

Morgan Stanley

The David Miller Group at Morgan Stanley

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We all strive for favorable outcomes such as financial security, peace of mind, and evidence of progress. Naturally, we tend to approach situations with high expectations, especially when the stakes feel personal. But in many areas of life, dialing down our expectations can be a surprisingly effective way to boost our well-being.

Disappointment and Delight

Disappointment sets in when reality doesn't meet our expectations. If we anticipate smooth sailing but hit turbulence—be it in travel, relationships, or markets—we're more likely to feel frustrated or discouraged. By contrast, expecting challenges (like long airport lines or traffic delays) helps us stay grounded and reduces emotional friction when "life happens."

On the flip side, delight often comes when reality exceeds expectations. When we assume a situation will be difficult, but it turns out better than anticipated, we experience a welcome boost of satisfaction. Managing expectations isn't about pessimism; it's about making room for more moments of pleasant surprise.

It's especially helpful to assess how much influence we have in a given situation. When we have control, setting high standards can be motivating. But when outcomes are uncertain or outside our control, modest expectations are more realistic and less likely to result in disappointment.

Framing Investment Expectations

Investors often hope for strong returns with minimal bumps along the way. That's understandable. But there's a difference between our investment *hopes* and our investment *expectations*.

If we expect smooth performance and steady growth, we're setting ourselves up for frustration when markets fluctuate wildly, as they have done these past several months. But if we expect the journey to be bumpy and, at times undesirable, we'll be less rattled when "markets happen."

In investing, the healthiest mindset tends to be one of long-term confidence paired with short-term humility. We can believe in the resilience of the market over time while still acknowledging that the path forward may be uneven, noisy, and full of surprises.

During those times, please lean on me! I am here to listen, guide, and ensure we stay on the right path to achieve your goals.



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