



## Your Money, Your Terms

A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO WORKING WITH A  
FINANCIAL ADVISOR



Today, Americans are 41% more likely to turn to a financial advisor when seeking financial advice.<sup>1</sup> One of the biggest factors driving this trend is a broad pessimism about personal finances amid recent stock market volatility and rising consumer prices. Within this group of Americans is a demographic with a distinct set of needs for financial success and a more complex financial reality: women.

Today, women control roughly one-third (\$10 trillion) of U.S. household financial assets, a figure projected to triple by 2030.<sup>2</sup> Yet, despite controlling a significant share of wealth, many women feel overwhelmed when it comes to managing it. In Fidelity's 2024 Women & Investing Study, it was found that roughly 55% of women are overwhelmed when it comes to their finances, and 48% of them said they are embarrassed that they don't know more about investing.<sup>3</sup> This is particularly troubling given the substantial amount of assets women hold.

To feel more confident in managing their finances, women may benefit from working with a financial advisor to help guide their wealth decisions. While many women express a strong desire to become more knowledgeable about their finances, a number have reported feeling patronized by financial advisors or excluded from meaningful financial conversations. As a result, women have increasingly leaned toward working directly with women financial advisors, or ensuring there is at least one woman on their advisory team, so their goals and concerns are genuinely heard and understood.

For women—whether they choose to work with a female advisor or a male advisor—one thing remains consistent: they want an advisor who understands them and can fully grasp their comprehensive financial picture. Not all financial advisors are the same, which makes it essential for women to do their due diligence and know how to properly assess whether an advisor or advisory team is the right fit for their financial goals.

In this guide, we break down the key things to know about working with a financial professional, the questions to ask, and what to expect throughout the experience.

## Financial Realities that Set Women Apart

One of the most significant financial differences between men and women is life expectancy. In the U.S., women live on average nearly six years longer than men.<sup>4</sup> For those in the Baby Boomer generation, this longevity often results in a transfer of wealth from husbands to wives as the surviving spouse, leaving women with a substantial amount of assets later in life.<sup>5</sup> This dynamic can be a meaningful advantage for women who historically may not have been able to save as much for retirement due to lower wages driven by the gender pay gap or gaps in employment related to caregiving responsibilities.

Women are far more likely to experience career interruptions tied to caregiving. Women are often not only caregivers to aging family members, but also to their own children—a group commonly referred to as the “sandwich generation.” While both men and women can fall into this category, 60% of sandwich generation caregivers are women, and on average, they spend 45 more minutes per day on caregiving tasks than men.<sup>6</sup> As a result, many women face significant pressure managing the physical, mental, and emotional demands of caring for both children and elderly family members, while also navigating the financial strain of balancing the costs associated with both.

These caregiving responsibilities can have lasting financial consequences. Time spent out of the workforce or earning less can limit the ability to consistently contribute to retirement accounts such as a 401(k) or 403(b), and it can also reduce future Social Security benefits. The Social Security Administration calculates benefits by averaging an individual’s 35 highest-earning years, adjusted for wage inflation, meaning caregiving-related gaps can directly lower that average. Additionally, because women tend to live longer, they must be especially mindful of long-term care planning and the costs that come with it. A 55-year-old woman can expect to pay an average annual premium of \$2,800 for \$165,000 in long-term care insurance benefits, with premiums increasing 2% to 4% for every year coverage is delayed, potentially placing a meaningful strain on income and savings over time.<sup>7</sup>

Despite these challenges, women are increasingly becoming the primary decision-makers in their household finances. This shift is driven by higher educational attainment, increased career success, and rising income levels. As investors, women often favor more stable strategies and focus on long-term outcomes rather than short-term gains—a preference rooted in the desire for financial stability that will sustain them throughout their longer lives and help preserve their lifestyle.<sup>8</sup>

When this growing financial leadership is viewed alongside the significant wealth transfer women are receiving, many women find themselves managing a financial windfall. Often, this wealth is directed toward philanthropic initiatives. Women tend to be highly engaged in philanthropy—through donating time, financial resources, or a combination of both—and are more likely to give based on a personal or emotional connection to the causes they support.<sup>9</sup> Ultimately, this highlights the importance of strategically aligning philanthropic goals with tax-efficient giving strategies that support both personal values and long-term financial plans.

## Why An Advisor Matters

The bottom line is that anyone with complex finances can benefit from working with a financial advisor—but women, in particular, often face a set of financial realities that make that partnership especially valuable. As outlined above, longer life expectancy, caregiving responsibilities, wealth transfer, and evolving roles as financial decision-makers all contribute to a more layered financial picture. In addition, major life events such as marriage, divorce, childbirth, and selling a business can significantly reshape a woman's financial priorities and require thoughtful, proactive planning.

A financial advisor's role isn't just to manage these changes, but to help make them feel more feasible by having the right conversations, providing clarity, and ensuring nothing falls through the cracks. An effective advisor takes the time to understand your full financial picture and helps you feel informed and confident enough to make decisions at every stage. At the end of the day, women should be able to walk out of their advisor's office knowing they have someone on their team who is looking out for them, both personally and financially.

Below are several ways a financial advisor can help address the specific challenges and opportunities that women may encounter over time:

**Estate Planning:** Women are more likely to outlive their spouse and, as a result, inherit assets in addition to those they already own. These assets should be thoughtfully incorporated into an estate plan to ensure they are passed down to heirs and/or charitable organizations in a way that aligns with your wishes. An advisor can help create or update a will, establish trusts, and ensure beneficiaries are properly designated across accounts.

**Retirement Planning:** Retirement and the life envisioned after it look different for everyone. A financial advisor can help tailor a retirement strategy around your specific goals, while also helping you navigate market volatility, inflation, and longevity risk to help ensure your plan remains on track.

**Investment Management:** Women tend to be disciplined investors who prioritize long-term outcomes over short-term gains, often taking a more thoughtful and goal-oriented approach to investing. This long-term mindset can be a meaningful advantage, particularly during periods of market volatility. A financial advisor can help build and manage an investment strategy aligned with your goals, time horizon, and risk tolerance, while reinforcing discipline during market fluctuations. By keeping the focus on the broader plan, an advisor helps ensure investment decisions remain consistent with long-term financial objectives.

**Caregiving and Long-Term Care:** Caregiving responsibilities often evolve. Women who once served as caregivers for aging family members may eventually become care recipients themselves, transferring both financial and emotional stress to their children. An advisor can help put strategies in place—such as insurance, disability coverage, and long-term care planning—to help protect both you and your family.

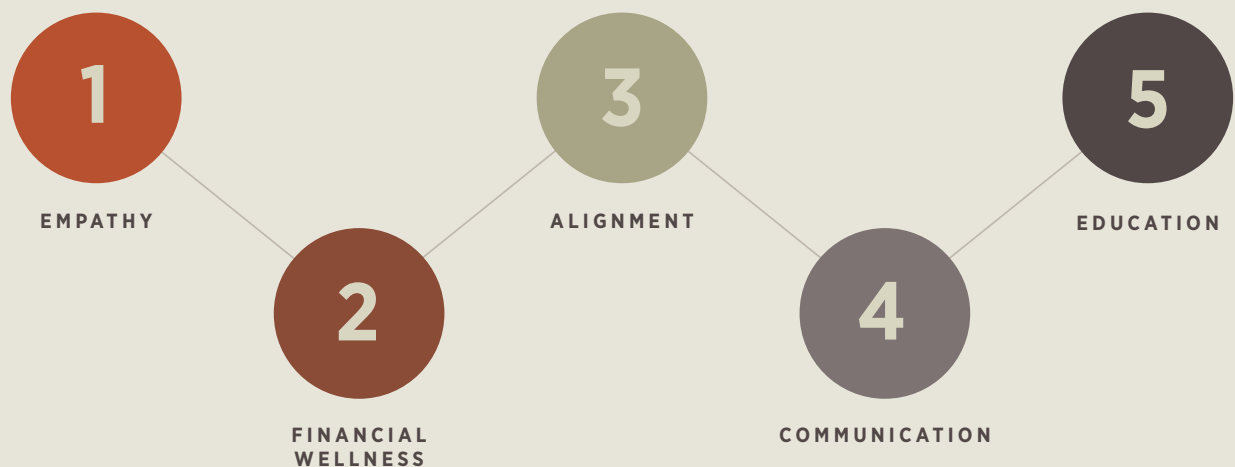
**Education Planning:** College costs continue to rise, and even high-net-worth families are feeling the strain. Parents who want to save for their children's education need a clear strategy and an early start. A financial advisor can help determine the most appropriate savings vehicles and structure a plan that balances education goals with other financial priorities.

## What to Expect of Your Advisor

Having a knowledgeable financial advisor is important. A strong advisor brings objectivity, personalized planning, and risk management experience—helping you save time, work more efficiently, and stay aligned with your long-term goals.

That said, the relationship you have with your advisor is just as important as their technical expertise. Women want an advisor who understands them and their life circumstances. New York Life Investment's [Inspiring Women by Partnering in Their Financial Growth](#) research report highlights five key attributes women value most in an advisor relationship: empathy, financial wellness, alignment, communication, and education. Together, these pillars offer meaningful insight into what women expect from their advisors.

### Five Attributes of the Ideal Client Relationship with Women

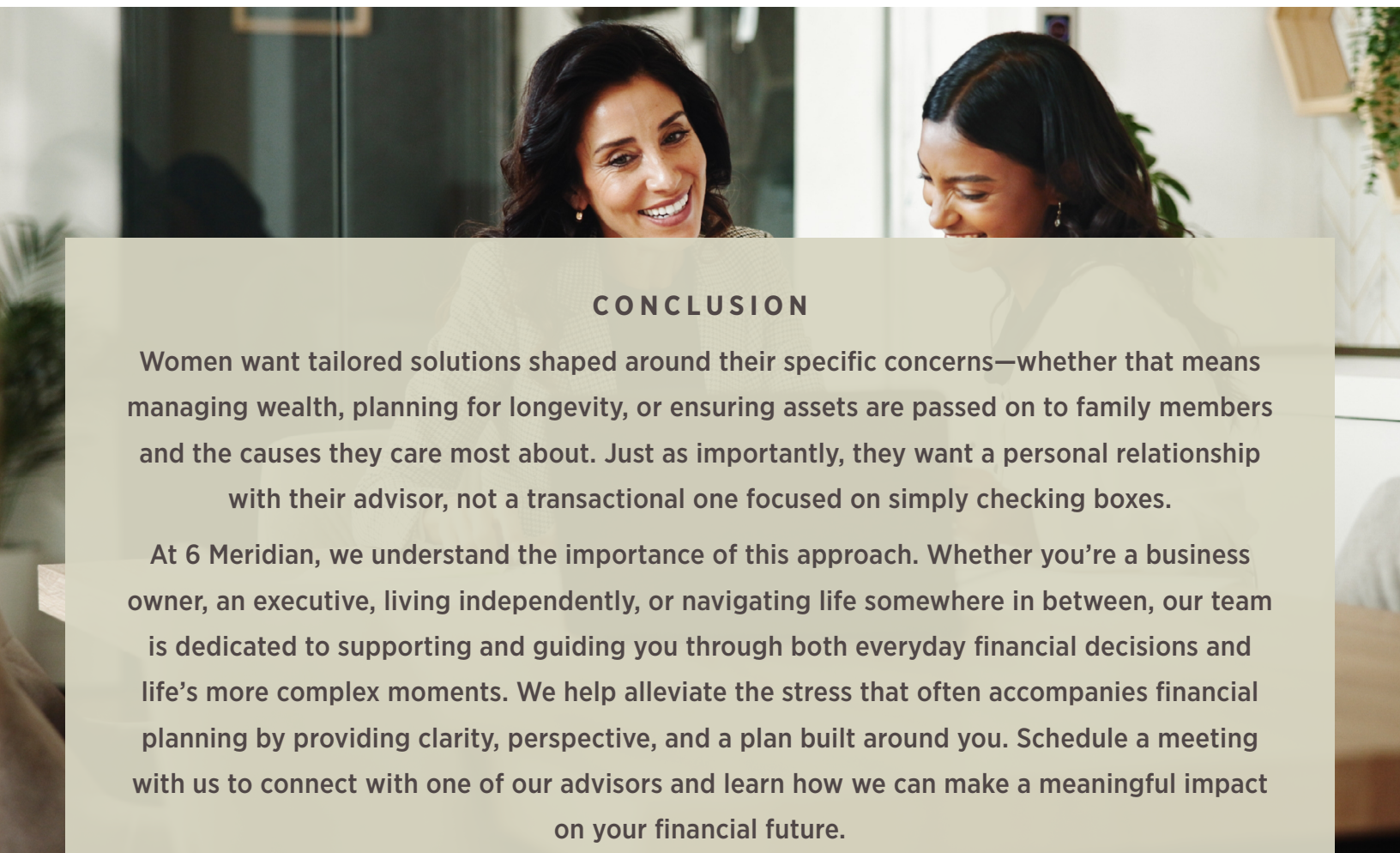


First, an advisor should lead with empathy—actively listening and recognizing the emotional aspects of financial decision-making. They should also provide recommendations that support the financial wellness of women and their families, helping make sure those strategies remain aligned with personal goals. Finally, strong communication is essential. An effective advisor is proactive in their outreach and uses clear, plain language so clients feel comfortable asking questions and fully understand their plan.

To assess if an advisor fits these criteria, women should ask the following questions:

1. Can you describe your typical client?
2. Are you a fiduciary?
3. How are you compensated?
4. How do you engage with your clients, and how often will we meet?
5. What services do you provide, and do those services extend to my family?
6. Do you partner with other professionals who have different areas of knowledge?
7. How will you help hold me accountable to my goals?
8. What is your investment philosophy?
9. How do you approach major life events such as divorce or caregiving?
10. How will we plan for a longer life expectancy?

While these questions are not a foolproof way to find the perfect advisor, they are a strong starting point. Ultimately, it's essential that you feel confident in your choice. If you ever feel pressured, unheard, or uncertain about an advisor's ability to personalize their approach, don't hesitate to move on and find someone better suited to support your needs.



## CONCLUSION

Women want tailored solutions shaped around their specific concerns—whether that means managing wealth, planning for longevity, or ensuring assets are passed on to family members and the causes they care most about. Just as importantly, they want a personal relationship with their advisor, not a transactional one focused on simply checking boxes.

At 6 Meridian, we understand the importance of this approach. Whether you're a business owner, an executive, living independently, or navigating life somewhere in between, our team is dedicated to supporting and guiding you through both everyday financial decisions and life's more complex moments. We help alleviate the stress that often accompanies financial planning by providing clarity, perspective, and a plan built around you. Schedule a meeting with us to connect with one of our advisors and learn how we can make a meaningful impact on your financial future.



## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Saad, L. (2025, May 13). Americans still turn to people for financial advice. Gallup.com. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/660467/americans-financial-advice-rooted-people.aspx>
- <sup>2</sup> WMWoMenWealth. (2025, March 12). [Video]. Morgan Stanley. <https://www.morganstanley.com/articles/financial-future>
- <sup>3</sup> Women's guide to finding and working with a financial professional. (2024, December 9). <https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center/women-talk-money/womens-guide-financial-professional>
- <sup>4</sup> Kcullen. (2025, February 12). Women investors to fuel financial advisor growth | BlackRock. BlackRock. <https://www.blackrock.com/us/financial-professionals/insights/financial-advisors-questions-about-engaging-women-investors>
- <sup>5</sup> Catania, C., & Zucker, J. (2025, May 8). The new face of wealth: The rise of the female investor. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/the-new-face-of-wealth-the-rise-of-the-female-investor>
- <sup>6</sup> Carpenter, C. (2025, August 19). The Sandwich Generation: Balancing care for Parents & children. Caregiver Action Network. <https://www.caregiveraction.org/sandwich-generation/>
- <sup>7</sup> Managing the cost of Long-Term care. (2025, July 1). Schwab Brokerage. <https://www.schwab.com/learn/story/managing-cost-long-term-care>
- <sup>8</sup> Catania, C., & Zucker, J. (2025, May 8). The new face of wealth: The rise of the female investor. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/the-new-face-of-wealth-the-rise-of-the-female-investor>
- <sup>9</sup> Giving similarities outweigh differences in men and women entrepreneurs. (n.d.). Fidelity Charitable. Retrieved January 26, 2026, from <https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/articles/giving-similarities-outweigh-differences-men-women-entrepreneurs.html>



## DISCLOSURES

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