



## Saturdays with Jim: A Service For Good

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Have you ever wondered why we do the work we do, how we came to do it and how we have progressed over the years? Today let's use the opening provided by the closing of a calendar year to peer under Gaia's hood.

We asked some of our portfolio companies three questions recently:

- 1) Why are you the CEO of xyz?
- 2) What's in it for you?
- 3) What's your vision for yourself and the company?

Let's pose those questions to ourselves.

#### **Why are you the CEO of Gaia?**

In the 80's, as Yogi Berra might have said, I encountered a fork in the road and I took it. I began my professional work doing financial planning, providing investments and insurance where needed. That work never really took off. Only the very rich seem to be motivated to put in place the recommendations of a financial planner. Others were too busy, too short-sighted, too whatever. I discovered group health insurance and this part of the business really took off. I seemed to have the skill set needed to solve problems for people and companies. The investment business continued. I retained my first financial planning/investment client throughout the 80's and into the 90's. She, along with the few other investment clients I had, graciously assented to move with me from commission to fees - I broke away from the broker side of the business and founded what would become Gaia Capital Management, Inc. The health insurance business continued, under an employee, but it never attained the level when I left it. I sold the business last year, retaining a partial interest. Since 1994, Gaia has grown, concomitant with my interest in helping people achieve financial security and to improve their life quality. In 2005 it became apparent that our society would soon be dotted with millions of retirees and that investing for retirement income was a needed service. Besides, many of Gaia's clients would retire within the next few years and I wanted to provide the best service I could. In short, I am the CEO of Gaia because I founded the firm, but there is more - a lot more - to the story. If we were not doing a

valuable service in at least a journeyman way, the business would have failed long ago.

**What's in it for you?**

This work is the most rewarding in my entire work life spanning some 30 years. The seemingly strategic decision to provide investment income for clients has become a life's mission. I feel that I have found the "Holy Grail of Investing" in this income work. I find it incredibly rewarding to help people of seemingly modest means to stretch their savings dollars so that they may live at a higher level. What about people of less modest means? I am pleased to provide honest and, hopefully, capable investment work for people of means. The world is full of shysters and crooks and people of means are their prey. Gaia's work allows me to express my concern for others' welfare in a concrete way through the provision of income. It is a truly heart-warming experience to know that my work can make such a difference in people's lives.

**What is your vision of Gaia?**

I want Gaia to be the best it can be at navigating the investment world to bring solid income to clients - high, secure and growing income. Our work provides from about 20% to 80% of clients' income and, as such, my goal for Gaia is to provide our clients with a good night's sleep, secure in the knowledge that we are on the job for them. I believe that we have found our niche. I just want to do this work with ever increasing proficiency, helping as many people as we encounter.

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