ALTIUS FINANCIAL

EMPOWERED FUTURE REPORT

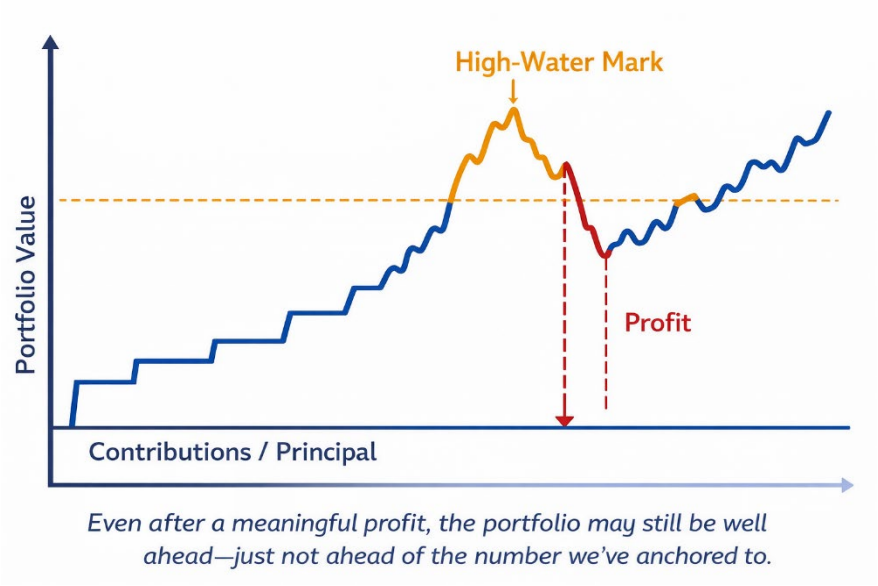
SHORT-TERM THOUGHTS ABOUT LONG-TERM MATTERS

April 2, 2026

When the High-Water Mark Becomes the Trap

In our recent *Capitalize Your Fridays* podcast, Taylor and I discussed a simple but powerful investing problem: once people see a new high in their portfolio, that number quietly becomes the new emotional baseline. Then a normal pullback starts to feel like something is wrong—even when the portfolio may still be well above what was actually invested in the first place.

That disconnect is where trouble starts.



Even after a meaningful profit, the portfolio may still be well ahead—just not ahead of the number we've anchored to.

We anchor to the peak. We mentally "own" it. And when markets inevitably pull back—as they always do—the decline feels like a real loss, even if the long-term progress remains intact. The chart here illustrates this dynamic: a rising portfolio, a clear high-water mark, and then a meaningful drop that feels worse than it actually is because of where we're measuring from. That would be challenging enough but today, the backdrop makes it more difficult.

The inflation chart below is hard to ignore. I'm not suggesting we are reliving the late 1970s. History doesn't repeat that neatly. But the resemblance is close enough to make a serious point: inflation can…

Quote of the Day:

"Maybe history doesn't repeat itself…but it sure does seem to rhyme a lot."

– Mark Twain

2026 EVENTS

June 9 – Q2 Workshop

July 9 – Client Appreciation Event

Sept 2 – Q3 Workshop

Nov 17 – Q4 Workshop

Dec 3 – Holiday Party

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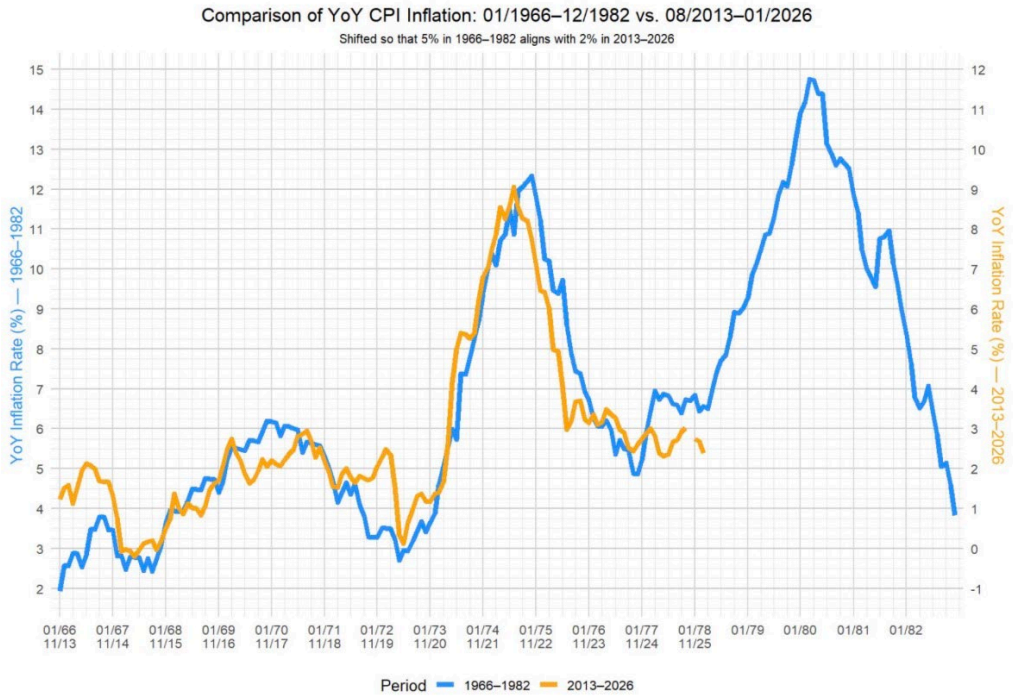
be persistent, uneven, and frustratingly slow to resolve. It doesn't glide back to target just because we expect it to.

Then there is oil.

The Strait of Hormuz remains one of the most critical chokepoints in the global economy. A meaningful portion of the world's oil supply flows through it every day, and there are limited alternatives if it becomes impaired. Markets are well aware of this, which is why oil has reacted sharply to recent developments. The real risk is not just the initial shock—it's the possibility that the strait does not reopen as quickly or as smoothly as many would hope.



If that happens, inflation pressures could reassert themselves quickly. And that brings us back to investing.

One of the biggest mistakes investors make is expecting long-term returns to arrive in a smooth, predictable pattern. They don't. Equity markets are constantly repricing expectations—growth, inflation, interest rates, geopolitical risk. That means even a good portfolio will feel uncomfortable at times. Especially after it has just felt great.

That's when the high-water mark becomes the trap. After a strong run, expectations quietly reset. A normal pullback feels like failure. And investors begin asking the wrong question—not "Am I on track?" but "Why am I below where I was a few weeks ago?" Those are not the same thing.

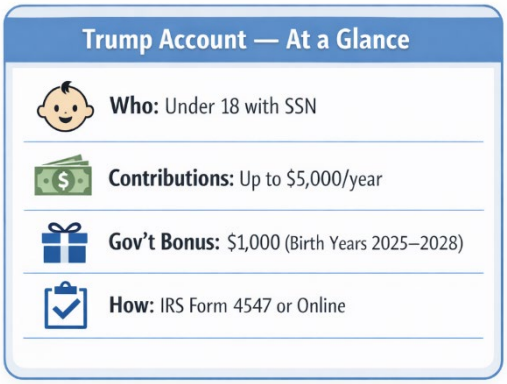
A sound portfolio is not one that avoids volatility. It's one built to endure it—aligned with your goals, your time horizon, and a realistic understanding of how markets behave. In periods like this, with inflation uncertainty and real geopolitical risk, that perspective isn't just helpful. It's essential.

Taylor's Take: A Beautiful Account

I imagine many of you are already wondering when, why, and how to take advantage of the newest savings vehicle for the next generation: the “Trump Account.”

Like most things these days, the name alone tends to spark a reaction—some positive, some not so much. But as w ith any financial planning decision, our focus should be on the strategy and usefulness of the account itself, not who it’s named after. After all, this isn’t the first time a name has been attached to a savings vehicle (Roth, Coverdell, Keogh, Archer…), it likely won’t be the last.

Here are the key facts:



Who is eligible? Children under age 18 with a U.S. Social Security Number.

How much can be contributed? Parents, family members, and friends can contribute up to $5,000 annually. Employers may also contribute up to $2,500, which counts toward that $5,000 limit. Government and charitable contributions do not count toward the annual maximum.

Who receives the $1,000 government contribution? Children born between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2028.

How do you sign up? Accounts can be opened through IRS Form 4547 as part of your tax filing, or directly at: https://trumpaccounts.gov/

Check out our podcast for our upcoming episode on Trump Accounts including Taylor's experience with signing up for one or if you're looking for more details check out our Trump Accounts Explained page. As always, if you’re considering using this as part of a broader strategy for your family, we’re happy to help think through where it fits—and where it may not.

Jenn’s Jangle: Where Are My Tax Forms?

If you're wondering where your tax forms are , it can depend on your specific accounts. Not every account receives a 1099. Schwab only issues one if certain thresholds are met—generally at least $10 in dividends, interest, royalties, or OID income, or if there’s a reportable transaction like a sale. If none of those apply, you won’t receive a 1099 for 2025.

Corrected 1099s are only issued if changes meet IRS thresholds, such as a change of more than $100 to a reportable item, more than $25 in backup withholding, or any change related to a covered security on Form 1099-B. Smaller adjustments typically don’t trigger a corrected form under de minimis rules. Corrected forms are updated weekly from March through April 15, then monthly after that (for up to three years). Updates like cost basis changes must be submitted before a production date to be included, and any requests made after a run will be reflected in the next cycle. Also, if you hold investments that issue K-1s (like certain partnerships), those forms often arrive later in the season, which can delay final tax reporting. If you’re unsure whether to expect a form, or a correction, just reach out. We’re here to help!

The Road to Independence

As we count down to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America, ALTIUS is exploring freedom-inspired ideas in our **Road to Independence** campaign. In this spirit, we've curated a list of works to Read & Watch, enriching the connections between our nation's independence and one's financial freedom. Check out the Read & Watch list here!

Join us! Stay up-to-date with our list, as we will be adding various works each month. **Mark your calendars for our Client Appreciation Party on July 9th *Date changed. What a fitting month to see you all and discuss how Freedom = Financial Freedom!**

Road to Independence Movie Rec: Ratatouille

by Krescent Williams

Anyone can cook. Anyone can cook? Yes, anyone. At first glance, Ratatouille seems far removed from the American story. It's set in Paris, centered on French cuisine, and follows a rat with an improbable dream… only made by American filmmakers and animators. But beneath its setting, the film captures something deeply aligned with the American ideal: the belief that talent, effort, and vision (not background) should determine one's path.

The core message, drawn from Chef Gusteau's mantra, "Anyone can cook," echoes the same spirit found in the Declaration of Independence, that individuals are not defined by where they come from, but by what they are capable of becoming. You've probably seen this movie already, but I urge you to watch it again in a new light. A Freedom = Financial Freedom light.

Remy, our murine protagonist, embodies this idea of the American Dream. He is born into circumstances that should make his dream impossible, and yet he refuses to accept those limitations. That refusal is central to the American ethos: the rejection of predetermined roles. The film also explores merit over status. In a rigid culinary world that values pedigree and hierarchy, Remy succeeds not because he belongs, but because he is excellent. This reflects a key aspiration of American freedom, not just equality of opportunity, but the chance for true ability to rise, even when it disrupts established systems.

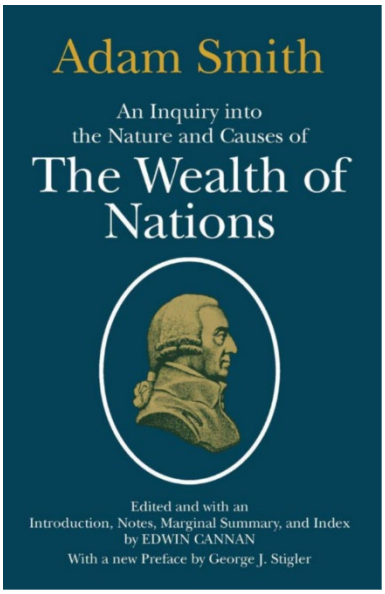
Perhaps most powerfully, "Ratatouille" challenges elitism. The critic Anton Ego, initially the gatekeeper of taste and authority, ultimately recognizes that greatness can come from anywhere. His transformation mirrors a broader democratic principle: that truth and value are not confined to institutions or experts, but can emerge from unexpected places.

In that sense, "Ratatouille" is not just a story about cooking or a Parisien rat. It's about the freedom that comes from a lack of needing permission. Ratatouille suggests that waiting for approval is often the very thing that limits human potential. The American ideal, at its best, does not require permission, it invites initiative. The initiative to pursue your own dreams no matter your limitations. And the freedom that comes from initiative is the greatest predictor of your financial freedom.

Ultimately, "Ratatouille" makes a quiet but compelling case: a truly free society is one where excellence is allowed to emerge from anywhere, even the most unlikely places. And when it does, it is recognized, not because of who created it, but because it is undeniably good. Thus, when you see Freedom = Financial Freedom on our Road to Independence page, hear "Anyone can cook."

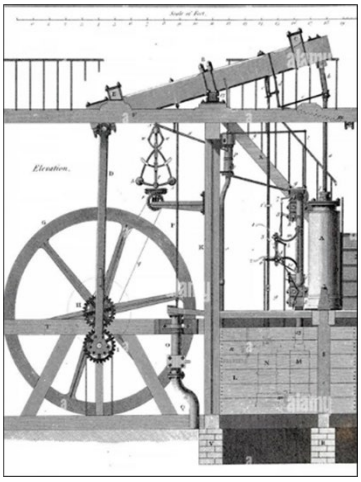
250 Years Later: More Than a Revolution

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence this year, I'm reflecting each month on the enduring spirit of liberty that drove real people to risk everything—not the slogans or stagecraft we often see today, but as a lived commitment to self-determination, dignity, and financial freedom. That same spirit continues to shape our values and the work we do at ALTIUS.



As we continue reflecting on the road to July 4, 1776, it is worth remembering that the American Revolution was about more than battles, troop movements, and separation from Britain. Important as those were, 1776 also marked part of a much larger turning point in human history.

That same year gave us the Declaration of Independence, Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, and James Watt's steam engine breakthrough. That convergence matters. It reminds us that freedom is not merely political. It is also economic, technological, and deeply practical.



For most of history, poverty, scarcity, and hard living were the norm. What began to change was not just a new nation, but a world in which people were increasingly freer to think, produce, trade, invent, and build. In that sense, 1776 points to something bigger than independence alone. It points to the conditions that made widespread prosperity possible.

That broader lesson still matters to us at ALTIUS. Financial freedom is not just about reaching a number. It is about expanding choice, resilience, and independence in one's own life. Wealth, properly understood, is a tool for living more deliberately and more freely.

As we approach America's 250th birthday, that is a story worth revisiting. In fact, it has become one of my favorite talks to give recently. If your group, organization, or circle of friends would enjoy a fresh look at the deeper connection between freedom and prosperity, I'd be glad to continue the conversation.

Freedom begins with ownership—of your choices, your money, and your future.

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