



WOMEN, WEALTH & WHAT MATTERS | EPISODE 17

The Divorce Is Over. Now What Do You Do With the Money?

Five financial decisions to consider after a divorce settlement.

Getting control of your assets in a settlement is one thing. Knowing what to do with them is another. Here is where to start.

1. DON'T RUSH TO INVEST THE SETTLEMENT	2. A \$1M HOUSE IS NOT THE SAME AS A \$1M PORTFOLIO
■ Before investing, ask what your life costs now - income in, expenses out, and what is changing.	■ Equal values on paper are not always equal in reality. A house has taxes, insurance, and maintenance - you cannot pay for groceries with the guest bedroom.
■ You do not have to decide everything the day the divorce is final. Keeping cash while you plan is not fear. It is strategy.	■ Watch the cost basis on investments received in a settlement. Embedded capital gains can mean a hidden tax bill inside the asset.
■ The portfolio needs to support your new life - your income needs, goals, risk, and timeline may look nothing like they did when you were married.	■ Before keeping any asset, ask: What does it cost to own? What taxes come with it? Does it fit my life now?
3. YOUR EX'S PORTFOLIO DOESN'T HAVE TO BE YOUR PORTFOLIO	4. REBUILD YOUR FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE
■ Take inventory: What do you own, where is it held, what is taxable, what is retirement money, what is liquid, what is concentrated?	■ Update beneficiaries immediately - retirement accounts, life insurance, transfer-on-death designations, estate documents, and powers of attorney.
■ Your goals, income, expenses, risk tolerance, and timeline all changed. The investments should reflect your financial life - not your former spouse's.	■ Review every financial connection from your marriage: bank accounts, credit cards, insurance, property titles, passwords, and emergency contacts.
■ Dividing assets legally and making them work financially are two different jobs. Your attorney, CDFA, CPA, and advisor may all need to talk to each other.	■ If married 10+ years, you may be eligible for divorced-spouse Social Security benefits. Know what you are entitled to and put it in the plan.
5. NEVER ABDICATE YOUR FINANCIAL LIFE AGAIN	
■ There is a big difference between delegating and abdicating. Hire the CPA and the advisor - but stay at the table.	
■ Know what you own, what you owe, what is coming in, what is going out, who is advising you, and how they are paid.	
■ Financial confidence does not mean doing everything yourself. It means knowing enough to stay in control. Delegate the work. Do not abdicate the decisions.	

"You made it through the divorce. Now make sure you stay at the table. It's your money. Your life. Your future."

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