFFEE.

A cup of coffee at 7 a.m. can leave you burned out by 10 a.m. Try swapping it with green tea for a more gentle wake-up call. After that, you can brew your favorite coffee to keep you going strong. This practice also might help you consume less caffeine overall!

TAKE A QUICK MORNING WALK — AND HAVE YOUR MEETINGS ON THE GO.

Morning meetings can make us want to fall asleep again. Don't spend all of them sitting down if you don't have to! Not only will morning walks help you wake up, but they can also add some extra physical activity to your day.

WRITE IN YOUR JOURNAL.

Who says you have to journal at the end of the day when you're tired and ready to sleep? You can journal in the morning about what happened yesterday and the things you're looking forward to that day. Journaling can remind you of your daily goals and motivate you to stick to your commitments.

PACK YOUR LUNCH (OR SNACKS!).

Staying on track with your goals starts with having the energy to do them. Plan a healthy balance of fats, vegetables, carbohydrates, and proteins. This can be as simple as assembling dips, carrots, wraps, and salads each morning.

It's time to try these tactics to jump-start your day!



HOW WILL THE 2020 ELECTION IMPACT THE STOCK MARKET?

Not as Much as You Think

Some days it seems like America's news outlets are having a contest to see who can scare us the most about the future. This month, the 2020 presidential election takes center stage. You have probably heard rumors that the stock market will soar or tank, depending on who is elected — I hear it every election!

A lot of people worry about the markets if their preferred candidate doesn't win the election. However, from a statistical perspective, the market doesn't really care which party's presidential candidate wins. It just does not move markets like the media pundits want you to believe. Historically, the lowest returns are recorded in the first year after a presidential election — Republican or Democrat. Statistically, the third year of a term is the highest, regardless of which party holds the Executive

Office. Now don't bet on these cycles as many who have played that game have lost dearly.

According to the 2019 Dimensional Funds Report, the market has been positive in 19 of the last 23 election years between 1928 to 2016. Just another confirmation that the theories floating around about presidential election cycles and the market are not true. Investors should find comfort in the fact that the politicians don't have as much power over the markets as they like to believe.

Back when I was an alderman, I saw firsthand how ineffective the legislative powers were on the wider market and community. When our city council enacted cumbersome laws, the local businesses would work around within those laws and still thrive in spite of bad legislation. Their drive to create wealth found a way to make

positive things happen even if the legislative body made it difficult.

The factors that really move the market are things like the Federal Reserve (the Fed) buying or selling treasuries or changing the interest rates. Inflation will affect the market, and so will consumer sentiment, employment numbers, housing starts, and manufacturing production numbers. Unfortunately, we can't usually see how much these things matter until after the fact, so they don't help much with predictions.

At the end of the day, you should recognize that the market is resilient and so are you. No matter what happens, with a bit of preparation (see Page 3), you can get through this election and out the other side wealthier. Have a plan and stay the course.

Do Your End-of-Year Tax Planning Like a Pro TIPS FOR WRAPPING UP 2020

Before I jump into my suggestions for end-of-year tax planning, I want to say again how grateful I am to have you as a client, friend, or business associate. When I'm counting my Thanksgiving blessings this year, relationships like ours are at the top of the list! I am fortunate to work with, and alongside, such wonderful people. Thank you!

This month I am using this space to share something important with you (although it's not sexy): end-of-year tax planning. I know it feels like tax season just ended, but now is the time to start thinking about what lies ahead. Going into the holiday season, it's important to remember that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act offers some temporary opportunities you may want to take advantage of in 2020. The CARES Act changed many policies, including the limits on business expenses, Social Security and Medicare tax requirements for employers, rules for net operating losses, business interest deductions, and qualified improvement property depreciation. It also allowed penalty-free IRA distributions of up to \$100,000 for the year, where the tax liability can be paid over a three-year period.

Many people will be impacted by the changes in required minimum distributions (RMDs), which was bumped up to age 72. They may also benefit from the 2020 distribution waiver option. That means you should reevaluate any automatic withdrawals you have planned for now or through the end of the year. If you don't need the distribution for living expenses, you can avoid the tax consequences by not taking the distribution or rolling the distribution back into the account (unfortunately this option is not available for non-spouse owners of beneficiary IRAs). If you have taken an RMD distribution within the last 60 days, you may still have time to roll that distribution back into your account and avoid the additional tax liability. However, if a distribution was taken more than 60 days prior to today, the rollback option has expired.

Let's consider the good side of all this year's market volatility. Looking at the bigger picture, market downturns can be a good opportunity to move your tax-deferred assets into a tax-free Roth account.* You pay tax only on the value of the assets at the time of their conversion. So if you own a stock that you think has great potential for growth, and its value falls from \$100 per share to \$50 per share at the time of the conversion, you will only be required to pay tax on the \$50 per share value. This situation creates one of the best opportunities to implement a conversion strategy. And there is no income limit for this strategy. Another factor that makes this strategy attractive is the fact that taxes are likely to increase due to all the debt the government has assumed this year. However, it is important to understand the extent of the tax consequences of moving tax-deferred assets to a Roth, so talk to a financial professional before taking action.

Now let's talk about how to avoid a repeat of last year's marital deduction snafu. Many married couples found that they had to pay additional tax rather than get the refund they expected. If you reduced your benefit contributions this year, you should verify whether you are withholding enough tax from your paycheck. Make certain your withholdings are correct by going to the IRS Estimator at [IRS.gov/individuals/tax-withholding-estimator](https://www.irs.gov/individuals/tax-withholding-estimator). If your withholdings are low, you should increase your withholdings now, or you will pay a large lump sum and possibly a penalty on April 15th. **Be prepared!**

The 2020 tax returns promise to be complicated, with all the temporary tax law changes created to minimize the economic impact of the coronavirus. Therefore, it is in your best interest to start thinking about your current financial situation and compare that to what you are expecting to happen in 2021. Keep good records and retain your documentation — particularly if you took advantage of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP).

Of course, you don't have to tackle this alone. Tax planning can be trickier than cooking the perfect turkey, so if you have any questions about what tax strategies are best for you or your business, don't hesitate to reach out to us at DLJ Tax Services. Whether you prefer to call us at (920) 944-6020 or (678) 491-49744 or email me at Deb@DLJTaxServices.com, we're here to help!

* This strategy is not for everyone, so please check with your financial advisor.

DID YOU KNOW?

7 Fun Facts

- The human body contains enough fat to make seven bars of soap. *No wonder it's so hard to lose weight.*
- It's impossible to hum while holding your nose. *Go ahead and try it! I actually tried.*
- Have you ever noticed how much time MLB players spend looking at the balls? The average lifespan of an MLB baseball is only seven pitches.
- Tomatoes are native to the Americas, so there was no such thing as tomato sauce in Italy until at least the 16th century. *So, what would we eat if pizza and spaghetti weren't created?*
- Beer was legally classified as a soft drink in Russia until 2011. *Actually, all beverages with less than 10% alcohol were classified as foodstuff.*
- The cranberries we use at Thanksgiving are indigenous to North America.
- It's hard to believe, but toilet seats are about seven times cleaner than our cellphones.



The Good News

"Truly, anyone welcoming my messenger is welcoming me. And to welcome me is to welcome the Father who sent me."

—John 13:20–22

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