Want Happy Clients? Talk About Charitable Giving

Over the years, more than a handful of attorneys, CPAs, and financial advisors have shared with the Chester County Community Foundation team that their happiest clients seem to be those who've incorporated charitable giving into their estate and financial plans. Whether or not you believe this phenomenon is a "chicken or the egg" dilemma, it's hard to dispute that philanthropy offers both emotional and rational upsides to your clients. Advisors who lean into these benefits stand a strong chance of being viewed by their clients as effective, impactful, and delivering well-rounded services to improve clients' lives and give them peace of mind.

Despite these advantages, many advisors lack confidence in discussing philanthropy with clients. A survey found that only 5% of advisors felt "very confident" in this area, with 72% not including philanthropy in their initial fact-finding conversation with clients. This gap represents a significant opportunity for advisors to enhance their services and strengthen client relationships through philanthropic discussions.

Keeping clients loyal and engaged with your services is just one of many reasons to talk with clients about charitable giving. A recent *Wall Street Journal* article sheds light on the ways charitable giving can have positive effects on both mental and physical health.

Notably, the article makes these points:
- Donating to charity can lead to improved mood, lower blood pressure, and potentially a longer life.
- The act of giving may trigger a release of serotonin and dopamine, hormones associated with happiness, while reducing cortisol levels.
- Brain scientists and economists have conducted studies supporting these health benefits of charitable acts.
- Research suggests that the positive feelings associated with giving may contribute to these health improvements.

The article implies that engaging in charitable activities could be a way to enhance overall well-being, suggesting that generosity might have tangible benefits beyond just helping others.

Of course, not every client will have exactly the same experience with charitable giving, and of course, charitable giving is above all primarily motivated by a client's desire to help others rather than solely for personal benefit. Still, it's critical for advisors to be aware of the unique role charitable giving can play in a client's life.

The Community Foundation is here for you! Please reach out anytime you are working with a client who is charitably-inclined. Our highly-trained, professional staff can help navigate both the tax planning complexities as well as the emotional side of giving to ensure that your clients achieve their financial goals as well as their goals for making a difference.

For more information, contact the Chester County Community Foundation:
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