

Flourish Wealth Management

Quarterly Newsletter

April 2026

As we move further into spring, it's often a natural time to pause and reflect on how the year is unfolding so far. This season tends to bring a sense of renewal — not only in the world around us, but also in how we think about our routines, priorities, and the decisions we make each day.

In this quarter's newsletter, we're exploring a topic that often sits just beneath the surface of financial planning: the connection between money and mental health. Our featured article takes a closer look at how emotions, experiences, and perspective can influence financial decisions over time. You'll also find our latest market commentary, offering insight into current conditions and how portfolios are being thoughtfully positioned in a more uncertain environment. Together, these pieces are designed to provide both perspective and a steady foundation as you move through the months ahead.



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®

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QUARTERLY ARTICLE

Money and Mental Health: Understanding the Connection Between Emotions and Finances

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

When we talk about money, it's easy to focus on the numbers — budgets, savings goals, investment accounts, and long-term plans. But if you pause for a moment and think about how money actually shows up in your life, it rarely feels like numbers alone. More often, it shows up as something emotional. [For some, it feels like stress or uncertainty.](#) For others, it can feel like relief, possibility, or even a sense of control. In reality, money and mental health are closely connected, and that connection often plays a meaningful role in how financial decisions are made over time.

Recognizing this isn't about complicating financial planning. It's about understanding that decisions are shaped not only by logic, but also by experience, perspective, and emotion.

It's Not Just About the Math

Most financial decisions aren't made in a spreadsheet; they're made in the middle of everyday life, alongside competing priorities and responsibilities. You might find yourself putting off reviewing your accounts because something about it feels overwhelming, or hesitating to make a financial change because you're unsure how it will play out.

These moments are incredibly common, and they don't suggest a lack of ability or discipline. Instead, they reflect the reality that emotions are often part of the decision-making process, whether we acknowledge them or not.

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When financial planning is viewed only through a technical lens, this human element can be overlooked. But when it's acknowledged, it becomes easier to approach decisions with greater awareness and intention.

SEE ALSO: [The Power of Perspective: How Framing Impacts Financial Outcomes](#)

How Emotions Quietly Influence Decisions

Emotions can shape financial behavior in subtle but meaningful ways. Sometimes this shows up as avoidance — delaying a decision or choosing not to engage with financial information because it feels unclear or uncomfortable. Other times, it may appear as overthinking, where every possible outcome is considered, yet moving forward still feels difficult.

In some cases, financial habits are tied to a desire for stability or reassurance, particularly during periods of uncertainty or transition. These patterns are not unusual; they are often shaped by past experiences, family dynamics, or long-standing beliefs about money.

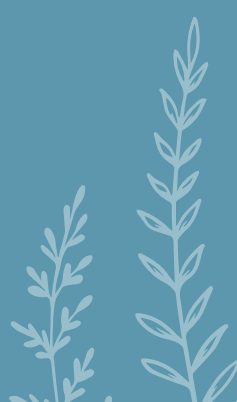
Taking the time to notice these tendencies, without judgment, can create space for more thoughtful decision-making. Awareness doesn't eliminate emotion, but it can help prevent it from quietly steering decisions in ways that may not align with long-term priorities.

A Perspective Worth Acknowledging for Women

In many conversations, women share that their relationship with money has evolved over time, sometimes shaped by experiences where they were less involved in financial decision-making early on, or where responsibilities shifted later in life due to a transition.

Add to that the realities of career pauses, caregiving responsibilities, or simply balancing multiple roles, and it becomes clear that financial decisions are often layered with both practical and emotional considerations.

This doesn't reflect a lack of capability. Rather, it highlights the importance of an approach to financial planning that feels collaborative, supportive, and



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grounded in real life. When there is space for conversation, questions, and reflection, confidence tends to grow naturally over time.

A More Balanced Relationship with Money

Developing a more balanced relationship between money and mental health doesn't require dramatic change. It often begins with small, intentional steps that create a sense of familiarity and ease.

This might look like setting aside time to [review your financial picture without distraction](#), or simply noticing how you feel when making certain financial decisions. It may also involve asking questions and seeking clarity, rather than feeling as though you need to have everything figured out on your own.

SEE ALSO: [EQ + IQ = Wealth: How Emotional Intelligence Shapes Stronger Financial Choices](#)

Over time, these small shifts can lead to a greater sense of comfort and engagement. Financial decisions begin to feel less reactive and more aligned with your broader priorities and values.

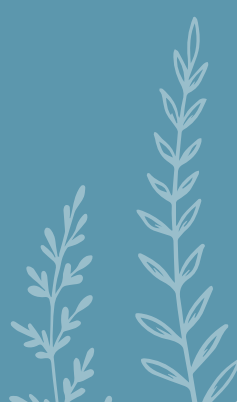
Moving Forward with Awareness and Intention

Understanding the connection between money and mental health invites a more thoughtful and compassionate approach to financial planning. It allows for the recognition that financial decisions are not just about outcomes, but about the process of getting there.

Rather than trying to remove emotion from the equation, it can be more helpful to understand it and allow it to inform decisions in a balanced way. This creates an opportunity to approach financial planning with greater clarity, steadiness, and intention.

At its core, financial planning is about more than numbers. It is about supporting a life that feels aligned with your priorities, your experiences, and your sense of well-being over time.

Final Thoughts on Money and Mental Health



If you've been reflecting on your relationship with money and how it's shaped by your experiences, you're not alone. These conversations are often more nuanced than they first appear. If you'd like to explore your financial picture in a way that feels thoughtful and supportive, [we invite you to connect with us for a conversation.](#)

MARKET COMMENTARY

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

Stock and Bond investments struggled in the first quarter of 2026 due to increasing volatility and uncertainty. Stocks struggled during the first few weeks of the quarter with a drag from the Magnificent 7 companies focused on Technology and Communications. Markets had begun to rotate toward value-oriented companies with earnings, profits, and dividends before the War with Iran started at the end of February. Once the war started, Big Tech continued to struggle while Energy and Industrials value-oriented stocks surged further with rising oil prices. Bonds moved in tandem with stocks on a frequent basis after the start of the war as fears of inflationary pressures led to higher interest rates and lower bond prices. Although International markets mostly held ground during the quarter, the US Dollar increased in value which led to small losses for non-US investments. This was a good time for diversified portfolios which stayed close to breakeven during the quarter despite losses of 4% for US Large Cap Stocks and a 1% loss for International stocks, with US Large Value and Small Value offsetting most of the broad market losses. The lack of clarity about next steps for the War in Iran, including mixed messages about the end game for the war, continue to support volatile markets where diversification is the best tool to balance short-term risks while staying invested for the long-term.

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Concerns about inflation surged after the start of the War in Iran as rising oil prices led to a 1% increase in Headline Inflation which includes Food and Energy in the calculation. Core Inflation (without Food and Energy) stayed flat at 2.4% during the quarter, which supports a patient approach from the Federal Reserve. Expectations at the beginning of the year for the Fed included two interest rate cuts, both taking place in the latter half of 2026, but shifting inflationary pressures have led to a consensus for zero interest rate changes this year. It was helpful to see the market rotate toward previously lagging sectors and stocks with positive earnings and steady dividends, including relatively good performance from US Small Caps. Historical data indicates that US and International stock markets generally have positive returns over the 12-month period after the start of geopolitical disruptions like the war in Iran, so we plan to remain fully invested while balancing risk and reward with proactive efforts to rebalance client portfolios to target allocations.

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

Conclusion

As the season continues, it can be helpful to pause and stay connected to what matters most to you over time. If something in this issue sparked a new perspective or raised questions about your financial path, we're always here as a resource. Wishing you a season of continued growth, clarity, and renewal.



Sincerely,

Kathy Longo, CFP®, CAP®, CDFA®
and the Flourish Team