



“Plan today, protect tomorrow”

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The science of why you should spend your money on experiences, not things



While we know that money makes you happier, after basic needs are met, it doesn't make you that much happier.

Dr. Thomas Gilovich, a psychology professor at Cornell University has been studying the question of money and happiness for over two decades. “We buy things to make us happy, and we succeed. But only for a while. New things are exciting to us at first, but then we adapt to them.”

So rather than buying the latest iPhone or BMW, Gilovich suggests you'll get more happiness spending money on experiences like going to concerts, doing outdoor activities, learning a new skill, or travelling.

Happiness from material purchases diminishes over time, but experiences are ingrained in our identity.

Gilovich says, “You can really like your material stuff, but they remain separate from you. In contrast, your experiences really are part of you.”

You will hear people who say that their happiest years were as a university student. By definition, student years are their poorest as they do not have an income. So how can they be the happiest? It's because they did so much. Experiences replaced possessions. Similarly ex-military personnel will often recount their incredible times with comrades.

A couple who recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary recounted all their experiences and adventures when asked for highlights of their lives. Not a single new car or material possession was mentioned.

So plan your next real experience now. As they say... “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.”



Greetings from Malcolm. We have a stable government, low inflation and what could be a reduction in mortgage interest rates later this year. This all makes for a happy picture of what our economy is doing.

There is still the issue of house prices in Auckland, along with road and other transport woes into and out of the city.

But while we all appear to be going ok, this is also the perfect recipe for complacency. The best fix for complacency is planning. So ask yourself, “Where will I be one year from now?” One year from now, where will I be financially, health-wise, my family circumstances and spiritually (my mental health)? Give these some thought. The answers will help guide you through the year.



Say ‘Nuts’ to heart disease

This is a quote from Australian Cardiologist, Dr Ross Walker. “People who eat 10-15 natural macadamia nuts per day (not roasted

or salted) have a 50% reduction in heart disease which has been proven from five different major studies.

It is because of the mono-unsaturated fats, proteins and omega-3, which offer improved stability of the heart and open up your blood vessels. They also thin your blood and contain fibre.”

The 3rd best place to die!



An index, compiled by the Singapore-based Lien Foundation, looked at forty countries, each nation ranked according to its performance in availability, cost and quality of end-of-life care services. New Zealand ranked third overall!

New Zealand did not perform so well in the end-of-life healthcare section however, managing only 28th equal with the UK. But this only tells part of the story. The stress on families, both emotionally and financially when someone dies can be considerable.

Other family members may have to take time off work to care for them in the final months. There may still be a mortgage (not everyone dies of old age) and the house may have to be altered to cater for disability needs.

So while the cost of the funeral may be acceptable – typically being \$6,000 to \$10,000 – it's the total financial cost to the family that can be crippling.

Life insurance is designed for this specific purpose. To allow the family to be financially stress-free at the time of such crises.

If the family member has a terminal illness, it is often possible to claim their life insurance while they are still alive. This allows for giving up work to care for the loved one, altering the house or to achieve final memories.

Life insurance claims paid annually are in the hundreds of millions in New Zealand. So while we may be the third best place to die, the financial impact can be considerable.

Answers: 1) The doctor is his mum
2) Corn on the cob. 3) Draw a shorter
line next to it, and it is the longer line.

How our lives are changing



How we live our lives is changing. Here are just a few of the trends being expounded by various people.

- Half of girls and a third of boys born since 2000 in the developed world will live to be at least 100 – which means that they will spend 35 years in retirement if they retire at 65!
- While birth rates in NZ are declining overall, there is an accelerating birth rate for women aged 35-40.
- We now spend more time in front of computers screens than in front of TV.
- Over a third of the jobs our kids will choose as careers do not exist today!
- The gap between rich and poor is going to get considerably wider, with education being a prime determining factor. This is because a lot of jobs will rely on technology and innovation that require education to provide the necessary skills.

Get out of prison FREE



During WW2, over 35,000 Allied prisoners managed to escape from German POW camps, 12,000 of these helped by the game of Monopoly!!!

Makers Waddington managed to conceal real bank notes in with the Monopoly money, hide compasses and maps printed on silk inside the paying pieces and even a hidden file in pieces that screwed together.

Board games were an approved item allowed into the camps in Red Cross parcels so were beyond suspicion by the Germans.

British and American airmen were briefed on this before take-off. They and Waddington employees were also sworn to secrecy indefinitely as it was never discovered by the Germans and the Allies thought it could be used in future wars. So incredibly the story wasn't declassified until 2007, when the Waddington were finally honoured by the government for their work.

1. A dad and his son were riding their bikes and crashed. Two ambulances came and took them to different hospitals. The man's son was in the operating room and the doctor said, "I can't operate on you. You're my son." How is that possible?

2. Throw away the outside and cook the inside, then eat the outside and throw away the inside. What is it?

3. You draw a line. Without touching it, how do you make the line longer?



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