

Financial Planning

2012: Doomsday is approaching...or is it?

January 2012

According to the Mayan long count calendar, the world will come to an end in 2012. They were even more specific and predicted that this catastrophe will happen 21 December 2012; when a very rare celestial occurrence will appear—when the sun and the earth should be directly aligned with the centre of the milky way.

If you believe in this fatalistic prophecy, then it would be appropriate to enjoy your life to the fullest, and spend whatever money you have left on those things you always wanted to do.

By now most of you have been back at work, and forgotten the long summer evenings reminiscing with family whilst on holiday, about the good times and sharing the dreams and aspirations of permanently being on holiday or maybe changing your lifestyles to make more time for yourself and family, or possibly taking early retirement.



*All glory comes from
daring to begin*
Eugene F Ware

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, any one can start from now and make a brand new ending.

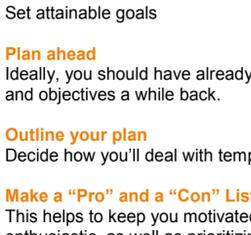
Marcus Aurelius

New year, new beginnings

A new year brings with it many opportunities, dreams, desires and renewed hope. At the beginning of the year, it is crucial to decide on the priorities for the year ahead. There's another opportunity to start afresh and approach 2012 differently.

Make a balanced plan with goals in each area of your life to move your physical, social, educational, financial, mental and emotional self forward. Make sure that your goals are reachable by making them very specific and measurable.

There are often things we leave undone in our lives. Things we wish we had done, that are always sitting at the back of our minds and draining our energy. These are "energy leaks". Let 2012 be a unique year symbolizing a new beginning of a better tomorrow. Focus on eliminating distractions, spread happiness and be ready to celebrate new hopes and dreams.



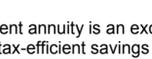
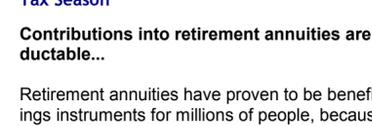
Here are some tips to help keep New Year resolutions:

Be Realistic
Set attainable goals

Plan ahead
Ideally, you should have already set your goals and objectives a while back.

Outline your plan
Decide how you'll deal with temptation

Make a "Pro" and a "Con" List
This helps to keep you motivated, strong and enthusiastic, as well as prioritizing your goals.



Tax Season

Contributions into retirement annuities are tax deductible...

Retirement annuities have proven to be beneficial savings instruments for millions of people, because they encourage disciplined savings with tax incentives. For many their disciplined savings efforts paid off when they retired with an intact nest egg.

Three good reasons to invest in Retirement Annuities....

A retirement annuity is an excellent investment instrument for tax-efficient savings as retirement annuity fund members receive three tax breaks:

- Contributions are income tax deductible up to each contributor's limit. For each R100 invested in an RA plan, R40 (for someone taxed at a 40% marginal rate) is effectively paid back by SARS.
- Favourable tax treatment of monies in the retirement fund. Tax is not payable on rental income and interest and no tax is payable on either capital gains or dividends received.
- Favourable tax treatment of the lump-sum proceeds at retirement. On retirement the first R315 000 is tax-free and the rest of the lump sum taxed at favourable scales.

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The first step to getting the things you want out of life is this:

Decide what you want.

Ben Stein

Talk about it

Share your New Year's resolutions

Reward yourself

Recognize your efforts with small rewards, thereby strengthening your resolve to keep on track.

Track your progress

Keep track of each success, every little achievement counts

Don't beat yourself up

Obsessing over defaults won't help you achieve your goal. Do the best you can each day, and take it one day at a time.

Stick to it

Keep striving towards reaching your goals.

Keep trying

If your plans run out of steam during the first quarter of the year, don't despair. There's absolutely no reason you can't make a New Year's resolution any time of the year.

This is a chance to start on a clean slate, an opportunity for introspection and anticipation. Let us welcome the new year with a positive attitude.



>> CONTACT US

Tel: 011 463 2794 | 011 463 2136

Fax: 086 510 9286

E-mail: info@olemera.com

PO Box 3052,
North Riding, 2162

42 Sheperd Avenue,
Bryanston Ext 3, 2194

www.olemera.com