

Flourish Wealth Management

Quarterly Newsletter

JANUARY 2025

As we step into a new year, I want to take a moment to thank you for being a part of the Flourish Wealth Management community. This quarter, I'm excited to share our feature article, *Four Advantages of Setting Financial Resolutions*, which offers actionable ideas to help you align your financial goals with the life you envision. In addition, our Director of Investments, Jay Pluimer, has prepared a thoughtful quarterly market commentary and annual market review, providing insights to help you better understand the trends shaping today's financial landscape.

I'm also thrilled to welcome three talented professionals to our growing team: Jaclyn Madrid, CFP®, CPWA®, who joins us as a Wealth Manager; Jayden Shultz, our new Investment & Wealth Management Associate; and Anna Davis, who will be supporting our efforts as Executive Assistant. Each brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm, and I know they will play an integral role in helping us serve you with care and excellence. I encourage you to visit the "[Our Team](#)" section of the Flourish website to read the bios and background information about Jaclyn, Jayden, and Anna. As always, we are here to partner with you to make the most of the opportunities ahead. Thank you for trusting us to be a part of your financial journey, and we look forward to a wonderful year ahead!



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFAs®

4th Quarter | 2024

QUARTERLY ARTICLE

Four Advantages of Setting Financial Resolutions

How Financial Resolutions Can Strengthen Your Money Management in the Year Ahead

By: Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®
President and Founder

As a new year approaches, many people turn their thoughts to self-improvement and goal setting. While health and lifestyle resolutions often take center stage, financial resolutions for better money management are just as important. Establishing clear financial goals can help provide direction and structure for your money management, whether you're saving for the future, managing debt, or working toward a specific milestone.

Here are four advantages of setting financial resolutions and how they can contribute to a more focused and intentional financial strategy.

1. Clarity on Financial Priorities

Setting financial resolutions encourages you to take a closer look at your current financial situation and clarify your priorities. Whether you aim to build an emergency fund, pay down debt, or plan for retirement, identifying these goals helps you focus on what matters most. Writing down resolutions creates a tangible list of objectives, making it easier to evaluate where you stand and where you'd like to go. This clarity can make financial decisions more purposeful and aligned with your overall vision.

2. Improved Accountability

Financial resolutions serve as a personal commitment to yourself and your goals. By setting specific and actionable objectives, you create a sense of accountability. This might involve tracking spending, sticking to a monthly budget, or reviewing your progress regularly. Sharing your resolutions with a trusted partner, friend, or advisor can also enhance accountability, offering support and encouragement as you work toward your goals.

3. Better Financial Habits

Resolutions often require making small, intentional changes that can lead to lasting improvements. For example, committing to automatic savings, reducing unnecessary expenses, or reviewing your finances monthly can help establish positive habits over time. These incremental steps may not feel significant initially but can contribute to building a more disciplined approach to money management. Resolutions provide a framework for creating habits that align with your financial priorities.

4. A Sense of Progress

One of the most rewarding aspects of setting financial resolutions is the sense of progress they can provide. Each small milestone, whether it's paying off a credit card or saving toward a vacation, reinforces the value of setting goals. Tracking progress also allows you to reflect on your achievements, adjust your plan as needed, and maintain motivation. These moments of accomplishment can remind you why you set resolutions in the first place.

Tips for Setting Effective Financial Resolutions

When creating financial resolutions, it's important to make them actionable and realistic. Using the S.M.A.R.T. framework—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound—can help guide your goal-setting process. For instance, instead of a vague resolution like “save money,” consider a more specific goal such as “save \$5,000 for a vacation by the end of the year.”

Also, remember to revisit your resolutions regularly. Financial situations can change, and your goals may need to be adjusted along the way. Regular reviews allow you to assess progress, refine your strategy, and stay focused on your objectives.

Are You Setting Financial Resolutions for Better Money Management?

Setting financial resolutions can offer clarity, accountability, improved habits, and a sense of progress. By thoughtfully identifying and working toward your financial goals, you create a structure that supports more intentional money

management. Whether your resolutions are big or small, starting with clear objectives can make a meaningful difference in how you approach your finances in the year ahead.

As 2025 begins, let Flourish Wealth Management help you write the next chapter in your money story. We integrate the personal and technical sides of finance to help you achieve your financial goals and your personal aspirations. Take the first step toward greater financial freedom – schedule a conversation with us today!

MARKET COMMENTARY

Fourth Quarter 2024/Annual Market Review 2024



By: Jay E. Pluimer, AIF®, CIMA®
Director of Investments

Although Stock markets ended the year on a down note, 2024 was the second consecutive year with gains above 20% for the S&P 500 Index of US Large Cap companies. The main drivers of market returns during the quarter included a Presidential Election in early November, two Federal Reserve interest rate cuts of 25 basis points in November and December, and stubbornly high rates of inflation. Stocks expected the Fed rate cuts but had built in aggressive rate cuts throughout 2025 and turned downward when the Fed expressed a more cautious view about inflation and unemployment rates in the future. Bonds also trended downward during the quarter while adjusting to an environment where interest rates are expected to be higher than usual for longer. Despite these adjustments to expectations, the strength of the US economy was supported by high levels of consumer spending, rising consumer confidence, and lower rates of unemployment. The S&P 500 set 57 new all-time highs during 2024, reflecting the consistent upward trend of the markets with reasons to remain optimistic as we look ahead to 2025.

We are taking a cautious approach to client portfolios in the first half of the New Year as markets and the economy adjust to a new Presidential

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Administration. At this point, it is difficult to know what economic policies will be put in place during the first few months of the year and what implications those policies will have on economic growth. The Federal Reserve committed to being patient and waiting to see how things develop before making any additional adjustments to short-term interest rates. Economic fundamentals are in excellent shape, particularly in the US where Big Tech companies continue to lead Stock markets higher with enthusiasm for how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can support efficient growth in the future. Client portfolio allocations are aligned with long-term targets, and we will proactively rebalance investments as market conditions change over the next few months.

For more information on investments and the markets, you can reference our [Quarterly/Annual Market Review](#).

Conclusion

We trust that you've found this quarter's insights helpful and that they serve as a practical guide in your financial journey. At Flourish Wealth Management, we're always here to support you and your family in achieving your financial goals.



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP[®], CAP[®], CDFA[®]

and the Flourish Team