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Lynn's Top Five

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apparition. Have a true vision of what you'd like to do and be and start putting money away now for that future. We can outrun many things, but time isn't one of them. Think of time as your pal, just like Casper the Friendly Ghost, and start saving as much as you possibly can for your future and those whom you love, everyday.

4) The Devil on our Shoulder: Ever been in a store staring at something you crave but do not need? And then you wage an internal battle of to buy or not to buy? It's like having an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other. Disarm the devil with facts: using your plan, determine just how much you can afford to spend on wants versus needs and then look at that potential purchase through that lens only buying if it's within your budget. We can handily disarm that spending devil with facts. If you aren't sure and you need to think it through, just step away and then go home and do the math. You can always go back later if you can afford it and it really means that much to you. Typically, that purchase "devil" is an impulse that can be thwarted with solid planning and review.

5) Dressing up as a "Jim Cramer" TV type personality: While very entertaining, you should view your portfolio in a long-term lens and not as a television personality day trader. The taxes, the fees, the lack of purpose - all of the bad characters that work against a successful approach to life-time investing make great TV but poor life choices. Whether you invest your own portfolio assets or work with a truly qualified team of professionals, focus on what your money needs to do for you and in what time frames and don't become distracted by the noise from those who are selling media time and aren't working for you and in your personal best interests.

I hope this has been a fun way to tackle some easy to ignore tricks that can undermine our best planning selves. Wishing you only the best treats this Halloween!

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

It's always fun to have a theme for my column. With Halloween here tomorrow, this is a wonderful opportunity to dig into my bag of planning treats to share five "tricks" to avoid in your financial planning. See if you recognize yourself in any of these disguises and if so, treat yourself to a better costume!

1) Taking better care of others than yourselves: If you dress up as the Statue of Liberty in life and care for everyone to your own financial jeopardy, it's time to rethink your costume. If you run out of assets, who will care for you? Work with your planning team to determine just how generous you can afford to be. Whether it's family, friends or your favorite charitable organizations, if you need to give time instead of money, make that change!

2) The Pinball Machine costume: I frequently see clients who have spent much of their adult lives avoiding setting up a proper plan and just end up bouncing from thing to thing with no real path in mind. Sometimes they do so because they are concerned about the cost of working with a planning professional and worried that financial planning is just a ruse to sell them something that's not in their best interests. So, my advice: get out of the maze and treat yourself to a proper planning session with a qualified financial advisor such as a Certified Financial Planner who is a fiduciary acting on your behalf. The peace of mind and focused approach you can achieve working with the right advisor team can be both a time and money saver and help you live a focused financial life.

3) The Time Value of Money Ghost: Most everyone I talk to tells me they wish they had started saving earlier - they just don't know where the time went. Envision your future self as something more than a nebulous ghost like

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