

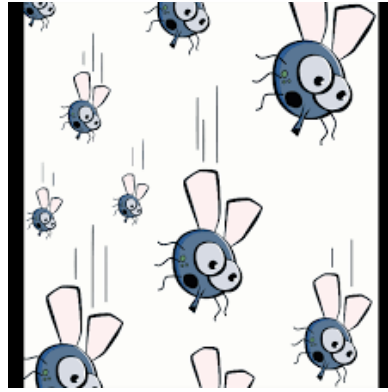
RETIREMENT PLANS THAT “CLEARLY” WORK FOR YOU.



Prizant Group



DROPPING LIKE FLIES:Falling down ill or dead in large numbers.



The origin of this phrase isn't known. It is clearly a simple allusion to the transitory and fragile nature of an insect's life. It is known from around the turn of the 20th century. The earliest printed version I have found is in The Atlanta Constitution newspaper, May 1902:

"I saw men and women rushing back and forth within the flames. They would run along, then came the choking smoke and they would drop like dead flies." In the early 19th century the Brothers Grimm's published 'The Brave Little Tailor', which is a cautionary fable of a child who easily and thoughtlessly kills numerous flies. It seems that they chose flies as being synonymous with something even a child could kill with little effort. The phrase doesn't appear in that text.

The Fly-Golblum



Over the past few years, my relatives, friends, business associates and acquaintances have been "**Dropping Like Flies.**" One would think all these deaths were COVID related, but the **BIG C** has been the ultimate culprit. Whether blood, kidney, liver, skin, brain, breast, ovarian, lung, pancreatic, or prostate; the end result has been an early departure from this earth. These were people who had access to the best oncologists, hospitals and state-of-the-art treatments. Nonetheless, they went quickly downhill and many died within a year of their diagnosis. We all know that "**We All Go Out Feet First,**" but there

is certainly nothing wrong with cheating death and buying more **"Upright Time."** Even though particular cancers are now considered "chronic," overall the ravages of the disease in its many forms are tragic and unrelentingly painful. My guess is there are few citizens of the world who has not come into contact personally or within a few degrees of separation of this horrendous disease. However, leave it to Hollywood (who else can take tragedy and make it funny?) to create a dark comedy about a person with cancer, [Big C](#) Though I must admit that The Big C storyline, cast, and Laura Linney were excellent, in terms of cancer deaths, Historically, the film industry produced **"tear jerker movies"** the likes of "Terms of Endearment" [Terms](#) and "Love Story." [Love](#) We all know the grim reality. What has been a quandary in my mind is the apparent inability, after all these years of research funded by billions upon billions of dollars, for medical science to find a cure (with the understanding that there are thousands of forms of cancer with each have their own insidious attacks on the human body. The good news is that survival rates continue to increase and there is much hope on the horizon. [2020 Cancer Expenditures](#)
[Survival Rates](#)

Due to my cynical bent (does the medical-industrial complex **REALLY** want to **CURE CANCER.**), I was wondering how big the "Cancer Business" might be. Just in my travels around Chicagoland, I see major additions for the cancer institutes of area hospitals and clinics. With that in mind, I found the article below to be quite illuminating:

[The Multi-Billion-Dollar Business Behind Cancer: Why Is it a Commodity?](#)

[December 5, 2021](#)

[Khevin Barnes](#)

[A male breast cancer survivor takes a critical look at the confusing marketing campaigns that surround his disease.](#)

[Like it or not, surviving cancer is a multi-billion-dollar business. Sometimes it feels like I'm being shuffled between combative pharmaceutical companies and competing cancer camps. In 2021, oncology spending is expected to be around 187 billion U.S. dollars worldwide, according to a market and consumer report. Turn on your TV for a few minutes and the onslaught of pharmacological advertisements will pummel you with visions of active and upbeat people whose happy lives are attributed to ingesting a drug of some sort.](#)

[But it's not just the drug makers who are competing for my attention. Hospitals and doctors are vying for my business too. The American Medical Association \(AMA\) has created a "Code of Medical Ethics" for physicians to follow, and in it they state that "there are no restrictions on advertising by physicians except](#)

those that can be specifically justified to protect the public from deceptive practices.”

So, our oncologists can advertise themselves through any commercial publicity or other form of public communication. This seems like a reasonable policy except for the fact that, according to the AMA, “the public can sometimes be deceived by the use of medical terms or illustrations that are difficult to understand.”

Let me site an example from my own experience. For 50 years I have made my living as a professional stage magician. Magical entertainment, though a rather unusual vocation, is a very competitive business. In this case, I have become the commodity. I am in the business of selling myself, and I have an ethical obligation to represent my work honestly. But the truth is, nobody checks.

For those of us with cancer in our lives, the task at hand is to find and recruit the cancer experts that can reliably assist us in our mission to be healed and possibly cured; and the urgency of our quest doesn't often permit a methodical search. When you are newly diagnosed with cancer, days matter.

So what can we do?

In my case, it was important for me to learn as much as I could about male breast cancer in the shortest amount of time. I was living in Hawaii temporarily at the time with no established primary care physician and health insurance that was only a month old. Within 30 days of my diagnosis, I was in surgery to remove my left breast, so that didn't leave me a lot of time. The internet provided my only link to information, since little was known about how to treat breast cancer in men. In fact, male breast cancer is so rare that it took five years before I met face to face with another man with my disease.

So it's imperative that we research our own particular form of cancer before launching a routine to save our lives. As daunting as it may seem, it's up to us to advocate for ourselves – to read the fine print on those drugs we ingest and to ask lots of questions of those whom we enlist to help in our survival. I'm not suggesting that drug makers and doctors deliberately exaggerate their products or inflate their achievements but learning to read through the hyperbole is often difficult, especially when you are working diligently at beating cancer.

A few years back I spent a week as a student and participant in a program called “Project LEAD,” the National Breast Cancer Coalition's science training program for activists in the world of breast cancer research and public policy. We spent many hours each day studying and learning to interpret clinical trials.

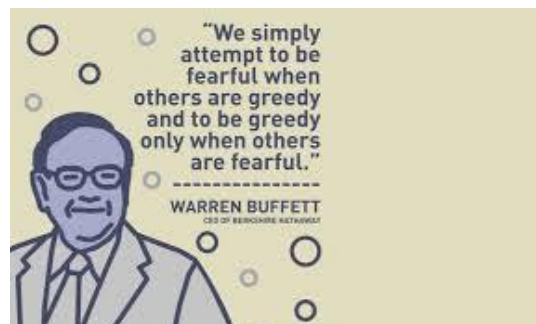
If you think understanding the fine print on your medicine bottle is difficult, try interpreting a clinical trial of the drugs you are taking. This is where we need to enlist the help of others.

Cancer support groups are a great resource for many of us. First person, experiential stories from fellow survivors is an important tool, though people react differently given identical drugs. And following reliable sources of cancer information is a valuable means of collecting information. Right now you're reading this story in CURE®, one of my own trusted sources for the very latest in scientific and medical advancements for patients like me, along with many personal essays and stories by survivors.

At the end of the day, cancer is not without conflict. If you're a patient or survivor dealing with constant corporate controversy or bothersome bureaucratic battles, you are not alone. This is one area that seems to connect all of us. And it's that very connection that unites us, because despite all of its varieties and forms, there really is just "one" cancer. It's the one each of us has.

[Cancer Business](#)

[Knocking on Heaven's Door](#)



My primary focus in the retirement plan space is education. It is no easy task as talking about ERISA and investment options can seem quite alien to most folks. I made a decision a few years ago to tailor my investment education to each individual participant instead of using the "**Blanket Approach.**" I find that it just makes more sense than drivel on about the different styles of investing, difference between active and passive, and the dreadful discussion of bond selection. Nonetheless, there are some basic tenets that all retirement plan participants would be wise to follow. With that in mind, I present the article below which does a much better job than I could ever do.

Warren Buffett is worth about \$100 billion, and he built that wealth through investing. Understandably, many investors watch his every move and mimic his strategies.

Tracking Buffett's trades can be intimidating, though. He has billions to work with, while you might have hundreds or thousands of dollars.

Still, it's probably easier than you'd think to invest like Buffett, albeit on a smaller scale. If you have access to a 401(k) and a budget for retirement contributions, you're already set up for success.

Your 401(k) is meant for buy-and-hold investing

Buffett is a practitioner of buy-and-hold investing. That means he likes buying companies that are positioned to perform well over the long term, despite whatever economic crises might lie ahead. Usually these are established, domestic companies with strong balance sheets, enduring competitive advantages, and predictable cash flows.

Two characteristics of your 401(k) encourage you to practice the buy-and-hold approach: withdrawal restrictions and access to quality, large-cap funds.

1. 401(k) withdrawal restrictions

You might get access to your first 401(k) in your 20s. And thanks to early-withdrawal penalties, you shouldn't touch those funds until your mid-50s or later. That gives you an investment holding period of at least 30 years.

In reality, you probably won't liquidate your entire portfolio the day you retire. You will likely hold some of your investments until even later in life -- which could be 50 or 60 years from your first 401(k) contribution.

When you can measure your holding period in decades, buy-and-hold investing has the lowest risk and is the most reliable approach. This is because you can stay invested through downturns, which minimizes realized losses.

2. Quality, large-cap funds

Your 401(k) probably offers you a vetted selection of funds for investing. Some 401(k) investment menus are better than others, but all will offer some form of a domestic large-cap fund. A popular choice in this category is an S&P 500 index fund. This is also a fund type that fits right into Buffett's investing style.

S&P 500 funds hold the 500 largest and most established companies in the U.S. stock market. They're not all individually Buffett stock picks, but they cumulatively represent the best of American business. And Buffett is bullish on American business, once recommending investors "never bet against America."

He has also specifically endorsed low-cost S&P 500 funds as a core holding for individual investors.

Keep investing for best results

To implement your Buffett 401(k) strategy, set your investment selections to include an S&P 500 index fund or a similar large-cap fund. For diversity, you might add a small allocation to a government bond fund also. Then, increase your contribution rate now if you can or later when you get a raise.

[Buffet](#)

We, at [The Prizant Group](#), understand the investment concept of "**Fear and Greed.**" Emotional decision making on any level has a tendency to result in poor outcomes. Investing is no different and we advise our retirement plan participants to "temper their emotions" and think about the long-term benefits of maintaining a steady course. There will be times when you want to "**spit up your lunch**" over the machinations in the equity and bond markets. Alas, a little Dramamine and a few Pepto Bismol chewables will settle your innards down. And as we enter the Fall Season and another Summer goes by the wayside, I will end with "Summertime" by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong.

[Summertime](#)

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