

JASON's Direct to the Point Advice for 2023! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I would like to wish you and your families all the best for 2023! I hope to see you in Japan soon.

Below are a few tips to help preserve and grow your wealth, that I think are important, so I wanted to share these with you to start the new year.

#1. TAXES - Reduce your Tax burden. This is the #1 missed opportunity for many expats in Japan who forget that reducing taxes increases income. They work with conservative accountants who are focused more on collecting fees than reducing their clients' taxes. Also, some people misinterpret aggressive tax planning as a bad thing, when it is a GOOD thing. There is nothing wrong here because most tax codes are set up for the wealthy to pay less tax if they are smart. Paying less tax helps you personally as well as your government, because preventing the government from squandering your taxes means that you will be recycling your money back into the system to help the economy. A win-win for all - how wonderful is that?

#2 SAVINGS - The stock markets are jumping all over the place, which makes it the best time for saving monthly, from Yen to USD, EURO or GBP, whichever currency is your targeted retirement country's currency. Not only do you benefit from world market turbulence, but also from exchanging the YEN with other currencies. If you are investing small amounts, like \$500 to \$1,000 a month, you will benefit from cost averaging monthly into global markets and from Yen exchange rate fluctuations. If you have a monthly savings plan already, you should increase your monthly contribution if possible. If not, you should start a new plan. NOW is the best time to act, as we know 2023 will be extremely volatile with lots of ups and downs.

#3 REAL ESTATE - If you have built up your savings, or you have surplus cash to work with, for a down payment, real estate makes for a good investment with LEVERAGE, the 8th wonder of the world. There are many other benefits to investing in real estate, but the most important one that people overlook is the Loan/Leverage concept. Using other people's money to make yourself money (productive DEBT) is good if you do so in the correct way. Most people think that DEBT is evil because they don't know how to use leverage to their advantage. In many cases that is why they are not as wealthy as they would like to be. Also, LEVERAGE helps to reduce your tax burden, which means that the more real estate you own, the less tax you pay. Getting richer and paying less tax is WONDERFUL. Skillful use of leverage is why most real estate magnates pay such small amounts of tax - i.e., Donald Trump and his \$750 USD tax bill. He used leverage to his advantage, and so should you.

#4 ASSET PROTECTION - This is also often overlooked, but the following two-pronged approach is a powerful strategy for protecting you and your family.

A. OFFSHORE INVESTING - It is best to keep most of your assets offshore as protection against anything that might go wrong in your country of residence, like exorbitant medical costs, legal issues, bankruptcy, inheritance tax issues, or any other financial hardships that might crop up. If you don't keep your money offshore, you are completely at the mercy of your local government. In the US or Japan, for example, they can just seize your assets and you have NO SAY. If you don't believe that this could happen to you, you need to wake up and smell the coffee. Your family is most important, and OFFSHORE INVESTING protects your family way better than any local government with its hand out.

#B. US LIVING TRUST & JAPANESE WILL - This kind of legal protection is often overlooked, but it still needs to be addressed. The US has a very clean and simple inheritance tax system with efficient ways to pass assets on to your family if you set up a property living trust while you are healthy. A Japanese will is trickier, because Japan does not have the streamlined US system of inheritance tax. If you are a gaijin in Japan with a Japanese spouse, and you have assets or money in Japan, you need a WILL. WHY? Because without a will, gaijin are treated lower than the family dog when it comes to the inheritance rights and protections afforded by a traditional Japanese government family register. If your Japanese loved one dies, your Japanese in-laws can exclude you and inherit EVERYTHING if they want to push the Japanese government to decide in their favor. As Japanese nationals they have all the rights. Besides setting up a Japanese will, proper TAX PLANNING and OFFSHORE INVESTING are other keys that will enable you to call the shots instead of the government.

These are just a few examples of how ISG can help you and your family. ISG is proud to offer these services to you via our new PERSONAL WEALTH CONCIERGE (PWC) program. Your commitment to ISG is all that is required! ISG will protect you and your family's interests with advice on all financial matters, no matter what they are, if you take us into your confidence. There is no other company out there that provides this level of service - they mostly just sell products and don't commit to their clients at this level. YOU COMMIT TO ISG and ISG WILL COMMIT TO YOU.

Traditionally, tax accountants, lawyers, investment advisors, and real estate agents don't advise on or manage other services outside their lane. This is a HUGE problem, because they are disconnected from seeing the full picture of how best to advise their clients. The traditional advisor operates in his own little world, which is why clients don't get all the services they require. Have you ever felt that your tax accountant, lawyer, investment advisor or real estate agent fears being sued for giving complementary advice? ISG is not scared to do so because we pride ourselves on protecting the best interests of our clients.

It is like the President of the United States having a CHIEF of STAFF, who is his right-hand man. The CHIEF of STAFF gives the President direct and highly confidential advice behind closed doors, without fear of being controlled by regulations, to help the President make informed decisions. You also deserve a CHIEF OF STAFF to help you manage your wealth, and ISG's PWC service will do this for you.

ISG would be happy to work in conjunction with your current advisor(s) to provide ISG's suggestions on top of what they advise, so that you can make the best-informed decisions.

We understand that the PWC service might not be for all, which is fine, but we find that high level executives who need special care and support have the highest need for this PWC service.

As they say, it's not only what you know, but who you know. ISG has the right connections and the wide-ranging knowledge of financial services that most individuals on their own don't have, which are the real benefits of having your own Personal Wealth Concierge.

If you are interested in having your own PERSONAL WEALTH CONCIERGE, please email ISG at: pw@isgjapan.com