NELSONCORPNEWS

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TAX SEASON IS HERE

Our team of tax professionals are gearing up and getting ready for your tax returns! They asked if I would remind you of a few things and let you know of new things to be on the lookout for.

One question that has come up a lot is how long you need to keep your old tax returns. A good rule of thumb is to save three years worth of tax returns. If you have a loss from a worthless security or a bad debt deduction, keep your records for seven years.

If you have a PIN from the IRS for filing your tax return, please include that in your tax documents when you are dropping off or coming in for an appointment. Leaving that at home will result in a delay in getting your return filed.

If you have Marketplace insurance, remember to include your 1095-A tax document. It is required for filing and if we don't have it, your return will be rejected.

Something new to watch for: if you received payments from any type of cash app such as PayPal or Venmo, you may be receiving a 1099-K. If you receive one, be sure to bring it in for your return.

We're looking forward to seeing you this tax season!

David Nelson

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THINGS TO NOTE

Identity thieves may try to contact taxpayers through fraudulent calls, emails, texts and social media messages pretending to be the IRS. The IRS will mail a letter or notice before calling or emailing. Taxpayers who receive a request from the IRS in the mail or by phone can always contact IRS customer service to authenticate it.

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL CHARITIES & BUSINESSES

Check out what's happening at our area charities, businesses, and communities:

- *Bingo at the Clinton Moose Lodge*
- *Art at the Airport - Moline*
- *Visit Clinton www.clintoniowatourism.com*
- *Visit Quad Cities www.visitquadcities.com*

NelsonCorp Nuggets

49% of Americans say they would advise their younger self to save more, 18% would advise to spend less, and 16% to make more money.

Source: wallethub.com/blog/new-years-financial-resolutions-survey

SHARE THE LOVE

What do you think of when you think of Valentine's Day? When I was young, I remember the first thing I thought of was how many valentines I would need for my elementary school class and how fun it would be to make my own "Valentine box." As I got older, my thoughts changed to nervousness about who I would ask to the high school dance or how I could impress my date.

As I entered adulthood and the holiday became more commercialized, I would be surrounded by images of red roses and pink hearts. I looked forward to having a partner to spoil with chocolate and kisses.

But even when we stop growing physically, we never stop growing emotionally, do we? Over the years, my sentiments about the holiday have continued to change. I was lucky enough to find a partner to share Valentine's Day with, my amazing wife, Sally.

We have shared many dinners and adventures together. And over time, our love expanded to include our beautiful children. Starting a family of my own has made me reflect on holiday traditions and what memories I want to make for my kids.

I know a friend who made a conscious decision to always give his daughters a small Valentine's gift along with his wife's. He loves being able to show his daughters love in that way, while also showing them how much he loves their mom.

Hearing that is what inspired me to express love to more than just Sally on Valentine's Day. It got me thinking of how people share their love with others in their lives.

I think of how I've seen love shown in cinema. For example, professing love in the grandest of gestures with rose petals, balloons, and giant teddy bears.

But that's not what I've personally seen in my lifetime. I've seen young people in my neighborhood quietly tape hearts on doors – leaving a "heart attack", if you will – to show love to unsuspecting neighbors.

One year a relative of mine went out with her girlfriends, and they turned it into an annual celebration of their friendship every February.

I also have friends who are single who celebrate the day by treating their pets or take a self-love day for themselves.

There are many different ways to celebrate Valentine's Day, and you're allowed to share the love you have with anyone you want. Sharing your love with others is something that should be celebrated. And that, to me, is what Valentine's Day is truly about.

Beyond cards and candy, beyond chocolate and roses, it's an opportunity to tell others how much we love them. Your family, your friends, your neighbors, your coworkers...or in my case, my clients.

Valentine's Day is about appreciating every form of love.

So, on behalf of everyone here at NelsonCorp, I hope you have a wonderful holiday. May it be personal, not commercial. May it be spent however and with whomever you wish. And no matter how you celebrate your love,

We hope you have a lovely Valentine's Day!

UNITY AND RESPECT

On the morning of January 20, 1993, President George H.W. Bush sat down at his desk in the Oval Office for the last time. Since he had failed to win reelection to a second term, he was preparing to attend the inauguration of his successor, Bill Clinton. But before he left the White House, he decided to pen a note to the man who would shortly replace him.

When Clinton took office that afternoon, he found the note waiting for him.[1] This is what it said:

Dear Bill,
When I walked into this office just now, I felt the same sense of wonder and respect that I felt four years ago. I know you will feel that, too.

I wish you great happiness here. I never felt the loneliness some Presidents have described.

There will be very tough times, made even more difficult by criticism you may not think is fair. I'm not a very good one to give advice; but just don't let the critics discourage you or push you off course.

You will be our President when you read this note. I wish you well. I wish your family well.

Your success now is our country's success. I am rooting hard for you.

Good luck —
George

I've been thinking about this letter as we approach Presidents' Day. As you know, this holiday, which began as a way to celebrate the birthdays of Washington and Lincoln, has since become a celebration of all those who have served in our nation's highest office.

I think it's remarkable that Bush would take the time to write such a kind and thoughtful message to the man who had defeated him. He could very easily have said nothing. People would have understood. It also would have been easy to leave something nasty, sarcastic, or passive-aggressive. After all, Bush and Clinton were technically rivals. That would have been an unfortunate — but also very human — response.

But President Bush did not do those things.

Though he didn't have to, though it wasn't required of him, he thought it important to make the new president feel, as Clinton himself later said, "as much at home as he could."[2] He decided to emphasize unity, respect, and goodwill over bitterness.

And that, to me, is the whole point of a day like Presidents' Day.

As you know, there have been forty-five different presidents in our country's history, across forty-seven presidencies. (Presidents Cleveland and Trump served/are serving non-consecutive terms.) These men were all very different, with different philosophies, styles, beliefs, opinions, and ambitions. That makes sense, because we are and have always been a country made up of different philosophies, beliefs, opinions, and ambitions.

But no matter our differences, all those presidents — and all of us — still have two things in common: A shared love for our country...and a mutual benefit whenever we place unity, respect, and goodwill above our differences.

President Bush's letter established a tradition of leaving a note for the next commander-in-chief.[3]

As chance would have it, each president's note has been to a member of the opposing party. Bush to Clinton, Clinton to Bush. Bush to Obama, Obama to Trump. Trump to Biden and back again. None of these men, it is fair to say, agreed very much with each other. But each chose to continue the tradition. Each chose to stress unity and goodwill over bitterness.

Our country is strongest when we emphasize these values. When we remember that even those who disagree can still show respect for one another.

While it's not as important as Independence Day, or as hallowed as Memorial Day, I think this holiday is still a wonderful opportunity to exercise our patriotism...and to remember that what unites us will always be more powerful than what divides us. To paraphrase President Bush, the more each of us succeeds, the more we all succeed. And the harder we root for each other, the better off we all will be.

1 "Note from President George H.W. Bush to President Bill Clinton," Clinton Digital Library, https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/101724

2 "The letter George H.W. Bush left for Clinton is a lesson in grace," CNN, December 1, 2018. https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/01/politics/george-bush-bill-clinton-letter-trnd/index.html

3 "Letters left by U.S. presidents to their successors," Ballotpedia, https://ballotpedia.org/Letters_left_by_U.S._presidents_to_their_successors

NelsonCorp Nuggets

As part of the SECURE 2.0 Act, the "super catch-up" went into effect 1/1/25. This potentially allows savers ages 60-63 the ability to make larger contributions to a 401(k), 403(b), governmental 457 or Thrift Savings Plan.

Source: aarp.org/retirement/planning-for-retirement/info-2024/retirement-changes

INCOME STRATEGIES IN RETIREMENT

Income is one of the most important aspects of any good retirement plan. For that reason, we want to highlight the topic of income planning, picking up where we left off last month. Each section will be devoted to a different source or strategy regarding income in retirement.

What's Around the Bend: Maximizing Social Security, Part II

When it comes to income, few sources are more important — or more reliable — than Social Security. And guess what? There are ways to potentially maximize your Social Security benefits, thereby increasing your post-retirement income.

One important method is to claim a spousal benefit. You see, married individuals can claim Social Security based on either their personal earnings record (in other words, their own work history) or on their spouse's earnings record. If a married individual chooses the latter, they could receive up to 50% of their spouse's benefit.

Why choose to claim benefits based on 50% of your spouse's earnings record rather than your own? Simple: because you can claim whichever number is higher.

If, for example, you don't have enough Social Security credits to get benefits on your own work record — or if you didn't work long enough to earn a significant benefit for yourself — than claiming spousal benefits may be the right option.

Now, it's important to keep in mind that a spousal benefit is up to 50% of your spouse's **full retirement age benefit**. The chart below shows each person's FRA as determined by their birth year:

Year of Birth	Full Retirement Age
1943-1954	66
1955	66 and 2 months
1956	66 and 4 months
1957	66 and 6 months
1958	66 and 8 months
1959	66 and 10 months
1960 and later	67

The reason this matters is because many people choose to delay claiming their Social Security benefits until after their full retirement age, as benefits increase for each year you wait. However, postponing does not affect their spouse's benefit — it will always be 50% of their full retirement age.

To qualify for a spousal benefit, you must be at least 62 or older, or have a child younger than 16 who is either in your care or has a disability.

It's important to know well in advance how much in Social Security benefits married couples are eligible to receive, so each person can determine whether it makes sense to claim their own benefit or their spouse's.

Please let us know if you ever need any assistance in estimating your own Social Security benefits.

What's Over the Next Hill: Retirement Income Taxes

When pondering income in retirement, it's easy to focus primarily on what's coming in, not what's going out — especially in the form of taxes.

Everyone knows that taxes don't end when we retire, of course, but it's easy to forget what types of taxes we have to pay. Some sources of income are taxed; some are not. And various types of taxable income may be taxed at different rates, in ways that may seem confusing.

The following table shows several common sources of retirement income and how they are taxed:

Income Source	Tax Rate
Roth IRA/Roth 401(k)	Distributions are tax free
Traditional IRA/401(k)	Distributions are taxed as ordinary income
Annuity payments, short-term investment gains, bond income, most dividends	Taxed at the same rate as your ordinary income
Social Security Benefits	certain conditions. For example, if a married couple files a joint return with a combined income of over $44,000, up to 85% of their benefits may be taxable.[1]
Long-term investment gains	Taxed at the long-term capital gains rate.

[1] "Income Taxes and Your Social Security Benefit," *Social Security Administration,* https://www-origin.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/taxes.html

This is another reason why it's so important to have a plan for where your income will come from in retirement — and what percentage of your income will come from each source. By knowing this, you can plan for how taxes will impact your cash flow…and thus, your overall retirement lifestyle.

Next month, we will cover some simple-but-critical ways to potentially minimize taxes in retirement.

What's On the Horizon: Exploring Additional Sources of Income, Part II

There are more sources of income out there beyond Social Security and standard investments like bonds and CDs. These additional sources of income are not right for everybody, but they are always worth exploring to see if they fit you and your situation.

One potential source of income are **dividend stocks**.

Dividend stocks are where a company pays out a percentage of their profits to their shareholders. Basically, this means that if you invest in a dividend-stock, you are sent a check or receive a direct deposit. What you do with it is completely up to you. (Pay your expenses? Take a trip? Re-invest? You decide.)

Different companies pay different amounts when it comes to their dividends, and their schedules may differ, too. For example, some companies pay quarterly dividends, while others annually or semi-annually. But whatever the schedule, dividends can provide you a regular stream of valuable income even after you stop working.

Here's a quick example. Say you own 300 shares in a company that is currently trading at $100. The company pays a quarterly dividend of 2% per share. Multiply that dividend by the number of shares you own, and voila! Owning 300 shares nets you a payment of $600 each quarter. (Obviously, this example uses nice round numbers, but it gets the point across.)

It's usually recommended that younger people reinvest their dividends, meaning they use the money to buy additional shares instead of keeping it for immediate use. This is one of the most powerful ways to build up your wealth over time. But when you're retired, income is often more important, so it may make more sense to treat your dividends as a kind of quarterly paycheck.

Now, keep in mind that dividends are taxable, and are usually classified as ordinary income. Furthermore, dividends aren't guaranteed — a company may choose to raise, lower, or nix their dividend entirely. But many companies that pay dividends do so because they are large, well-established, and stable. For these reasons, owning dividend stocks are certainly worth considering if you are looking for more income in retirement.

Watching the Weather: Market Conditions on the Road to Retirement

Santa Claus never really showed up for the markets in December. The S&P 500 slid 2.5% for the month, while the Dow fell 5.27%. This was largely due to investors selling their holdings to realize some of their profits for the year, but renewed concerns about inflation and interest rates also played a part.

Despite the tepid end to the year, 2024 was a banner year for the markets. Driven by enthusiasm over artificial intelligence and helped by interest rate cuts and falling inflation, the S&P 500 gained over 23% for the year. The Dow rose over 12%.

What We're Keeping an Eye On

Here are some of the major storylines we'll be studying this year:

- Is the inflation roller coaster truly over? Consumer prices ticked back up in November, and there are some indications that they may rise higher still in the coming months.
- President Trump has promised to levy across-the-board tariffs against China and many other countries. What effect will those tariffs have on the economy, especially inflation?
- Will interest rates continue to fall, or will they remain where they are for a while? In its most recent statement, the Fed projected only two cuts for 2025.
- Much of the market's performance over the last two years has been generated by tech companies, especially those ones investing in AI. However, to date, many AI companies are valued far above what they are actually earning. Will that change in 2025? Will the hype continue, or will it recede somewhat?

2024 marked the first time since 1998 that the S&P 500 saw gains over 20% for two years in a row. For this reason, many investors are full of confidence going into 2025.

As always, our team will continue scrutinizing the markets, and we will let you know if we ever feel that confidence should change to concern. In the meantime, have a great month!

NELSONCORP MEDIA APPEARANCES

Be sure to catch our weekly educational content featured locally on television, radio, and the newspaper. You can get this and more at www.nelsoncorp.com/blog.

On 4 Your Money, David Nelson discussed how with a growing percentage of people putting money into their 401(k)s and IRAs, the stock market is making a bigger impact on a higher percentage of people's net worth. He also stressed that a tactical approach is so important for anyone investing now and in the future. Nate Kreinbrink was on with a look at business borrowing. The growth we're seeing in C&I loans could be a positive sign for the economy. David returned to talk about interest rates, the Fed, and the resulting bond market movements. He pointed out the interesting change on the 10-year bond after the Fed started cutting rates.

4 Your Money airs Tuesday mornings on FOX 18 News at 8am and on WHBF CBS Local 4 News at around 6:10pm.

This month on Financial Focus, Nate Kreinbrink and Andy Ferguson offered some tips to make your tax season a little smoother, such as looking at when you filed your taxes last year as a guide for when you file this year or verifying the bank account you want any possible refunds to go to so they aren't going to closed bank accounts. Nate returned on another segment to discuss the changes to inherited accounts. David Nelson joined Gary Determan addressed the current valuations and how that is a slight concern for stocks right now. He also mentioned that we're really starting to see people coming in to get their taxes done and how we offer both drop-off and in-person tax preparation.

Financial Focus airs every Wednesday at 9:00 am on KROS FM 105.9 and AM 1340.

KEY NUMBERS AS YOU PLAN FOR 2025

Are you familiar with how our federal tax code originated?

In 1909, progressives in Congress attached a provision for an income tax to a tariff bill. Conservatives, hoping to thwart the idea, proposed passing the bill as they believed 75% of the states would not ratify the constitutional amendment, according to the National Archives.

To their surprise, the 16th Amendment was ratified in 1913, granting Congress the authority to impose a federal income tax. Originally, less than 1% of the population paid income taxes, and the tax rate was merely 1% of net income, thanks to generous exemptions and deductions.

Today's complexity

Things have changed since. They continue to change.

Late last year, the Internal Revenue Service provided detailed information on adjustments to more than 60 tax provisions that will impact taxpayers when they file their returns in 2026 for tax year 2025.

As incorporated into law, the IRS adjusts various categories to account for inflation. Annual inflation adjustments, however, do not cover all tax provisions.

Below, we will touch on the high points. If you have questions, please reach out to us. As always, if you have specific tax questions, feel free to consult with your tax advisor or ask us about our team of tax professionals.

1. Tax brackets have changed. Generally speaking, the rates are applied to taxable income—income less the standard deduction or itemized deductions, whichever is higher. In other words, if you are married and filing jointly and taxable income is $50,000, the first $23,850 is taxed at 10%, and the remaining income is taxed at 12%.

This does not include tax credits or self-employment tax.

The standard rules apply to the Estates and Trusts tax brackets. For example, if a trust has $10,000 in income during 2025, taxes would be calculated as follows:

- 10% of $3,150 (earnings between $0 – $3,100) = **$315**
- 24% of $6,850 (earnings between $3,101 – $10,000) = **$1,644**
- Add the two together, and total federal taxes due = **$1,959**

2. For single taxpayers and married individuals filing separately for the tax year 2025, **the standard deduction** rises to $15,000 for 2025, an increase of $400 from 2024, according to the IRS.

For married couples filing jointly, the standard deduction rises to $30,000, up $800 from tax year 2024. For heads of households, the standard deduction will be $22,500 for tax year 2025, an increase of $600 from the amount for 2024.

For single filers and heads of households age 65 and over, the additional standard deduction will rise from $1,950 in 2024 to $2,000 in 2025.

For 2025, married couples over 65 filing jointly, the additional deduction per qualifying spouse will increase from $1,550 in 2024 to $1,600 in 2025, a $50 increase per qualifying spouse. If both are older than 65, there is a total increase in their standard deduction of $100.

3. For tax year 2025, **alternative minimum tax exemption amounts** for unmarried individuals is $88,100 ($68,650 for married individuals filing separately) and begins to phase out at $626,350.

For married couples filing jointly, the exemption amount is $137,000 and begins to phase out at $1,252,700.

4. The **maximum child tax credit** is $2,000 per qualifying child. It is not adjusted for inflation. The refundable portion of the child tax credit is adjusted for inflation and will remain at $1,700 for 2025.

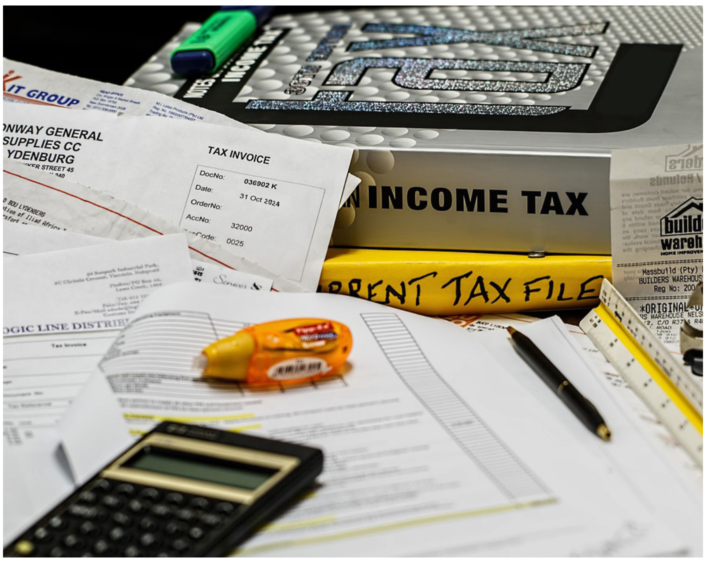
5. The **gift and estate exemption** for individuals in 2025 is $14.0 million, up from $13.6 million in 2024. The **annual gift tax exclusion** for 2025 is $19,000, up $1,000 in 2024, without using any of the lifetime gift and estate tax exemption.

6. Favorable treatment for long-term capital gains is a cherished tax break for investors. Long-term capital gains, such as the profit on the sale of a stock held for more than one year, are taxed at a more favorable rate than short-term gains. A short-term gain is taxed as if it were ordinary income. Qualified dividends are also taxed at a lower rate.

7. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) of 2017 includes a **20% deduction for pass-through businesses**. Limits on the deduction begin phasing in for taxpayers with income above $197,300 (or $394,600 for joint filers) in 2025. This compares to income above $191,950 and $383,900, respectively, for joint filers in 2024.

8. Other taxes you may be subject to or credits you may capture.

- High-income taxpayers are subject to the **net investment income tax** of 3.8%, levied on the lesser of net investment income or the excess of modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) over the following



threshold amounts: $200,000 for single and head of household filers, $250,000 for married filing jointly or qualifying surviving spouse, and $125,000 for married filing separately.

These amounts have never been indexed to inflation.

In general, net investment income includes but is not limited to interest, dividends, capital gains, rental and royalty income, and non-qualified annuities, according to the IRS.

Net investment income generally does not include wages, unemployment compensation, Social Security Benefits, alimony, and most self-employment income.

Tax on a child's investment and other unearned income, also known as the **kiddie tax**, applies to unearned income for children under the age of 19 and college students under the age of 24. Unearned income is income from sources other than wages and salary, like dividends and interest.

The exemption from the kiddie tax for 2025 rises by $100 to $2,700, according to the IRS. A parent will be able to elect to include a child's income on the parent's return for 2025 if the child's income is more than $1,350 and less than $13,500, which compares to $1,300 and $13,000, respectively, in 2024.

- For tax year 2025, the **maximum credit allowed for an adoption of a child** with special needs is the amount of qualified adoption expenses up to $17,280, increased from $16,810 for 2024.

The available adoption credit begins to phase out for taxpayers with a modified adjusted gross income above $259,190. It is completely phased out for taxpayers with a MAGI of $299,190 or more.

The credit is non-refundable, so the amount cannot exceed your tax liability. However, you may apply any excess credit amount to future years, up to five years.

IRA contributions

The **IRA contribution limit** for 2024 and 2025 is $7,000 for those under age 50, and $8,000 for those age 50 or older.

This is up from 2023's limits of $6,500 for those under age 50, and $7,500 for those age 50 or older. You can make 2025 IRA contributions until your April 15 federal tax deadline for income earned in 2025.

SEP-IRA limits

The SEP-IRA contribution limit for 2025 is 25% of an employee's total compensation, up to $70,000, and up $1,000 from 2024. Contributions may only be made by employers.

If you are self-employed, you may make an employer contribution on your own behalf. If you're self-employed, your contributions are generally limited to 20% of your net income.

Changes may be on the horizon

The TCJA significantly increased the standard deduction, simplifying the filing process, as it eliminated the need for many taxpayers to itemize. But it also scrapped the personal exemption.

Unless extended, please be aware that many provisions of the TCJA will expire at the end of 2025. Republicans generally favor a broad extension of the TCJA. However, it is uncertain how negotiations will eventually play out regarding key provisions. Any changes will be implemented for tax year 2026.

Expected changes if the TCJA is allowed to sunset:

- When the TCJA expires at the end of 2025, marginal tax rates for individuals will revert to pre-TCJA levels, including a maximum rate of 39.6%, up from 37%.

- The standard deduction will return to pre-TCJA levels, with an adjustment for inflation. For single filers, the standard deduction would fall to approximately $8,300 and $16,600 for joint filers.

- The child tax credit will be reduced to $1,000 from $2,000.

The personal exemption will be reinstated and valued at about $5,300, per the Tax Foundation.

- The gift and estate tax exemption will be reduced for individuals to roughly $7.5 million, according to Fidelity.

- The $10,000 cap on itemized state and local taxes (SALT) will be removed.

- The special 20% tax deduction for pass-through businesses will disappear.

We are mindful that the tax code is quite complex. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Feel free to consult with your tax advisor or if you need a tax advisor, ask us about our team of tax professionals.

NelsonCorp Nuggets

Social Security benefits are 96% funded by payroll taxes and 4% funded by income taxes paid on Social Security benefits. Payroll taxes have been 6.2% for employees and 6.2% for employers since 1990, i.e. no change for the last 34 years.

Source: Congressional Budget Office

MAKING THE LEAP INTO RETIREMENT

Retirement doesn't have to be scary.

After investing years of mental, physical, and emotional energy into their work, many employees fear the prospect of retirement. They worry about isolation, a lack of structure, a lack of purpose, even a loss of identity.

"People use metaphors like 'leaping off a cliff' or 'jumping into the void' to describe their sense of what it might be like to end their careers," said Teresa Amabile, emerita professor of business administration at Harvard Business School.

"Scary" was a word spoken often by the 120 people that Amabile and her co-authors interviewed for their new book, Retiring: Creating a Life That Works for You. It's a practical guide to navigating one of life's biggest transitions. It also shatters some long-held stereotypes about aging and retirement.

Preparing for a successful retirement

In the book, interviewees told vastly different stories about their retirement experiences. The authors used those stories, along with decades of research insights, to identify the "work" that must be done—the four tasks needed to create a satisfying retirement life. They noted that the tasks don't always appear in this order:

1. Decide how and when to retire.
2. Detach from work. Finish projects, hand off assignments, and emotionally detach. For many, effectively navigating feelings of excitement, loss, fear, and a strong desire to settle into a new life is the most difficult task.
3. Explore and experiment. Try new activities, build new relationships, explore new places, and do other things that help build a provisional retirement life.
4. Take the best elements from step 3 to settle into a stable retirement, one filled with people, places, and activities that suit you well.

There is no right way to retire. Some people continue working part time, some start second careers or volunteer, others spend time with family or simply doing whatever they want.

"There's no prescription," co-author Kathy Kram said. "A person needs to examine his or her own values, priorities, and needs, which tend to shift over the life course."

One of the key lessons from the research is "identity bridging," described as the process of carrying pieces of pre-retirement identity into post-retirement life in some way. It's important for people to reflect on who they want to be once they are no longer an employee.

Two notable stories were of "Simon," a professional with a supportive wife and good work-life balance, and "Margaret," an introvert with a chronic illness and no partner or children.

Simon slowly eased into a successful retirement, enjoying leisurely mornings with his wife and applying his career skills toward volunteering with an organization that helps underserved people acquire necessary furniture.

Meanwhile, Margaret realized she was headed for the lonely life of a "couch potato," so she started going to the gym, volunteering at a hospice, making new friends, and trying other activities to create new routines in her days. Both Simon and Margaret serve as different examples of successful transition.

'Retiring': A personal journey

Kram and Amabile spent 10 years on the book from inception to publication. During that time, they were both making their own transitions to retirement.

Amabile said the story of one participant in the book changed the way she planned her own retirement. "Lawrence" and his wife moved 1,000 miles away after his retirement to be closer to one of their children. Upheaval in that child's family, coupled with a lack of community, was harder than the couple expected. His story made Amabile and her husband, Steve, carefully evaluate their plans to move 100 miles away to be closer to their only child.

"I took that as a cautionary tale, and it really informed what Steve and I did as we were considering making the move, which we did make six years ago. It worked out extremely well for us," she said.

The four 'As' of retirement

The authors offered what they call the "four As" of retirement: Align, Agency, Awareness, and Adaptability.

First, **align** the vision of your life after retirement with your current preferences, needs, and aspirations in order to create a satisfactory life when work no longer dominates your time.

Second, exercise **agency** to make the changes needed to achieve that alignment.

Third, develop better **awareness** to understand what affects you both positively and negatively.

And fourth, develop **adaptability** because life is unpredictable and ultimately uncontrollable.

"The process of retiring is not just a decision to retire, but it's a journey that takes time. So, being patient with oneself is very important," Kram said.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED CHARITY IS PAWS & RELAX THERAPY DOG PROGRAM AT THE CLINTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

At Clinton Public Library, we are excited to offer a unique and heartwarming Therapy Dog Program designed to bring comfort, reduce stress, and promote well-being to our community. Moose, a trained therapy dog, is here to provide a soothing and non-judgmental presence, helping individuals of all ages engage in reading, relaxation, or simply spending time with a friendly canine companion.

How It Works:

- Reading with a Dog: Children and adults alike are welcome to read aloud to Moose, who is a calm and patient listener. This can help improve reading confidence, enhance literacy skills, and create a relaxing space for all.
- Stress Relief: Whether you're seeking a moment of peace during a busy day or need to unwind, Moose offers a calming presence, reducing anxiety and boosting emotional well-being.
- Interactive Activities: Join us for scheduled sessions where you can pet, cuddle, or simply enjoy Moose's companionship. He loves to interact and is eager to brighten your day.

This program is free and open to everyone, and no prior registration is required. Check our library calendar for upcoming therapy dog sessions and join us for a chance to connect with a furry friend while enjoying the library's resources. Moose, the therapy dog is here to offer comfort, joy, and a reminder that sometimes, all you need is a little paws-itivity!

Donations check can be made out to: Friends of the Clinton Public Library.
Mailed to:
C/O Friends of the Library
306 8th Ave S.
Clinton, IA 52732

JEANS FOR CHARITY

Every Friday, the team at NelsonCorp Wealth Management wears "Jeans for Charity". In exchange for getting to wear jeans to work, we each pay a $5 weekly fine. At the end of the month, the fines are donated to a charity. NelsonCorp will match the fines that are collected, up to $250.

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