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FACING THE ONE CERTAINTY IN LIFE

Michael Preto, CFP®, CIM®

Last month, we talked about how uncertain life can be. So this month, let's talk about something a little more certain: we're all going to die someday.

There it is—said plainly. And if we *know* something is going to happen, most of us would agree it makes sense to prepare for it. Strangely, only **43% of Canadians have a will** in place¹. While a will isn't a complete estate plan, it *is* a starting point. And if you don't have one, chances are your estate isn't prepared.

Here are three common scenarios that show why estate planning matters:

1. Young families with kids

If both parents pass away without a will (dying *intestate*), it's up to the courts to decide who becomes the children's guardian. This process is often slow, expensive, and emotionally harmful. A will allows parents to name a **guardian and trustee** and set guidelines for how and when the kids receive their inheritance. (Let's be honest—if you got a large inheritance at 19, would that money still be around today?)

2. Blended families

Without a will, intestate laws come into play—and those don't favour stepchildren. In fact, unless they're named in the will, stepchildren have no legal right to inherit. So, if a parent leaves everything to a spouse who later changes their own will, the original children could end up with nothing. A proper estate plan can help ensure everyone you care about is looked after.

3. Families with significant real estate assets

Real estate-heavy estates often face large tax bills, especially on assets like vacation homes with big capital gains. These taxes must be paid before the estate can be settled. If the only tool in place is a will, the **probate process** can delay access to funds, force the sale of properties, or cause the family to lose cherished assets. Probate can take months and cost tens of thousands of dollars—money and time that could be saved with proper planning.

1 - <https://narrativeresearch.ca/half-of-canadians-dont-have-a-last-will-and-testament-while-diy-online-providers-are-now-responsible-for-a-quarter-of-existing-wills/>



SO, IF A WILL ISN'T ALWAYS ENOUGH—WHAT IS?

Depending on the situation, tools like **trusts, holding companies, or living inheritances** may make sense. But none of those tools come into play before you've had a **conversation**—with yourself and your loved ones—about your values, your goals, and your wishes.

A **family meeting** is a great way to bring everyone together. It creates clarity, minimizes surprises, and helps foster stronger relationships. We've helped facilitate many of these meetings, and we're here to support you through the process.

Once you've established a clear framework—what you want to happen, and why—it becomes much easier to structure things legally and efficiently. That's when we engage trusted legal professionals and begin drafting the details of your estate plan.

If you've ever asked yourself:

- What's the tax bill going to be—and how can we reduce it?
- Should I use a notary or a lawyer to draft a will?
- How can I make things easier for my kids?
- Do the kids even want the cabin? Can they manage it together?
- Where do I start—and who can help?

Then it's time to chat. [Book your time here.](#)

This is your opportunity to develop a plan that builds and maintains **both wealth and family harmony** for generations. And if you've been with us a while, you know:

Family is a big deal at Hillside.

HILLSIDE WEALTH MANAGEMENT | FREEDOM | FAMILY | PERFORMANCE



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WHAT STOCKS TO INVEST IN DURING _____?

Steven Chen, CFA®

That's right—the blank is intentional. It's a nod to one of the most common headline tactics in investing commentary today: link your investment advice to the latest macro worry and voilà—instant clicks.

Let's try a recent one:

What Stocks to Invest in During the Trade War?

Well, here's what we'd look for:

1. **Pricing Power & High Margins** - So the company can absorb rising costs and protect profitability.
2. **Long-Term-Focused, Honest Management** - Leaders who adapt quickly and make sound decisions—because some things are simply beyond control.
3. **Market Leadership** – Companies strong enough to gain market share when weaker competitors falter.
4. **A Strong, Conservative Balance Sheet** – To not just survive tough markets, but use them as an opportunity—like buying back stock at a discount.

In short: we look for **high-quality companies**.

Actually, these are the same types of companies we'd invest in no matter what you put in the blank:

- What stocks to invest in during a recession?
- What stocks to invest in during high inflation?
- What stocks to invest in during the Great Resignation?

The truth is, macro events are unpredictable—just like the stock market in the short term. But the good news? **We don't need to predict them.**

Instead, we stay laser-focused on high-quality businesses—those with staying power and resilience—so that your portfolio is built to thrive through cycles, not react to headlines.

Curious what “high-quality companies” look like in your portfolio?

Tune in to our **June 5th Portfolio Update** webinar: [Get your link here.](#)

Or **book a meeting** here: [To learn more.](#)



HILLSIDE WEALTH MANAGEMENT | iA Private Wealth

PORTFOLIO UPDATE

with Hillside Wealth Management

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025
Online Presentation 6:30 - 7:30 pm PT

APRIL 2025 PERFORMANCE RESULTS

An overview of our three portfolios to date.

Performance to April 30, 2025	YTD	6 Mo	1 Yr	3 Yr**	5 Yr**	10 Yr**	Inception**
Hillside Conservative Growth*	0.33%	2.96%	15.29%	10.40%	8.11%	7.54%	7.84%
HCG Benchmark ¹	-0.28%	1.43%	8.76%	5.38%	4.35%	4.10%	4.28%
Hillside Balanced Growth*	-0.21%	2.88%	15.67%	11.81%	10.49%	8.99%	9.87%
HBG Benchmark ²	-1.62%	1.30%	11.65%	8.87%	8.94%	6.51%	6.53%
Hillside Focused Growth*	-0.38%	3.42%	19.42%	16.63%	16.22%	10.14%	10.99%
HFG Benchmark ³	-3.01%	0.80%	13.21%	11.58%	13.10%	8.65%	8.57%

Past performance is not an indication of future returns.

* Performance is presented gross of fees.

**Inception: Sept 2, 2014. Results beyond 1 year are annualized.

¹ Hillside Conservative Growth Benchmark: 100% Vanguard Conservative ETF

² Hillside Balanced Growth Benchmark: 75% Vanguard Balanced ETF & 25% Vanguard All-Equity ETF

³ Hillside Focused Growth Benchmark: 100% Vanguard All-Equity ETF

Source: SIACHarts.com

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Insurance products are provided through iA Private Wealth Insurance Agency which is a trade name of PPI Management Inc. Only products and services offered through iA Private Wealth Inc. are covered by the Canadian Investor Protection Fund.

Hillside Wealth Management is a personal trade name of Michael Preto and Jason Del Vicario.

Performance is calculated using month-end market values of the model portfolio. Since we use a model portfolio to calculate performance there are no client-initiated cash flows (deposits/withdrawals) to account for. Performance is calculated by dividing the change in the model portfolio's market value by the model portfolio's market value at the beginning of the performance period. Also, all income generated by the portfolio's holdings are held within the model portfolio in cash and is accounted for in the portfolio's month-end market value - this results in a total return measure of the model's performance.

Returns for periods less than 1 year are shown as periodic returns while returns for periods greater than 1 year are annualized. Returns do not include fees and actual returns experienced by an investor may differ from those shown. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results.