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Revamping Retirement Episode 83

Intro: Covering the ever evolving retirement plan landscape to help identify the biggest opportunities for plan sponsors, CAPTRUST presents Revamping Retirement.

Matt Patrick: Hello and welcome to another episode of Revamping Retirements. My name is Matt Patrick, and I am co-hosting this month with Pete Ruffle.

Pete, great to be with you again.

Peter Ruffel: Hey Matt. Thanks for having me.

Matt Patrick: It's been a while since you and I got to host together, so I'm extra excited about this one. I'm also excited because our topic this month is going to be CAPTRUST's first annual financial wellness survey, and we will cover what that is and what it's meant to do the findings in there.

financial wellness has been a big topic for the last few years and continues to evolve within the retirement plan space. So excited to, take this venture into producing our own survey and getting our own findings, and we're excited about the, results that we're gonna be able to share with you today.

we are joined by two guests and a rare honor that we have one return guest on here. So, Chris Whitlow is joining us again. He's been on the show I think a few years ago. Chris, it's great to have you back.

Chris Whitlow: Great to be back. Thanks, Matt.

Matt Patrick: And then we're also joined by Cat Ellis. Cat, this is your first appearance on the show and we are really excited to have you here.

Welcome.

Cat Ellis: Thank you. I'm really excited to be with you guys today as well.

Matt Patrick: could you all just describe your all's role at CAPTRUST and then maybe the perspective that you're gonna be able to provide? As we go through the survey results.

Chris Whitlow: Yeah, absolutely. So Chris Whitlow, I am a senior director and head of CAPTRUST at Work. my function involves, looking kind of the lens of strategy and growth for the organization when it comes to financial wellness, and we're really excited. About this financial wellness survey because it gives us insight into the way our participants are thinking and how we can, uh, build. Better solutions and content and create ways of generating more engagement with them. so my perspective's gonna be about how we built the survey, the types of individuals that connected and what were the insights and the process that we went through and order to generate the results.

and then how we might use those results, going forward to create more engagement.

Cat Ellis: Cat Ellis, I'm an institutional advisor here out of Austin, Texas, and I'm working directly with the plan sponsors and the committees not only to, advise on their retirement benefit structures, but also on their participant engagement strategies. So it's really important that I'm aware of what Chris and his team are creating, leveraging that and putting those ideas in front of my clients to make sure that they are.

To their getting in front of their people with what's most important to.

Peter Ruffel: Chris gotta start with you. give us a little sense. Let us get into the mind of.

The goals of what this survey was meant to accomplish. You talked about creating solutions, better engagement, but let's peel that back a little bit more and give us a sense of what we think we can do with what we received.

Chris Whitlow: know, there's a lot of. Information out there that talks about financial wellness. and so we know today, financial wellness comes from financial stress and people who are stressed out, they have a lot of challenges with it.

and so there's a lot of no-brainers, that exist. and so we wanted to do something that if we were going to do it would be unique and different. And I think that, CAPTRUST has a really unique perspective on this topic. if you think about

types of clients that we work with, the breadth and scope of our organization, we are the largest.

RIA that provides retirement plan advice to, participants and companies. we have a broad range of clients, so lots of different, demographics and different industries that we serve. and when you look at all of the different financial wellness surveys that exist, not a lot of them focus so broadly, a lot of them are more myopic and, our participants engage, they meet with advisors.

That's a unique value proposition that we have. it's not just digital content. it's not just web clicks. And so we wanted to peel back, as you had said, a little bit about the minds and hearts of our participants and truly understand what was challenging them, where there were opportunities for us to lean in a little bit more, and where there were possibilities for us to create better solutions to capture their attention.

And so if we can help, anyone create more confidence around their finances, ultimately leading them to financial wellness, I think we're going to do the work and dig in a little bit and find the value in it so that we can deliver.

Peter Ruffel: we were really thoughtful as to the questions that we were gonna ask that was. Engage with the advisors and clients as to what types of things they wanted to know. we also knew that there were things that we wanted to trend over time. So, financial wellness, as I said, people who challenged with financial wellness and it creates financial stress.

Chris Whitlow: And that's a no brainer, right? But we can track that over time. We can see how it changes and then we can focus on thematic. things that are happening year over year.

and, I was really excited about the over 4,000, participants actually complete the survey.

and that included over 790 plus. Organizations across the number of industries. And there was a wide scope And I think that where we got such rich data.

Matt Patrick: that's perfect. I think we've established the purpose and the goals of it. we've set the table for the conversation. let's get into what were the findings? what were the biggest takeaways?

Things that you think plan sponsors would need to know.

Chris Whitlow: so there's some key things from the survey that we found, and like I said, some of them are. Things that you would expect. 62% of employees reported that they had, moderate to severe financial stress. but of those who were experiencing, severe financial stress, 75% of them.

It impacted their ability to be productive at work. And so I know oftentimes we think about like financial wellness being something that can help us attract and retain employees. But when it comes to productivity, we don't often think about how much time people are spending at work thinking about their finances or trying to navigate difficult financial situations, both positive and negative ones.

It's not just a negative thing. so that was interesting to us. we also found that engagement wasn't. The only answer, just because people engaged didn't necessarily mean that all of their financial stress went away, And so we know that there's more work to be done in terms of engagement and the different types of engagement that we offer.

so if you're speaking with, folks and you're just asking the question, what's the engagement rate? that's not the only question to be asking There's more to it than just getting people to read an article or take action or do something. and then we also found that, across various career stages there was different levels of financial stress and we feel that, older.

Generations and, middle career folks, like they can handle stress, I think, a little differently than the younger folks that are just learning to come across financial stress and having to deal with that. And so that was, a takeaway as well is, what are we doing for the younger population?

And then there was also a disconnect between what people felt stressful about and what they wanted to learn about. And so that was something that was unique. The things that we think that we need to teach aren't always the topics that people are interested in learning about.

And so how can we. Change the way that we talk about certain content that might be more attractive to them while also helping them solve some of the problems that we know that they're dealing with, that with financial stress. the last thing that we learned is that, meeting with an advisor, nothing is better than that.

90 plus percent of people wanna meet. With an advisor, they wanna meet one-on-one with folks. There's some hurdles to do that and we can talk about what those are. But ultimately, connecting with the human, having empathy, having

somebody explain it to you in a way that you feel connected, that was what the majority of participants were looking for.

Cat Ellis: I think that was probably the biggest thing that I gleaned from this was just the need for that human connection and that one-on-one interaction was truly so powerful across industries, across workforce types, et cetera. But what I found, distressing or an interesting problem for us to try and consider and solve across different workforce environments is that we isolated in our respondents, those who had access to a physical desk and office to go to versus those that were in desk-less type environments and those that do not have a physical space to go to where they have that already a sense of connection, right?

So what's going on? And awareness or feeling higher levels of stress. And, overwhelm and unease with their financial situation than their counterparts who have a desk environment. And I think that's something that we all, both as advisors and plan sponsors really need to be thinking about is how do we reach those people that are not coming to us every day?

Peter Ruffel: KA I'd love to learn about how you think about the findings of this survey and how it interacts with how you think about participant engagement strategies. When you're talking to your plan sponsors, committees, and their North star is always, what do our employees need?

What are they asking for? How do we preempt some of those needs? What solutions are available? So you as the advisor, you're quarterback to some of that. how is some of this. Either empowering or underscoring some of the conversations you've already had.

Cat Ellis: First of all, I'm so pumped that we're doing this. 'cause now we actually have some empirical evidence to lean into, to talk to versus just what I myself am seeing in my conversations and leaning into my fellow peer advisors on what they're hearing. Not that isn't successful and powerful in and of itself.

This is just so much more powerful because it's coming directly from the people we're trying to impact. so from a. How can I leverage this? How will I leverage this? This is just a great opportunity to get into the weeds and think through the different, dynamics or demographics within a company structure, to think more targeted and how we form our annual plans, and the different groups.

And maybe the messaging for one group is not the same as the other one. And. Can we bifurcate that and be very intentional around that? and they always ask us, what are you seeing from everyone else? And yes, I can tell them the lens of

my other clients, but still that is significantly less of a population than what we can glean here from this evidence.

so I look forward to incorporating this. I do annual planning strategy meetings with all of my clients. They start in December, they flow into January and February. And then of course, we have ongoing touch points throughout the year to ensure we're on track. And I can't wait to be able to leverage this data, to incorporate into our planning sessions.

Matt Patrick: Chris, some of the takeaways that you highlighted. So you mentioned a couple times differences in the data based on. Age or where people are on their career path. And picking at the engagement, not all engagement is the same, I anything there where you feel like there's takeaways to be had from the type of engagement that is appropriate based off of age or where you are in your career.

Chris Whitlow: Yeah, we did look into the different types of engagement that people were most interested in. and what we found was that one-on-one advice meetings was the number one thing they wanted. two was online tools, calculators, articles, videos, things like that. the third one was self-study courses.

And then the fourth was group education meetings. Things like webinars or seminars. And then the last thing was just getting email drips. what's interesting is the last two things we probably do the most, just because it's the initial outreach. we have to send an email in order to get to a webinar.

we have to connect with someone in order to get them to a one-on-one. people don't necessarily want to go through the noise of getting the emails and having to go through that. but there's a marketing piece that has to take place in order to get them connected to the advisor.

the advisor is the most impactful thing. That's one of the things we learned, but it's also the hardest. Hurdle to get people to, and it really didn't matter if they were early, mid, or late stage career. This is more of a function of, just the logistics of how do you roll these types of programs out.

and so when you're thinking through the early career, mid-career and late career, and you're looking at the topics that they are struggling with, you look at the topics that they're most interested in. Us figuring out ways as practitioners to combine those things or be creative with how we distribute differently through

those groups is probably going to be more effective than just blasting everybody at once.

And I always talk about how, if you go through your email, you'll see, hey, I got. A hundred emails today. how many of those do you actually read? A lot of companies are just peppering you with stuff, but as soon as you see the right information in the right way at the right time, all of a sudden it clicks and you're like, oh, I need to connect with that.

And so we have a long way of going of personalizing. The experience much more for our participants and we're working on that, Interacting with more data. that's gonna be a key thing, for us going forward. leveraging more technology. We just gotta figure out how to get the right message to the right folks and then clearly get them connected to the advisor as quickly as we can, while overcoming some of the hurdles that they had pointed out in the survey.

Peter Ruffel: what do you think are some of the choke points that stop people from taking that step of, whether that's booking a meeting or there's an advisor on site and I need to just make time in my day to make myself available for that and be present for that.

what are you feeling in that regard?

Chris Whitlow: So I'm gonna answer from the survey, but then I'm curious as to what Cat is thinking and what she's seeing as she talks to clients. Because, the number one thing that we found within the survey was people are afraid that if they meet with an advisor, they're gonna sell them some type of product.

And at CAPTRUST holistic advice is what they're getting, The second thing is that they wanted a clear understanding of the advisor's approach and strategy. Like how is the advisor thinking about how they're gonna work with the participant.

the third was privacy and security. there's a lot of concerns around privacy, and I think that's understandable. And as an industry we can do a better job of helping people feel comfortable about the ways that we use their data or the things that we know about them and giving them more control over that.

and then it was the advisor's qualification and experience. And I think that's more just you hear that you should work with this type of individual and you wanna make sure they have those types of credentials and, connecting those. And then the last thing is they want a trial session in some way.

they don't wanna pay for it. they want access to the advice if they could, but they wanna try it out before they're committed. so those are the factors that we saw stack rank. But Cat, what do you see or what do you hear about out in the field?

Cat Ellis: we're always talking about the importance of having advocates within the company, Which. To a degree would be having a trial section or having someone who could say, I've had this experience, I've done it myself, and this is what it was. Someone that they could go to.

And I think that is the important, but maybe shocking to me was that it was so far down. Unfortunately, since that's such a big component of what we tried to advocate to our committees, is to create a whole army of advocates who understand it and are talking about it. the other thing too is being, really.

Targeted in who you're trying to reach. for too long in our engagement strategies, we've just tried to paint a broad brush and capture as many participants per event, per meeting, per whatever. And the problem is it's too broad, it's too vague, and it's not directionalized enough to what the actual need is that they're saying right now in this response that they need.

and so I know for a lot of the clients that I'm working with, that's been a huge directional shift. From 2025 into 2026 planning is just how can we get much more targeted in how we're trying to engage and create those opportunities? Because it's just staggering to me. It's not surprising that almost all of the respondents said they wanted access to advice.

Everyone wants financial advice, which shocking to me is that only like 34% of people who have access to it are leveraging it right now. So that told me that myself. The plan sponsors that I'm working with, we all have work to do to make sure that we're being much more directionally targeted in how we're connecting and creating the right environment for people to engage.

Chris Whitlow: we worked so hard just to have such a broad group of people engaged. And so we're trying to get those engagement numbers, but as we talked about earlier, what we found was that engagement didn't necessarily, Equate to someone who is gonna have less financial stress. And so if we're spending so much time and effort just trying to get as many people as possible, maybe it's more valuable to them and to us to focus on getting people connected in ways that are gonna make a meaningful difference and their life, and actually reduce the financial stress versus the strategy of just try to get everybody.

Matt Patrick: both of you have now highlighted some version of either more targeted reach out. Also like some personalization in the actual advice is that a demand that you're seeing or is it more like this is, starting to get on the leading edge of we realize we need to target better.

Personalization is coming. What are your thoughts there?

Cat Ellis: I feel like personalization has been there for a long time and the need only continues to grow, to have personalization. But I feel like where the personalization was understanding the goals and needs of the business and what was important for them to connect with their people on. And I think now we're finally bridging that gap of, okay, so these are the needs and goals of the business, but how do we bring that down and personalize it really directionally to our people?

and that's the shift. But personalization, that's not dead. It's not going away. the desire is for it to only be improved, enhanced, but how we do that is where we still need to, as an industry. We've gotta continue to build that out.

Peter Ruffel: the survey did a great job of highlighting. The differences between short term and long term goals when there were polling, participants in these retirement plans. Can you talk a little bit about what you were looking to achieve in asking those questions?

Was that to help highlight more of that personalization of communication to those participants of what they might be looking for from an advice perspective? Or was there something else in mind there?

Chris Whitlow: Yeah, I think just a function of financial wellness. We're always juggling between our short term goals that we're trying to accomplish. And then in the back of our heads, we know we want to get to retirement. We know we want to, buy a house or pay off our debt or whatever the longer term goals could be.

and so we tried to. Get an understanding of where people were in terms of being able to feel confident about tackling those goals. in terms of, short-term goals, what we found was 51% of people felt like they were on track. but long-term goals, only 39% of people felt they were on track.

We had a lot of people who were unsure if they were on track. There's a lot of uncertainty around those goals. And so I think it just points to, when you meet

with an advisor or you're thinking about, you can focus on the investment piece of things and it's like, how am I going to manage my investments to grow?

Or we can focus on the planning piece of things, which is how do I navigate the complexities of my day-to-day life and the things that lead me to the ability to save more, to reach longer term goals. And sometimes there's a mismatch between where people feel comfortable and where they're uncomfortable, and what they need to do going forward.

And I think that's probably the experience from a lot of our, counselors and advisors that meet with participants on a regular basis. Not everyone knows where to start and not everyone knows, what to tackle first. And so they're looking. For advice on those things, and that's one of the things we found through the survey.

Peter Ruffel: It's interesting because it touches back to the point from the survey about why people aren't seeking out this advice, which is they don't understand that the conversation begins at goals, which is that whole mosaic of stress. Stress is not more an individual aspect.

There are short-term elements. There are long-term elements. Can you see your clients pull their employees on financial wellness needs themselves, or do they look more to, CAPTRUST or other third parties to help facilitate some of that so they can keep a finger on the pulses?

Cat Ellis: Ironically, I do have one client that does do an annual survey on their employees, and it's a little bit more all encompassing. Some of it's all of their benefits, but also just. Their understanding, comfortability, awareness, et cetera of their benefits, the advice tools that are available to them, et cetera.

And we certainly leveraged that, insight to help us in our strategy going forward. I've had other clients consider doing their own surveys. There's a real reticence, from plan sponsors to survey their people because in the absence of willingness to action, take action on anything you may learn from that.

It scares a lot of the plan sponsors off from wanting to actionably do that. So having access, to insights like this is a great starting point to help them to navigate that. But going back to the participant themselves, and to pick it back on my answer before on why or why not, I think that the challenge to creating a strategy of personalization for participants and for plan sponsors alike is that you have really two different types of. Planner, if you will, future planner. You have the person who can only see what's immediately happening to them right

now, and whether that be through a lack of confidence or lack of understanding, or because it's not an emergency today, isn't taking the steps necessary to fully engage. Then you have the perpetual planner,

Who is probably the participant that's responding that they feel comfortable with where they are. they still have stress because they're aware, And they can see their future self. That is probably the greatest thing that makes customization and personalization. The most challenging is just how do you solve for those two different types of people, right?

The person who can see their future self and the implications of the decisions that they make or don't make today, versus the person who cannot see beyond what's happening right this moment. but this data only helps with that, and I'm hopeful that if we can get more targeted, smaller groups, maybe more infrequent, short burst of information, that we can trigger something that will allow for participants to say, aha, this is my moment.

This is where I lean in.

Chris Whitlow: talking about personalization. when you meet with somebody. There's no choice but to personalize it for them in that moment, right? And so meeting with another human being who's an advisor, who's having a conversation about you. It instantaneously personalizes whatever topic you're trying to solve for.

And so I think that goes back to the value of the advisor. But if I may just throw a little commercial out here for a second. 'cause one of the statistics I wanna point out in this survey that we found was that

Employees who had engaged with a CAPTRUST at work advisor were 34% more likely to be on track with their short and long-term financial goals.

Cat Ellis: and statistically speaking, it does say that if you take the time to seek out advice and you engage with that, you are much more likely to have a successful outcome. That's the challenge for.

Matt Patrick: just confirmation of the results you highlighted earlier, like that's the number one desire that's there and it has, you know, for a reason and it generates the. Most personalized approach and therefore the best outcomes and people are feeling comfortable with it. So that part makes sense.

I did wanna pick at something, Chris, that you mentioned earlier. just in the findings, something that felt a little surprising is there was the disconnect between what people said that they felt stressed about and then what they actually wanna learn more about. So I'm curious if you could elaborate some on what those areas were Like, what do people feel most stressed about?

What do they wanna learn about? And then. After you run through those, Cat, how do you think about addressing that? when that's the reality of where we are?

Chris Whitlow: So what we found was that there's a mismatch. Between the goals that people had that we just spoke about, the topics that created stress for them and then the things that they were most curious to learn about. And, what I took from it is that if I'm worrying about something a lot and I'm stressed about it, it may not be the thing that gets me most excited.

About the topic. a lot of the topics that we saw in terms of what they wanted to learn about, had more to do with, growth and the longevity of where they were going, whereas obviously the things that were stressing them out, it was more of the things that are happening to me today.

I gotta pay off my debt. I gotta, take care of loans that I have. I'm struggling with the housing, situation. so there tended to be a mismatch between what they wanted to learn or what they were trying to plan for and the things that they were worried about. And I just think there's an.

Interesting opportunity for us to figure out how to leverage that to our advantage. How to, draw people in closer while talking to them about things that they're most interested in, but not. taking that opportunity and not speaking about the things that they need to learn about, we should take that opportunity and say, oh, by the way, you're in this stage of your career.

Here's the thing that might be applicable to you. Let's just take a few minutes to talk about how you can leverage it and moving towards your goal and moving towards your interest. it might be a smarter way for us to teach content.

Cat Ellis: I agree with that. So for example, the number one thing that people wanna learn about is retirement. And while that certainly does ring true across, some of the number one things that people were worried about, is there a way for us when we're drawing people into a conversation about retirement to integrate implications of, saving and buying a home or not saving, in your retirement to pay for student expenses or even.

Pulling from your retirement, To do these different things. So you're touching on different elements that we know that they worry about. but the impt, the draw, what brings them in is, I wanna learn more about retirement, just integrating more of these things that we know are stressors, but not the number one thing that draws them in. everyone is always talking about a budget and debt management and all of these things, but you put out content for that and get the amount people, no one show and can't manage budget.

Matt Patrick: it's just like when it's stressful in the moment, that's the thing You wanna avoid? I mean, people are gonna be inclined that way, just personality wise of yeah, I've been stressing about that all day already.

Do I need to sit in a 30 minute webinar to confirm that I'm struggling with managing my budget? Like, I think, I'm aware it, so it's interesting, it gets you thinking about If things that are growth oriented? or like the retirement oriented ones.

It's interesting to think about like how you could attack some of those challenges.

Cat Ellis: I think there's this hidden misconception that everyone just knows how solve for their financial needs, right? that they have their emergency savings and they know what a budget looks like, and that they know what good debt is. We're all just supposed to have this knowledge. we're not born with it, but we gotta break through those societal pressures that say we can't talk about it, and they're not gonna show up to a meeting that suggests that's already a problem.

Peter Ruffel: And we can't make up for the fact that high school and college didn't teach these lessons to us. So all we can do is meet people in the middle of where they're today.

Chris, we talked about productivity a little bit earlier. I think we can all personally attest that stress manifests in different ways, both mentally and physically. Was there anything in the survey that highlighted what this looked like from a health factor, whether that was absence or work at or otherwise?

Chris Whitlow: we know that financial stress is impacting people, but what was interesting was giving them the ability to stack rank the types of impacts they were having across mental and physical health. and what we found was

that anxiety and depression was the number one impact, to stress and it makes sense there.

but then the next one was sleep loss. people are more sleep deprived when they're thinking and dealing with the anxiety of financial stress. And then that led right into decreased motivation. So if I'm showing up to work and I got a lot of stress and maybe I didn't get a great night's sleep, how can I bring my best self to work?

I'm gonna have less motivation, less energy for me to do the things that I wanted to do. And then the next one right after that led right into relationship issues. If I can't. Perform well at work. If I'm stressed out now all of a sudden maybe that's bringing challenges within my relationship, which is just going to exacerbate the challenge.

and then if you're dealing with all of these things chronically, This isn't an acute problem, it's a chronic issue. what will that eventually lead to? It leads right into health problems. we had people report that they had physical health challenges. of financial stress. and those are the things that just really motivate me, as a practitioner in this field to figure out how we can spread the message better.

like we said, people wanna meet with a financial advisor. They want to learn about financial wellness, they wanna take control of their financial lives. We just have to remove the friction and the helping 'em. attach themselves to it. and that's what I'm most excited about being able to spend,our building session here at AtWork on what can we be doing in order to, change the way that we do things so that we can, get more people healthy and sleeping better and not having to deal with so much anxiety and depression.

Peter Ruffel: I think that's the crux of what financial wellness is. It's not simply investment advice. It's helping be a coach and a guide, to face things that. Cat was alluding to, that might feel taboo, that I don't feel comfortable saying I need help in this regard, but. These conversations, you can unpack it a little bit easier and you can tiptoe there and make small bites and set follow up meetings to make what seems like an insurmountable problem more manageable.

I think this is a great way to bring some light to this and like Cat mentioned,add some empirical data to things that I think a lot of us, when we were listening to you and Chris talking, nodding our heads like, yes, I, I know this, or no one's immune to this.

So I think this is super valuable and makes people not feel alone when they're, trying to approach this and tackle this.

Cat Ellis: we could spend a whole podcast on how we got to this point where we needed to create amazing solutions led by employers for helping people solve for the whole self, financially speaking, right? From a wellness standpoint. But here we are, and we all know the benefits for employers.

The success of your company are driven by your people, And being able to find solutions to help them be their fullest and best self is in the best interest of most business owners, And so for us as practitioners in the industry, it's awesome that we're finding these solutions. It's amazing that we're leading the way and finding the empirical evidence to support the why and the how.

and I just encourage all plan sponsors, if they're not already, to be figuring out a way to connect with their people and to solve for the whole person.

Matt Patrick: I think that's a great message to, to close us out on. starting to get the data together is just a great starting point and we hope that this will be a conversation that plan sponsors are having more as the financial wellness conversation.

And this journey continues to evolve. and we're excited that. We've got this data to work on internally. But yeah, if anybody has any questions, we certainly encourage you to reach out to your advisor and engage on it. 'cause as with Cat, as evidence, it's a big topic of conversation, there's a lot to be done.

And starting with that conversation is the best way to start to get that approach. That we'll be more tailored, we'll be more effective for your employee population, which is. Ultimately what everybody's after. So thank you both for running through the survey findings. certainly more to come from us as,as the survey comes out.

But, taking more of a personal turn as we look to close out here. this is the way we wrap up every episode. Is asking about what does retirement mean for you all? So Cat, this will be your first time answering. Chris, it's been a while. I'm guessing you don't remember how you answered the first time, which will create an a fun exercise for us where we can cross reference, your answer from last time you were on.

But maybe I'll start with Cat. Cat, interested, what does retirement look like for you at a personal level?

That's such a tough question. It's so hard to imagine not working. 'cause I'm such a workaholic. Don't tell my kids. Are we finding out you're a now problems person, not a, a persistent planner? Is that what we're learning?

Cat Ellis: No, I actually might be one of the few people that could see my future self. I've fully prepped for my retirement and I have ideas. For me, I think it's just about being able to be where all of my family is. my husband and I right now, we are far from both sides of our family. My husband's British, so all of his family's in England.

My family's back up in Kansas City. We get to travel and see them a lot, but our goals would be to be able to live where our family are different parts of times of the year to be able to be with them more. and as my kids get older and start having their own families, just to be able to be a part of that, an active part of what my family is doing, and to do that with dignity and on my own terms, that's really the biggest thing.

I just wanna be on my own terms.

Matt Patrick: All right, Chris, the moment of truth, how does it feel like for you now?

Chris Whitlow: I'd be remiss if I didn't use this opportunity to give you some rapid fire statistics that we went over. one financial stress is everywhere. 62% feel it every day. Three and four employees say money, stress harms their motivation. we know that engagement works with advisors.

People who spoke with one of our professionals were 28% less stressed. 98% of people wanna use an advisor, especially when cost isn't a barrier. And younger workers are nearly twice as likely as older ones to, to have financial stress. I'm hoping, I'm not spending retirement financially stressed after reading this and going through it.

and I love what Cat said. I wanna retire with dignity. I wanna, be able to be there for my family and watch, My family grow and spend time with them and meet them where they're at and not be a burden, to those,who are in my family. And so I think thinking about proper planning and thinking about other people and putting all that into practice, hopefully, retirement will be fantastic, but we've got a long way to go to get there.

And so until then, we're gonna focus on these takeaways.

Peter Ruffel: thanks again Cat and Chris for your time today. we also wanna. Thank the listeners for staying with us. Please, as a reminder, feel free to like and subscribe wherever you, get your podcasts and, look forward to, giving you our 20 26 predictions in our next episode.

Matt Patrick: And for anyone interested in more information or if you would like to view the actual survey, we would direct you to the resources page at the CAPTRUST website, which is CAPTRUST dot com.

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