

Women & Wealth: Mastering your plan

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PRESENTATION

Carly Doshi

Welcome, I'm Carly Doshi, Head of Philanthropy, Family Governance and Family Office Advisory. We're here today to kick off HSBC Private Banking's Summer Series, Women in Wealth: Mastering Your Plan While Doing It All. We're focusing on the unique concerns and considerations that women face with respect to our personal finance, taking control of our wealth, investing wisely, and planning for the future, all while continuing to manage life's many other responsibilities and challenges.

In addition to today's program, we are delighted to announce a new podcast series we'll be launching shortly in which you'll hear me interview some HSBC subject matter experts on specific wealth topics that we know women are concerned with. Towards the end of today's program, I'll explain a bit more about the podcast and where you can access that collection of information.

But for now, let's focus on today, and we are joined by three women who I think you'll learn a great deal from. They are incredibly talented advisors to women, in addition to being passionate about supporting and championing women to take charge and take a seat at the table when it comes to personal wealth. They've also navigated their own journey through the world of wealth management.

First, I'm delighted to introduce Kirby Rosplock, PhD. Kirby is a recognized consultant, author, facilitator and speaker on family businesses and family offices. She founded Tamarind Partners, a research and consultancy practice for families, and she's also an accomplished author. Interestingly, Kirby's PhD dissertation was on, very appropriately, women and wealth, and she followed up her research with studies on men and wealth and comparative analyses on the differences in views between men and women, and Kirby's first book *The Complete Family Office Handbook* is a popular desk reference for families and advisors, and is coming out with the second edition this fall. Importantly, Kirby knows firsthand the complexity of wealth in multi-generational business-owning families, as she herself is a fourth generation owner, beneficiary, and board member of the Babcock Lumber family enterprise and is also a trustee of her family's own family foundation. So, this is a topic that is particularly close to Kirby personally as well as professionally. Kirby, thank you for being here.

Kirby Rosplock

Thank you so much, Carly. It's a delight.

Carly Doshi

Next, I'm thrilled to introduce to you Meggie Palmer. Meggie is the founder of PepTalkHer, an initiative with the mission of closing the gender pay gap in global companies. Meggie and her team run corporate programming for major companies and brands on diversity, championing women in global business on the frontline, and she consults with companies to retain high potential women. Meggie additionally runs programs around confidence, negotiation, and fostering an inclusive workplace, and Meggie is also a lecturer at Columbia University in Barnard College. In her former life, Meggie was an award winning journalist. She spent 15 years as a journalist and foreign correspondent working for BBC World, CNBC, Channel 7, and Vogue. Meggie, thank you for joining us.

Meggie Palmer

It's a pleasure. Thank you so much for having me.

Carly Doshi

And finally, rounding out our panel today is Caroline Kitidis, HSBC Private Banking's own Head of Ultra High Net Worth Strategy. Caroline is responsible for the delivery of the bank's ultra high net worth strategy and delivery, including investment proposition, coverage approach, and client experience. Prior to joining HSBC, Caroline held senior roles at Deutsche Bank and Goldman Sachs, both in their securities and wealth management divisions. Caroline lives in London with her husband and daughter and she's actively involved in charity work, with a particular affinity for education involving children in South Africa. While Caroline herself hails from Boston, her father is from Greece and her husband was born in South Africa, so her own family is truly global. And Caroline, it sounds like you embody HSBC's global outlook when it comes to working with families and we're glad that you're here with us today.

Caroline Kitidis

Thank you so much for having me.

Carly Doshi

Now, to kick this off. As we prepared for the session, we talked a bit about your respective personal stories, and being that I myself subscribe to the notion that any wealth management plan begins with yourself and an assessment of your own personal beliefs and values, I'd like to start there if we can. Kirby, to kick it off, you have an interesting story, both as an inheritor and a participant in a large business-owning family, and now also as an advisor to families, and how would you say that you've seen both impact relationships within a family, either within your own or with the families that you advise?

Kirby Rosplock

There's no doubt that you cannot uncouple the two, so families who are enterprising or have substantial liquid wealth, including my own, it's very hard to parse the hats that everybody wears with respect to how the family wealth is perceived, how that may galvanize relationships, positive or negative, and how it impacts over generations. So, in my family, the culture was very patriarchal, and it was very common that the men were more looked upon than the women to step up and take a role actively in the business. In fact, I think it was 117 years before the first woman, which is me and my aunt, were actually allowed to be on the board of directors of our family business, and even then, it was like, eh, I guess so. So, I do think that not all families necessarily see and welcome the diversity, although there's a lot of change happening as we've seen in the last decade or so, with more women. In fact, a lot of the research I've conducted has shown that parents look equally upon their daughters and sons and want to give equally to both of those demographics. So, in our family, we always joke that they're lumberjacks, not lumberjills, and that's pretty common for a lot of families who've got businesses that are very male dominated, but now women are breaking casts and taking down the glass ceiling. The first pilot, fighter pilot, black American female fighter pilot, there's all kinds of things are historically shifting right now.

Carly Doshi

Yes, that's right, and it's absolutely true that things are changing, and Meggie, you also have an interesting background. Speaking of change, your successful journalism career to now being a vocal advocate for closing the gender pay gap, so what inspired you to start PepTalkHer?

Meggie Palmer

Yes, for me, I did start my career in journalism, and it was when I was a journalist, actually, at one point, I must have been maybe 23, 24, and I realized I had this realization that a man is not a plan and I can't actually believe that I ever thought that but maybe it was just the subconscious signals that I had, and it's not that I was expecting someone to look after me, but I had this realization; I was like, I'm not getting any younger, I need to take control of my wealth, and so – not that I had much as a journalist, so I had to teach myself about investing, and so I started very basic, ETFs, managed funds, that kind of stuff and got really interested in something as simple as compound interest, which again, we were taught in school, but never the practicalities of that and how actually such a basic concept, as you all know, can literally change your life and your wealth. So, that was kind of, I guess, my foray into the idea of creating my own wealth, but then I had an experience in one of the networks I worked for, where my paying conditions as a foreign correspondent were quite different to that of some of my male colleagues, and when I found out I asked the question, and I was told, well, maybe you can quit, or you can take us to court. And so I was kind of like, what, I guess it felt like the blinkers had been taken off, and to be fair, a white middle class woman, I hadn't really experienced a lot of discrimination, so very fortunate that it didn't happen to me until a lot later in life, but I realized then that if this was happening to me, someone who was relatively confident and resourceful, it must be happening to a lot of other people, and so that's where my journey really began, and talking to a lot of people, and helping people negotiate and advocate for themselves. That was five years ago, I guess, and now, we launched an app, a free app last year at an event with Vogue, Apple featured us globally, and it's just grown from there, which has been wonderful to see the impact. Yes.

Carly Doshi

Yes, that's amazing. Caroline, bring you into this conversation. What can you tell us about your money story, and how would you say your views on wealth have been shaped?

Caroline Kitidis

It's funny listening to your different perspectives. I guess my money story, and I guess how I developed it, was a mantra from my family, and it was always save, save, and save, and then plan, plan, and plan, and I think it probably stems back from a child where my father moved over from Greece in the 70s, my extended family moved over from Greece in the early 1900s, and I think the wealth changed. They went from having a lot of wealth and then war broke out, and you have little wealth, and then you had to create your wealth again, and so the wealth story, really, shifted up and down over the years, and so I think that mantra always stuck with me. Now going through one's teenage years, no one really saves and all you want to do is spend, and then you've got to develop into your adult years, and I think, as I did that, and I really was very keen on finance and the stock market and how companies were built and worked, and so then that led me to Wall Street and starting my early career at Goldman Sachs. But I think throughout that early years, and even early in my career, it stuck with me, and funnily enough, when I joined Goldman Sachs, it was really during that internet boom in the late 90s, which then very quickly went bust, and so during that time, when I was there, we had helped a lot of internet entrepreneurs hedge their risk and companies because their wealth was really on paper. They were multi-multi-millionaires and billionaires, but really on paper, and the smart ones thought ahead and did hedge. A lot of people didn't, the wealth didn't survive that. So, again, it reinforced my save, save, save, and plan mentality, and so I think that shaped, I guess, my mantra and how we think about clients and investing.

Carly Doshi

And let me follow up with you. As an executive in financial services, you obviously work with wealthy families every day, how did you come to be passionate on the topic of advising women specifically?

Caroline Kitidis

Well, it's a very natural thing to say. I am a woman, so maybe I feel as though I'm passionate towards other women, and I think... and I'm the type of woman that really tries... I'm a sensitive woman, I would say, but I really enjoy speaking to people and understanding their stories and really trying to figure out their goals and plans and ideas, and so I think when working with women, two things that really struck me was, one, it is very personal, and not that our wealth isn't personal in general, because of course it is, it's ours, and it's personal, but I felt as though there was a very personal element in how women felt about their investing for their families, long-term, and really building that long-term plan. And then, two, I always felt as though women invest with purpose, and if we look at... I mean, we obviously have the experts here, but many studies show socially responsible investing is really important to women. If you ask a broad population of high net worth and ultra high net worth women, half of them will tell you that it's key to part of their

investment strategy, and that's different for men. Men, I think it's about 20 to 23%. So, I think that for me was really powerful and something that I felt really connected with me.

Carly Doshi

Yes. Kirby, speaking of research, you've studied the history of wealth transfer and how family wealth was traditionally passed down, and the fact that women were largely left out. Can you tell us a bit more about that and about your research and the findings that you've come across?

Kirby Rosplock

Sure. I mean, it's really fascinating because we live in this day and age where when you're born a woman today, you think, of course I can do everything a man can do and you can, but we are very much hardwired back to our ancestral roots and our great grandmother's and our great, great grandmother's, and it was very different. So, let's just close your eyes a minute, and if we were to go back in time, and imagine we were coming to the United States, and we were on the arm of a gentleman walking off a ship for the first time, you were only actually able to own what was on your physical person, OK? So, that's why so many women had beautiful things embedded into their dowries, why they had beautiful handbags, and adornments for hats and jewelry and everything else, because actually women per marriage law didn't have the right to own property, so you couldn't actually go buy a house or a piece of land. That was up to your husband today to do, so there were all these things embedded in marriage law that actually made you kind of like a second class citizen in the ownership realm. The ability to just transact business, you couldn't even own a business. So, then you go back even further, and you go back to the time of trust laws, so we think about a lot of wealth is actually held in trust, so if you're a beneficiary, technically you are not the owner. So, that whole trust is a contract for somebody else. The trustee has legal ownership and authority over that trust, and you, the beneficiary, it's for your benefit, but there's a whole bunch of laws and rules in that trust document that say how that asset or that trust can be used for your benefit. So, go back and think about that.

The trust law was actually created back to the time of the Crusades, and we start to find out that when the man left to go fight the Crusades, who was left behind? It was the women and children, so they actually made a contract with usually clergy or other people that were left behind saying, will you oversee these assets that are for my wife and children while I'm gone fighting the war, and so now you start to see we've been disintermediated and actually not party to the conversation about owning assets for a long, long time. Property law, trust law, marriage law, and it's only the women's suffrage movement and subsequent periods that things have started to really shift and change. And I shared a picture with you, Carly, right before this webinar where my great grandmother was part of the Daughters of the Revolution and the women's suffrage movement, and really, those were the first roots of we want autonomy, we want to be able to make decisions, vote. How crazy that women couldn't vote? So, I think the conversation about wealth and ownership is so much deeper than just the surface of what we live today, and it's really borne on the backs of the past, and that's a real great indicator to the experience that we share today.

Carly Doshi

Yes, it's fascinating, and I am grateful to you for having done the research and for sharing it because I think it is extremely important that we're aware of this history. It really does put things in context.

Now, Meggie, I think that this dovetails nicely into your work with PepTalkHer. If our history is that women haven't had a seat at the table for conversations about money and wealth, what can we do now to change this paradigm?

Meggie Palmer

Yes, it's so interesting hearing what Kirby was saying there about how... the way we behave today's steeped in literally centuries ago, and also, Caroline, the point that you made earlier about how women as investors are so much likely to want to invest in social impact and ventures that are going to go on and do good, as well as return a high return on investment, which obviously we're all looking for in this capitalist world that we all live in. But yes, so Carly, when we think about the gender pay gap, so we know on average it sits at around 20%. That's the gap in earnings that women earn on average compared to men. There's a lot of different factors that go into that and one of them is that women are more likely to choose lower paying careers, so we know that there are more women in caring roles like childcare and aged care, than say rocket science for example, so there's a delta there. We know that women typically take more time out of the workforce due to caring responsibilities, whether that's having children, caring for elderly relatives and things like that, but then there is another component of the gap that they can't work out, and that the part of the gap that they put down to

unconscious bias and discrimination, and that's really the piece that I'm interested in shifting. And to Kirby's point, we can't shift that overnight, because we are products of history and the way that we've been raised. My mother's a teacher, and I love the story she tells that in the playground, there's all these kids in the playground, and there's kids on the monkey bars, and a little boy in shorts hangs upside down on the monkey bars and has a great time, and the little girl who might be wearing a dress or a skirt hangs upside down the monkey bars, and a teacher or a parent goes over and says, darling, don't hang upside down, we can see your undies. Just pop down and have a little run around. It's not a big deal. It's not a big deal at all, but you can see how these small signals that we're given throughout our lives add up to the way that we perceive ourselves, the way we perceive our values, and certainly the way we perceive others, and that's just one anecdote.

But I think it's interesting when we think about the way that we raise girls and boys, the way we treat each other and that's why I think conversations like this are so important, to start to have this discussion about how can we, in our own personal lives, help move the needle and that's what we're trying to do a PepTalkHer is that grassroots level, shift the dial really using the nudge theory of psychology, which says that if we can make small incremental behavior changes, not a big deal, just a little bit, a little bit every day, if we can do that over the long term we actually see a really big impact. So, that's what we do in companies, but also at that individual level through the app as well.

Carly Doshi

That's great. Caroline, I'm interested in your opinion on this. Why do you think that family wealth management continues to be dominantly the arena of men? I mean, is it that women aren't leaning into the conversation and taking time to learn about managing their wealth, or do you think that the industry is just not receptive to meeting the needs of women?

Caroline Kitidis

It's interesting. Look, it's funny. Meggie, as you were talking, I was thinking to myself, oh, goodness, do I do this unconscious bias things with my own daughters, I've got to be sensitive to that? But, look, I think it's a very good question. I don't think it's necessarily the industry is doing something different, but to be fair, I do think, and this is kind of to what Kirby and Meggie said, there is an unconscious bias. I think that is just predicated in the investing world, that men make the investment decisions, a man is running the household, a man is the breadwinner. I mean, I think these are just historic underlying theories that in some cases might still exist, but if you look at the breadwinners today, 41% of households, the woman is the breadwinner. 41%. That's pretty high, and it's creeping higher. So, nearly half of all household income is being driven by women, and so if we're not focused, we should focus. I think there's that underlying piece.

I think also... so there's an unconscious bias element, but I think there's a couple of other points. I think generally what I've seen, and Accenture did a study, I think, back in 2017, and they looked at various components of women and men and investing styles etc., and women are less confident when it comes to investing than men, and women feel less educated on the topic when it comes to investing than men, and so if you feel less confident because you just don't have the education and information on the topic, then naturally you will steer away from that and you will let someone else do it if someone else is taking the lead. So, it's understandable, but that doesn't mean that longer-term it's something that we continue to do.

And then there's a time element. At the end of the day, we just do a lot, let's be honest. We're directing almost 50% of household income in many cases, we have families, we have outside interests, we're really the COOs of our homes and our lives. We're the Chief Operating Officer. Things break down if we're not managing them, and we get things done and we execute, whether that's in our professional life or our personal life. So, to juggle all of these bits and pieces, it's complicated, and so we don't have time, and I think we also need to make the time.

So, the recommendation would be that there's lots of ways that we can educate ourselves, and whether it's podcasts or books or friends or what have you, or using your financial advisor to do that, because they can spend the time and there are ways to do that with a firm, but I think we need to speak up and lean in and ask for a seat at the table.

Carly Doshi

That's great and, Meggie, I want to turn to you because Caroline mentioned confidence and I know that you do a lot of work – you talk about being a “confidence creator”, I love that phrase. What do you think? How does confidence play a role here and what are

your recommendations for those who may not feel as confident diving into personal financial discussions or making investment decisions?

Meggie Palmer

Totally, and I think confidence is such a big part of so much of this discussion. When we talk about wealth, when we talk about the ability to feel comfortable, to first of all go and see a financial advisor or a planner. A lot of people feel so embarrassed particularly if they have a lot of wealth, they think, I don't want to... it's terrible, I've got seven figures in the bank, but I don't know what to do with it, I must be a failure. Actually, I actually think that the education system fails us. I would love to see personal finance and being the CFO of your life as a subject from primary school, because I think if we learnt that at a young age, we would have so much more confidence.

I just reflect on myself as a 24-year-old journalist Googling, "Where do I invest?" and ringing some of my guy mates from college and being, 'hey, Tristan, I know you invest and you're always in the dungeon doing share trading at college, teach me', because I didn't know. I never had those conversations with my father, bless him. They taught me to save, similar to you Caroline, save, save, save, even from when I started at Burger King, but I didn't know what to do and we know that men are more likely – this is a stereotype – but on the golf course to talk about shares and investments and angel investing. Whereas, women, we are not again socialized, necessarily, to have those conversations.

For me, when I think about confidence when it comes to financial freedom and investing, I think it has to start with a conversation, and something that we've started – I live in New York City – and one of the things that we've started doing is having these money circles once a month where there's 10 or 15 women, it's different every month, and we have wine and cheese, which is always a good idea, and we talk and we ask questions about money. We always have an expert that comes in, because I think if we can break down those barriers, some of the women that come are very wealthy and a lot of them have no money to invest. I think, actually, all of us here today who know something have a responsibility to pay that forward, to be a shoulder or a person who your friends can call and ask for advice to refer friends to other people that we trust who can give honest impartial advice on investing. Because the knowledge brings confidence, and we know that this concept of imposter syndrome where you feel like you're out of your depth or you feel like you don't belong, we know that that impacts women to a large extent, and particularly when it comes to wealth management.

For me, it's about starting a conversation and parting our knowledge and our contacts forward, so we can support the next generation of women to make a lot of money, because we know when woman make money, they do awesome things with it.

Carly Doshi

I absolutely agree and I think that that's absolutely fantastic and it's absolutely right. To the audience, if you do have any questions for the panelists, you can type them into the chat box and we will make sure that we address them.

Kirby, we hear a lot about this generational wealth transfer. Caroline just referenced it in the US. We talk about baby boomer generation, ageing, and beginning to pass on their wealth, and we know that those studies that say that women will be controlling over half of the wealth in the US, maybe even as much as two-thirds in less than two decades potentially. Those are some exciting statistics. What would you say excites you about the proposition of more and more women controlling the world's wealth?

Kirby Rosplock

It's really exciting, but I have to tell you it's just our DNA. We have a little bit better than our male compatriots, so we live, on average, about seven to eight years longer, so really what's happening when you see those wealth transfer numbers is that, sadly, a lot of the spouses (male spouses) die before – the widowed wife is left behind and it's at that transition that we're in this new paradigm, which is, 'oh my gosh, I now really leave the final imprint of our generation before it transfers maybe to kids or charity or some other heir'.

What's happened, which is really fascinating is at that point, there's a sea change oftentimes for women... I ran a focus group one time and it was fascinating to have a mixture of widows, women on their second or third marriage and a lot of single women as well, never married and wealth creators in their own right, and so the idea of the opportunity is sometimes that they don't feel necessarily like they have a real seat at the table. In other cases, they have a seat at the table and here's the honest truth, from my own research and other research, women just, generally, oftentimes are not as actively interested in the topic of investing all the time, and that's OK. It's OK that you're not the operator and doer, and I want to give permission to anyone listening on the line today to say if you are

not... I had one client who literally took the securities exam in Canada because she didn't feel proficient enough for their family office. I said, 'well, most women do not go to that level to get their securities licenses'.

I guess what I'm trying to say is you need to know what your role is and how you can be most effective and feel most comfortable and competent so that you're getting what you need and that you know your investments are safe, your estate planning is complete, you've dialed down any risk by maybe your insurance and other products, and that you really understand what your lifestyle – how much do you spend? What's your burn rate? Is it too much? Could you afford more? Do you want to save more or give more? Those are all important considerations that, I think, a lot of women don't feel like until they're left literally holding the bag. I'm saying don't do it, don't wait so long, get involved now.

The other mistake I see oftentimes is that parents wait too long to start to communicate their intentions about their wealth transfer intentions and that actually gives a false sense of, either, security like, 'oh, I'm going to get a lot', or 'gosh, I don't even have any idea what I should expect or if anything'. I'm a big believer that women can take small steps like Meggie and Caroline have shared, but they can also think bigger and think today and make it real.

Carly Doshi

I love that. You mentioned two things that are very close to my heart. You mentioned roles, which I frequently talk about, organization and organizing your wealth as a family, and you also talked about communication cross generations and within families, which I think is also absolutely critical to this.

We do have a question from the audience that I want to pose. Actually, Kirby, I might start with you because I think that you were touching on this. The question is, "What advice would you give young women out there or your younger self – I like that – based upon your experience?"

Kirby Rosplock

I will start with my younger self, because I was so inspired recently by John Lewis' letter to his younger self, which I can never epically compare, but to my younger self, I would say, give yourself a little bit more credit and know that because you have questions doesn't mean you're ignorant or you're not competent. In fact, questions mean inquiry, inquiry means discovery, and that's where knowledge is born. For all the people on the call, I would really encourage those younger women to tap into resources, connect with a success group, a peer group, and they may not be mentors, they might just be women you think are awesome that are a few years ahead of you that have inspired your path. I would really say to my younger self that you have every ability to achieve your goals as long as you decide to invest in yourself and in the time it takes to be competent and confident. So, those would be some of my takeaways.

Carly Doshi

Absolutely, I think that's lovely and so beautifully put. Meggie or Caroline, do you want to answer that question also?

Caroline Kitidis

I would obviously reiterate what Kirby said. I think to my younger self, one of the things that I would just recommend is just to start early and the earlier you start with your investments and your plan or saving or whatever it is, the better. Because when you compound returns, you take \$100 and you make it \$110, and you grow \$110 into \$121. As 10% returns increase and increase, you're building upon and building upon and building upon, so I would say just start early, whatever amount, whether it's \$100 or a million dollars, the point is to really start early. And to write down your plan and hold yourself accountable to your plan, because many times we might have something in our head and we will get to it later, it may be this or maybe that or I don't have time, but at the end of the day, the only person you have to blame for not achieving what you want to achieve is yourself, because you're the owner and you're the creator of your destiny.

Growing up in my early days of investing, that was really some of the key things that I learned is if you want something, it's you that has to change that and go and get it. I would just say have the confidence and ask lots of questions. No question is a dumb question. I asked 100 questions today, I'm always asking questions. I might preface it sometimes with saying, 'this might be a stupid question, but I will ask it anyway', because I don't know and inevitably – and this is one of the things I always remember from my training at Goldman is that they always taught us there's always someone in a room that also doesn't know the answer to something, they're just afraid to ask the question, so just ask the question.

Carly Doshi

Meggie, what about you? I mean, you obviously have a lot to say on this topic given your own personal journey of exploring and becoming passionate about personal finance.

Meggie Palmer

I would echo what Caroline said, it's so boring, but it's true, start early. I wish I had started investing when I was at Burger King earning, I don't know, \$7 an hour or something terrible. I wish I had started then. But the next best time to start is now. I didn't do it when I was 15, could absolutely start doing it today or tomorrow.

I think just echoing something that Kirby said earlier as well, you don't have to physically do the investing yourself, there is nothing wrong with outsourcing that. I think it's all about what are you really, really good at and maybe you run an amazing business and you're really good at that. Maybe you have a couple of children and you're a really good parent and you love doing that and you want to focus on that. That is fine. There is nothing wrong with outsourcing. I think do that. Get a team around you who are better at investing than you or who have more knowledge than you on tax.

I've had three or four accountants since I migrated to the United States, and I outsource, but at the same time I'm also educated, so I know to ask the questions, so I think it's a bit of a balance. I'm probably not going to go out and do the SEC exam, Kirby, like your client, but doing some education, talking to colleagues and peers, just having a basic understanding allows you to ask those intelligent questions so that you can make sure that the people that you are hiring to help you are doing the right thing and they're achieving at the level that you want them to.

Carly Doshi

Perfect. That is, I think, is fantastic advice. We have another question from the audience, and this is about Alzheimer's and the question is, "Do you have any thoughts on the competition Alzheimer's is posing for the transfer of wealth, and do you have suggestions for including the caregiving components in planning, especially in the case of a very slowly progressing disease, which can impact the burn rate as Kirby, you alluded to?" Kirby, do you want to take that question?

Kirby Rosplock

Sure, so one thing to consider as we have two things happening. Now, this is a horribly depressing word, but you're going to remember it after you leave this panel, it's called "living in morbidity", and so once elderly get to a place where their quality of life is actually very depleted and it might not even be elderly, it could be someone younger, there's a real cost associated with care and needs and health and support, and so one of the most important things when you're looking at your wealth transfer goals is really assessing adequately your loved ones' care needs insurance, support, aid. There's so many different factors and so working with... sometimes your advisor could be a CFP or somebody within your financial institution, they can help actually drill down and look at the duration of time that you're going to support a loved one and the financial requirements to sustain their lifestyle, but also your lifestyle. That can actually be a significant drain on your finances, but if you can plan for that and, actually, a lot of folks now are stocking away more for retirement because they're assuming... if they know they've got in their DNA Alzheimer's or dementia, they're kind of starting to buffer and realize I might need more care and I don't want that burden to be shifted to my children or another member of my family or the state for that matter.

I think there's a lot of ways you can make that a goal within your financial plan and you can invest with that in mind, and then you can also support the care needs for your loved ones, so that they're not in a substandard living facility because you just didn't adequately plan.

Carly Doshi

That's exactly right. I know in the work that we do, and my colleagues who provide investment advice for clients, the models for even life expectancy have changed. Human beings are just living longer. So, if you're using a model from 50 years ago, it might be out of date, and that absolutely has to go into the modelling of how long you need your money to last you during your lifetime. It's absolutely relevant, as well as the increasing costs of end of life care.

Caroline as an advisor yourself, I would love to get your thoughts on managing your professional team. When engaging with a professional financial advisor, investment advisor, how do you recommend that women manage their managers?

Caroline Kitidis

We have lots of different personalities in our life, I guess, we need to manage. Your financial advisor is certainly one of them. I would say two pieces of advice, or three.

One, I think, with your financial advisor you should have a level of open and honesty and comfort, so it needs to be... it's a very personal relationship and you need to trust the person that you work with and you need to be able to be open and honest about your plans. Those plans should really be from A-Z. It could be including your family today, what you need long-term, like you said... you mentioned earlier it could include issues that you might have longer term with family members, but it has to be inclusive of everything and not just a sliver.

If I only see or if one only sees one very narrow piece of the puzzle, it's very hard to put the picture together. So, I would say find someone that you're quite comfortable with and then you really need to have an open and honest dialogue about your long-term plans and needs, the growth of your wealth, your income needs etc.

Then, I guess, lastly, I would just be direct, I'm a direct person. I always find that it might work positively in some ways and it might not work positively in some ways, but if you're not direct, then one can't understand where you're coming from and what you want, so I would say be direct, find someone who you really enjoy working with, that you trust and that you can be open and honest about your whole life plan.

Carly Doshi

I think that's great. We have another question from the audience, and this question is, "How should women and all investors prepare for a rapidly changing world regarding climate change and future pandemics?"

I'm sure that none of us have the answer in totality to that question or we probably wouldn't be on this call today, but maybe given your expertise, I could ask our panel to address that. What are you seeing in this rapidly changing world and how should we all be thinking about our finances in that regard?

Meggie Palmer

I can jump in quickly. I unfortunately don't have a solution for climate change, I wish that I did. I'm a big fan of the work that the Environmental Defense Fund is doing on this, so they're one of the charities that I like to give to every year. For me, I think I invest my money where I can in sustainable investments, that's a choice that I actively make and also when I just think about my day to day spending, I try and invest in women-owned businesses where I can, businesses that are owned by people of color, so I just try and direct my capital in line with my values and where I would love to see like an amplified effect of that capital. That's what I do and I hope that someone who is much smarter than me can solve the challenge of climate change and, certainly, COVID-19 as well.

Caroline Kitidis

Meggie, I think you make a fair point. We're seeing a lot of this trend, and Carly, I'm sure you're seeing it as well, with investing with purpose and investing around your values, and this is really prominent with our next gen population, and we spend a lot of time with the next gen, and the next gen can span from investors or family members of our clients who are between the ages of 20 and 45 or 50, a next gen is across many generations. I think the interesting piece is that especially with millennials and people that are in their 20s and 30s now, that is definitely prominent in the way that they invest, the types of firms that they want to invest in, the types of investments that they want to make, and this is coming out in a stronger and stronger way relative to, I guess, how we saw people investing 20 years ago. It's front and center, whether you can access those types of investments from an ESG platform at different firms etc., but it's definitely something that is front of mind for many, many investors.

Carly Doshi

Absolutely, and Kirby, any thoughts on this question?

Kirby Rosplock

I think it's really reshaping global trade and consciousness. The pandemic, for certain, climate change is ongoing and ever present. I think the one thing that it has really harkened to me is how important it is to understand your risk tolerance and your ability to sustain shocks, because in this pandemic-type environment, that's probably going to be sustained for some time, we need to live with volatility and some people can't live with it, they can't tolerate the ups and downs, so you need to really be conscious and clear with your investment advisor about how you feel if the market drops 20 or 30% in a week and you want to throw up. If you can't handle that, you better be clear with them what you can tolerate, and make sure you're properly allocated, and you can cover your liquidity needs.

It's not just about risk, it's meaning you have access to the cash when you need it, and that's a really big part of what's happening right now, because liquidity is not as easy to access through lines of credit, mortgages, and other available areas, so those are a couple of thoughts.

Carly Doshi

Absolutely, and managing risk is, as you can imagine, a very important topic that HSBC discusses all the time with clients, because you're right, risk tolerance and the ability to weather the storm is absolutely paramount, especially during times of market volatility.

Such a wonderful discussion. Thank you all so much for being here. This conversation, it's really only just the beginning. To our audience, if you do have additional questions for our panel, please do reach out and we will make sure that you're connected to them for further discussion.

Following today's program, we will be launching a brand new podcast series that we're calling, Women and Wealth: Doing it All, and it's a production by women for women. On that series, we will pick up right where today's program ends and we will go deeper on specific money topics, such as protecting your assets, investment terminology, banking knowhow, estate planning, and charitable giving. To everyone who participated live today, in the coming days you will receive an email with instructions for accessing this content online. It will also be made available on the HSBC website for everyone to participate in. As always, you can ask your Private Banking relationship manager to direct.

Before I sign off the call, and I know that myself, I am grateful to each of you for the education and advocacy work that you do every day in empowering and emboldening women on this very important topic of managing your own wealth. Thank you so much for being here.