



# THINKING BEYOND...™

## Enjoying the Deeper Meaning of Life

Ask any small child what is most exciting about Christmastime and the answer will be unanimous – getting presents. When we hear that answer, we all smile an understanding smile and maybe even conjure up a few of our own memories of childhood Christmases long past.

But, there is a much deeper level of fulfillment in life than the simple joy a child experiences as he rips open countless brightly colored packages full of wondrous things just for him. I would like to suggest that the greatest fulfillment can be found in the deeper meaning of life.

The deepest level of fulfillment in life is not found in what we *get* but in what we *give*. If you try to explain this concept to small children, they will stare at you with a blank looks on their faces, amazed that anything could possibly provide more joy than receiving presents. But, as every parent and grandparent knows, there is no gift you could ever receive that exceeds the joy of watching the bubbling enthusiasm of your own children or grandchildren as they wildly tear open a box, squeal with glee as they discover its contents, jump to their feet, dash headlong towards you and throw themselves into your arms offering a thousand kisses and *thank you's*.

Why should it be any different now with Family Wealth Planning? Far too often in our pursuit to build and control our own financial empires, we commonly find ourselves far more focused on what we are *getting* out of it all than what we could be *giving* from it. Often, we may find ourselves unconsciously reverting back to a childlike attitude

towards happiness – “getting presents for ourselves.” And, in so reverting, we sacrifice the deeper joy in life by neglecting the ancient truth that tells us, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*”

I would like to suggest that what makes our approach to *Family Wealth Counseling* so unique

is that we do not focus simply on maximizing what our clients will *keep* for themselves and their families. We also strive to address the deeper issues of life’s purpose – what we *give* to others!

It is the introduction of this element into the *Family Wealth Planning* process that brings purpose, meaning and fulfillment into what would otherwise be just another set of difficult business decisions that need to be made in order to minimize the damage. It is what gives *Family Wealth Planning* a *heart*. It’s what gives it *life*.

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