Giving Her Values a Starring Role

Insights from the Women and Wealth Community

By **Ashley Ilardo**, Regional Director, Client Communities,
Kahne Krause, Head of Client Communities and Vice President, and
Mandy Solin, Regional Director, Client Communities and Vice President

Money plays many different roles in women's lives. Whether it's a role she's been told that money should play or the one that's most familiar to her, this casting decision can have an outsize impact on her life and financial future.

How can advisors help give money positive meaning in women's lives, moving it from bit player to a breakout role? By starting with the bigger picture—beginning with her values.

Incorporating her values into a financial plan puts her in control of casting. Advisors who reflect back her values, weaving them into decisions and plans, build trust and show that her best interests are always top of mind.

There's no check-the-box approach when it comes to bringing her values into focus. Four methods continue to come up across the Women and Wealth community:

1. **Ask—**don't guess, being careful not to let assumptions sneak in.
   (See questions from the advisor community below.)
2. **Engage her in a values exercise**, such as Brené Brown's Values Exercise from *Dare to Lead.*
3. **Invite her to explore her values** in a Conversation Circle.
4. **Keep her values in the picture—**staying in tune with how they may evolve over time.

IDEAS TO SPOTLIGHT

A few guiding principles from the Women and Wealth Community:

- Openness and vulnerability are often reciprocated in kind.
- Share small pieces of yourself and your journey—while keeping her in the spotlight.
- Clarify and unpack meaning through follow-up questions *(What? Why? How? …).*
- Reflect back what you've heard, and listen actively.
- Go where she takes you *(Tell me more …).*

ASK—DON'T GUESS

Great questions take the conversation deeper—revealing her feelings, fears, and aspirations. Advisors in the Women and Wealth Community uncover her values by asking questions around four themes:

1. **What does the past reveal about your relationship to money?**
   - What does the word "money" mean to you?
   - What is your earliest money memory?
   - What did your parents teach you about money?
   - What's resonated with you as you've gone through life transitions (e.g., starting your career, getting married, having/adopting kids)?

2. **What brought you here?**
   - What prompted this meeting?
   - Why are you looking to work with a professional?
   - Three years from now, if you look back, what will a successful relationship with an advisor look like?
   - What was your favorite part of today's meeting? Anything you didn't like?

3. **What is most important in your life right now?**
   - What's important about money to you?
   - Who are the most important people in your life? Do any of them need financial help now/ looking forward?
   - What worries you? What does security mean to you?
   - What are your goals? How much do they cost?
   - What charities do you support or wish you could support?

4. **What would you like your future to hold?**
   - If we could only accomplish three things in our work together, what do you really want to accomplish? Why?
   - Are you expecting any life or career transitions?
   - If money didn't matter, what would you be doing? What can we do today to get you closer to that?
   - How much is enough?
   - What do you want to teach your children?

The Dimensional Women and Wealth community started with a simple question: Is serving women different? Today, Women and Wealth represents Dimensional's largest client community, bringing together advisors to better support women investors across different demographics and life stages and with different needs.

Learn more about the Women and Wealth Community *here*, or explore getting involved by emailing *communities@dimensional.com*.