You Are Your Most Valuable Asset

Imagine walking through a flea market and stumbling upon a small, unassuming machine. No one else recognises its value—but you do. It's a money machine. A remarkable device that can generate a steady income and secure your family's financial future.

What would you do?

You would buy it without hesitation. You would handle it with care, protect it from harm, and insure it against loss or damage.

Now consider this: **you are that machine.**

Your ability to earn an income is the engine that drives your financial life. Yet, unlike our homes and cars—assets we diligently insure against fire, theft, and damage—we often neglect to properly protect the very thing that makes those assets possible: ourselves – **you are that money machine.**

The True Value of Your Income

Let's put this into perspective.

Assume you earn R30,000 per month. That's R360,000 per year. Over a 25-year working career, that equates to **R9 million**—and that's before factoring in salary increases or inflation.

Your income is not just a monthly figure. It's a long-term financial asset of significant value.

Now ask yourself: What happens if that income suddenly stops? Through temporary disability, severe illness, or even death, that reliable stream of income—the one paying your bond, medical aid, school fees, and daily expenses—could disappear overnight.

Without proper planning:

- Medical aid may lapse, leaving you exposed to high healthcare costs
- Your home and vehicle could be repossessed
- Your family may struggle to maintain their standard of living
- Long-term financial goals could collapse

The reality is simple: **without your ability to earn, everything else is at risk.**

VERSO®
WEALTH (PTY) LTD

The Foundation of Every Financial Plan

At the heart of every solid financial plan lies one critical factor: your capacity to generate income.

That income funds your lifestyle, builds your wealth, and supports your family. Yet too often, the risks to that income—such as illness, disability, or premature death—are underestimated or overlooked.

In South Africa, these risks are very real. Claims for critical illness, income protection, and disability have been rising, particularly for conditions like cancer, heart disease, and mental health-related incapacity. These events don't just affect health—they directly impact earning potential and long-term financial stability.

Protecting Your Most Important Asset

Good financial planning is not just about growing wealth—it's about protecting it at its source.

A well-structured plan should include:

- **Medical Cover**
  At minimum, a core medical plan to ensure hospitalisation and major medical events are covered.

- **Life Cover**
  Ensures your family can maintain their lifestyle, cover ongoing expenses, and have access to liquidity while your estate is finalised.

- **Income Protection**
  A critical safeguard that replaces income if illness or injury prevents you from working—especially vital for self-employed individuals.

- **Severe Illness and Disability Cover**
  Provides a lump sum to cover treatment, recovery, lifestyle adjustments, or care needs without eroding long-term investments.

- **Emergency Savings**
  Ideally at least three months' income, offering a buffer against unexpected financial shocks without resorting to debt.

Your Financial Planner's Role

As financial planners, our role extends beyond investments and returns. It is about building a plan around you—the individual.

A meaningful financial plan considers your purpose, your goals, and your responsibilities. It prioritises protecting your ability to earn so that everything else can follow.

Because the strongest financial plans don't start with products or portfolios. **They start with you.** Protect yourself first—everything else depends on it.

To take the conversation further, reach out to your Verso Wealth financial planner today or contact us at info@verso-wealth.co.za to begin that journey.

This article was written by Brigitte Tamine, CFA, CFP®. Brigitte is a Financial Planner at Verso Wealth