

FINAL TRANSCRIPT – GTH – S4, E3- Wealth Management: Growing, Preserving & Protecting Wealth

Guests:

Kristen Bitterly, Head of Investment Solutions for Citi Wealth

Andy Sieg, Head of Citi Wealth

Full Transcript:

Jorian Murray ([00:01](#)):

Hello, I'm Jorian Murray and welcome to Good Things Happen, the show that invites change makers and enablers to share their inspiring stories of progress. Whilst change can be uncomfortable, unexpected, and at times disruptive, it's inevitable and more often than not, changes for good. We'll be hearing from people from all walks of life who have been at the forefront of change, including their journeys to get there and their motivations, because when people work together [00:00:30] for a common cause, good things happen.

Andy Sieg ([00:34](#)):

This is an extraordinary time in global history. Over the next 10 years, the projection is there'll be a hundred trillion dollars of new wealth creation that happens around the world.

Kristen Bitterly ([00:44](#)):

I think the secret sauce to Citi is this idea that we have this global reach and presence, but we have an ability to make it feel personalised and local.

Andy Sieg ([00:53](#)):

This is a moment unlike any other, and that has to make you optimistic.

Jorian Murray ([01:00](#)):

[00:01:00] Today in Good Things Happen, we are exploring wealth. The term wealth derives from weal and health originally meaning happiness and prosperity and abundance in Old English. More specifically, we'll be discussing the management of wealth with two of Citi's leaders responsible for preserving, protecting, and growing their client's wealth. Andy Sieg is global head of wealth, having [00:01:30] rejoined Citi last September 2023, and Kristen Bitterly is head of Investment Solutions in Andy's Global Wealth Team. Before we learn about the changing world of managing wealth, let's hear how our guests came to do what they're now doing. Andy, did you as a little boy have a long-held ambition to become head of happiness and prosperity and abundance one day?

Andy Sieg ([01:54](#)):

I certainly did not. Unfortunately, when I was young, whenever I got [00:02:00] the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I never had a very good answer. And so if there's anything that led me in this direction, it was a long-held desire to keep learning and try new things. And that pathway eventually led to here.

Jorian Murray ([02:16](#)):

Give us a little more detail. What did you study and what was your first job? What brought you to Wall Street?

Andy Sieg ([02:24](#)):

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As an undergraduate, I studied economics and was interested in particular public [00:02:30] policy, and that interest led me to go to graduate school at the Harvard Kennedy School. And then my first job actually was working in the Bush 41 White House as a young staffer in the Economic and Domestic Policy Office. The election in 1992 threw out the Bush crowd and brought in the Clinton crowd, so I needed to find a real job, so to speak, and that caused me through an interview [00:03:00] to get a role at Merrill Lynch, and I was a young strategy analyst at Merrill Lynch focused on where this world of financial services and the public policy world comes together and what that would mean for product development and advice to clients on topics like taxes and the like.

Jorian Murray (03:19):

We'll dig a little deeper into that in just a minute. Kristen, tell me, were you a mathematical prodigy?

Kristen Bitterly (03:27):

I'm not sure I was a prodigy in anything, but [00:03:30] I'm from a medical family. My dad was a doctor, my mom was a nurse, and so I think my first ambition was probably to be a doctor. I then pivoted into trying to do anything international, and so I thought I was going to work for the State Department. I actually worked for George W. Bush in the US Embassy in Madrid for a period of time. So I thought I was going to go in that direction, and ultimately I was lucky.

(03:58):

Senior year of college, [00:04:00] I applied to a number of different job opportunities, and there was a programme back in the day that was started by First Chicago that specifically targeted liberal arts majors, and they thought if we could take liberal arts majors and complement their acumen with an MBA and more technical knowledge, that could be a great training ground for finance. And so I applied, I got the job, I was like, "Hey, I get to get a master's in the process [00:04:30] and we'll see where this takes me." And so that was the beginning of my career in finance.

Jorian Murray (04:34):

So let's understand a little more about what you both do. Andy, you have a pretty awesome title, Global Head of Wealth. I mean, I just imagine you with rings and gold chains, but clearly it's not that. Tell me about your job. What do you do?

Andy Sieg (04:52):

Well, the gold chains are an interesting idea, so we're going to have to think about that. We frame this business head of wealth, [00:05:00] I think, and really Jane gets credit, to try to expand our horizons in terms of how do we think about a space that traditionally was fairly narrowly defined, investment advice, advice around lending and banking by broadening it and talking about head of wealth. What I think it prompts people to think about is everything from hey, wealth creation and the role that Citi as a company plays in terms of wealth creation that's [00:05:30] taking place around the world.

(05:31):

Of course, between the lines of wealth management, how do you build investment portfolios, borrow money most effectively? How do you handle your day-to-day banking needs in a way that's convenient and easy for you and your family? And then beyond that, what ultimately is the impact of wealth and what's it mean for your family? What's it mean for your community? And when you're interacting with some of the clients we do around the world, what's [00:06:00] it mean more broadly in terms of society

and how does the world look at this really miraculous growth of wealth that's happening worldwide as something that is definitely a force for good?

Jorian Murray ([06:14](#)):

I'm excited to hear more. Kristen, Investment Solutions. Give us an overview for those who might be uninformed about it.

Kristen Bitterly ([06:24](#)):

Sure. I have actually an incredible and amazing role. Leading Investment Solutions [00:06:30] here at Citi Global Wealth, essentially the way to think about it is we're taking our advice and putting it into action across investment solutions. So if you think of the different roles within a wealth management organisation, you could, and again, I'm massively simplifying, but you could think of a couple of different buckets. So the first being relationship management, so responsible for direct client coverage, developing that relationship, really understanding the client and their goals and what they hope to achieve. [00:07:00] Because I think the other part of wealth management is that it's really personal, so getting into what is someone's plan? What are their goals? What are their aspirations? Then the second bucket would be our research and advice. What are our house views? How are we advising clients? How are we helping them to navigate market conditions and economic conditions?

([07:21](#)):

And then the third piece is the implementation. So how are we implementing these views and actually helping our clients achieve their goals? So when you [00:07:30] think of massive trends that we're experiencing, we talk a lot about longevity and the fact that life expectancy is much longer than it was. And with all of the innovation that we have, I think there's some pretty scary stats out there about my children and how long they will live. And then you think about your wealth journey and what is required to have a fulfilling safe life. [00:08:00] And so these investment solutions, that's exactly what they do. And so we help our clients invest across public markets and private markets. We combine best in class strategies that are unique to Citi, as well as recognising that no one has a monopoly on good ideas or best in class performance. So we actually get to partner with some incredible asset managers from around the world to bring unique investment opportunities to our clients. And so this [00:08:30] is across insurance, markets, diversified portfolios, and alternatives.

Jorian Murray ([08:36](#)):

Andy, you are I think it's described as a boomerang. You've come back to Citi. Is a banker banker bank? Or culturally are they very different places? And what have you witnessed on return to Citi? What makes Citi special?

Andy Sieg ([08:50](#)):

Hey, such a great question. I think organisations have a DNA, it's very distinct from the balance sheet and [00:09:00] the profit and loss. Jane talks about this as a bank with a soul, and I think that there's aspects of Citi that are very, very unique. This is an organisation, of course, that's global at its very core, it has a degree of collaboration and teamwork that I think stands out. This is a bank that when we hear from clients how they interact with us, [00:09:30] frequently they speak to a degree of care, a sense that we have their best interests front of mind, which is candidly not the way that many financial institutions are described.

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Jorian Murray ([09:43](#)):

Kristen, we hear about the Magnificent Seven investment vehicles dominating the world, but does Citi's global perspective, does that give you an advantage when you're looking at Citi from an investment point of view? How does that [00:10:00] change things?

Kristen Bitterly ([10:01](#)):

Absolutely. I think to be able to have boots on the ground I think in these major, major locations like Hong Kong and Singapore and London and the Middle East and Latin America, I think actually, we kicked off this year with our Outlook 2024, and this is something that we do every single year. I think the secret sauce to Citi is this idea that we have this global reach and presence, but we have [00:10:30] an ability to make it feel personalised and local. I think one of the trends in wealth management that is really, really critical is, do you understand me? Do you understand the local conditions that I'm living through? Do you understand the political conditions? And so this ability not only to access our colleagues within wealth, but we talk a lot about one Citi and what that means. It's really creating this interconnectivity across all of our businesses, whether that's banking markets, TTS, [00:11:00] and really bringing that to our clients.

([11:03](#)):

So a great example is it is not uncommon for us to have an original relationship, let's say, out of Hong Kong or Singapore, and then their children go to college in the United States, build a life here, and then they're thinking about different types of acquisitions within their personal business that could be in Latin America or Europe. And so I think Citi because of not only our presence in wealth, but because of [00:11:30] our presence across all of those lines of business really creates this unique opportunity to be global, but make it local and make it personal.

Jorian Murray ([11:41](#)):

Andy, I think it must be around about six months you're into the role. I also know, because I've done a little bit of research that Global Wealth is a relatively new within Citi. Tell us about how you've approached the job and what's your perspective on where [00:12:00] you are and where you see the future?

Andy Sieg ([12:03](#)):

Well, it's a relatively new part of the architecture of Citi, but build with business units that have existed for quite a long time and have a very storied history. And so the thing that's very exciting is we brought different business lines together, our private bank, our Citi Gold businesses, which are wealth management offerings, which are intertwined with Citibank in the US [00:12:30] and several other markets and a business where we provide wealth advice in the workplace, which we call Wealth at Work. We brought these together and created one integrated wealth business, which is helping us really raise our aspirations in terms of how we're a major player in the global wealth marketplace. From our perspective, by bringing these groups together, you really see just how powerful the ingredients are that we have to work with. [00:13:00] In the Citi brand, we have a calling card that opens doors around the world, unlike any brand.

([13:06](#)):

And in wealth management certainly, a big part of winning in wealth management is being able to access the type of clients that you want to be working with. And this organisation enables you to do that in amazing ways. We have an incredible client franchise across these businesses and around the world,

which is we look at it collectively, you realise there's so many different dimensions [00:13:30] of wealth and ways into opportunities that by bringing these businesses together, we're sort of one plus one is equaling four in terms of what's possible. And then we've got products and services. Kris has been talking about investments, but in lending areas, in our banking capabilities, in our research teams, in our ability to provide trust and estate and wealth structuring advice that when you bring all this together, you've got a core set of capabilities.

Jorian Murray ([13:59](#)):

Kristen, it [00:14:00] is almost a cliché that the world is changing an incredible rate and it seems to be speeding up. Tell us the impact of all of the technological changes, cultural changes on the world that you operate in. How is it changing investments?

Kristen Bitterly ([14:18](#)):

So the first, which I think is amazing, is access to investment solutions. So you can think of this as everything from online trading, reduced commissions in trading, [00:14:30] and you just think of the number of people that have actually come into the market because of that. It is now what was once, just think about that, equity trading, bond trading, this was not something that was massively democratised. I think all of the digital innovation that we've even seen over the past 10, 20 years in product innovation to bring products to a bigger set of eligible investors I think is really critical. We're now seeing that in alternatives. And so when we think about strategic return [00:15:00] estimates, which effectively what those are is just saying, "Instead of an anticipated return for one single year, what are we seeing? What are we anticipating over the next decade? What is going to drive returns?"

([15:12](#)):

And when you think about a lot of these long-term secular growth trends, a lot of them start in alternatives. They start in venture, they build into private equity. And the idea that now where we're creating opportunities for more investors to have access and be able to use them as [00:15:30] part of a portfolio construction tool, coming full circle to what I said earlier about we're living longer so our money has to work harder for us and better for us. So I think the product innovation, the access has been incredible.

([15:45](#)):

I also think there's an element as to it's changed our interactions and what people demand of human interactions versus technology. So this is a very simple example, but I think it really hits on this point, is [00:16:00] that if I'm ordering a pizza and I go on any of the apps that you're able to order food on and my favourite pizza place is for some reason not available, I most likely am not going to call them, I'm going to go to the next pizza place online just to have a pizza easily delivered to my house and not have to speak to anyone because the value of speaking to someone in that interaction all of a sudden has been completely diminished.

([16:27](#)):

And so I think the same thing is true. [00:16:30] Imagine equity trading and having online access to equity trading, that's something that people want to be able to do on an aeroplane because all of a sudden they have peace of mind. They can sit and say, "Oh, I forgot to sell shares of XYZ stock." So I think what a lot of the innovation is forcing us to do, and even with the rise of AI and GenAI is saying, "All right, it's redefining what used to be always a high touch white glove service kind of hand-on hand combat [00:17:00] in terms of how we service our clients to recognising that there are interactions that our clients want where it's table stakes to be able to do it digitally."

[\(17:09\)](#):

They want a seamless digital experience to be able to do that. And then there's interactions where it's about planning and advice and breaking down complex markets or adding alternatives to your portfolio and understanding the best way of doing that. I think those educational experiences and where I need an expert, where I need that human [00:17:30] interaction, where I feel like I'm learning and benefiting from that. And so we will always be, I think, advisor-led business, but technology is enabling a lot and we have to go through those trends and recognise what used to be something that someone wanted to talk to someone about. Chances are it almost becomes a nuisance.

Jorian Murray [\(17:51\)](#):

Andy, you're nodding enthusiastically.

Andy Sieg [\(17:53\)](#):

Can I for the record say that if my favourite pizza is not available online, I'm driving there. I [00:18:00] just want to put that out.

Jorian Murray [\(18:03\)](#):

Note self, very particular about pizza.

Kristen Bitterly [\(18:06\)](#):

He's like, "I am loyal."

Jorian Murray [\(18:10\)](#):

Andy, you were nodding furiously to Kristen when she was speaking. Same question to you about changes, changes you've experienced. Are you optimistic about change? But also an added question from what she was saying, how do you strike that balance between building relationships but also [00:18:30] being easy to work with and intuitive to work with?

Andy Sieg [\(18:35\)](#):

First of all, I'm unbelievably optimistic and bullish. This is an extraordinary time in global history. I mean, over the next 10 years, the projection is there'll be a hundred trillion dollars of new wealth creation that happens around the world. And just to be clear, that's not money moving from point A to point B, one pocket to another. That's new wealth being [00:19:00] created through the magic of human ingenuity, free markets, the impact of great ideas and capital and talent coming together. And so this is a moment unlike any other, and that has to make you optimistic. There's changes. Kris talked about technology, she referred to demographics earlier. Regulatory landscapes are changing, so economies and markets are working in new ways. [00:19:30] All of these are creating opportunity. They're also causing clients to confront new challenges, have new problems to solve, have new vistas that they now think are possible.

[\(19:43\)](#):

And so in that the role of an advisor becomes central and we all live our lives just one time. So on so many of these really profound topics that come up along our life journey, you want to be able to interact with somebody [00:20:00] who's been around that corner before or can help you see over the horizon. On specifically on technology and all joking aside, the way that friction's being taken out of our

lives and in all categories that we expect, immediacy and responsiveness, that for many years has been thought to be a threat to the role that traditional advisors would play.

(20:25):

We see it very differently. I mean, technology's creating ways for [00:20:30] clients to access the advice that they're looking for in a way that it's available 24 by seven increasingly that collaboration becomes even more natural and easy. And so there's never an either or between the role technology is going to play in this business and the role that good old-fashioned human advisors are going to play. How do all these kind of capabilities come together and deliver what clients [00:21:00] really care about, which is the set of ideas and interactions that help them make the most of their lives?

Jorian Murray (21:08):

Kristen, are new generations caring about different things?

Kristen Bitterly (21:12):

I think the overarching theme is actually this idea of being able to deliver what feels and is personalized investments advice and also portfolio allocations. There's this thought process that it's only [00:21:30] the young generation, only young people care about this. That's certainly not true. So when we think of the inquiries that we get about energy transition and how to think about energy transition and what's that going to look like, how long is it going to take climate change. That's another thing that investors want to understand, the impact, how they can help, but also how they can finance that transition. And so I think [00:22:00] it actually spans across its multi-generational in nature. I do think this element though of being able to deliver bespoke solutions at scale then can take it down to a level of we have investors who are looking at the UN Sustainable Development goals and are really specific about the themes that they want to participate in.

(22:21):

They're very particular about what is important to them and where do they want their money to actually provide capital and add capital to [00:22:30] a particular space. So I would say that has been the major trend, this kind of personalization, but driven by scalable investments. And like I said, it's multi-generational, I'm always surprised. You go into conversations thinking that you're going to know. And maybe as a woman investor, I think you could even extrapolate that into females as well, that there's going to be things that are just uniquely female. I think that there are trends that the world cares about, that there are [00:23:00] problems that we're faced with. And certainly if you can be a provider of capital to help find solutions and invest in other people's ingenuity, then it's an incredible space to be in.

Jorian Murray (23:11):

And also as a parent, I feel I'm educated by my children who are all in their late twenties and thirties, and that's a great influence in terms of being more aware of what's required.

Kristen Bitterly (23:23):

One disclaimer though that I think is important for everyone, and this is actually when you think of advice and [00:23:30] where advice really matters because of all of that innovation and proliferation of new products and solutions, it also means there's a lot of options out there. And really understanding is the headline actually I'm investing in? And so I would also say for anyone who's interested in thematic investing, if it's something related to ESG or sustainable investing, make sure you know what you're purchasing as well because the innovation has enabled [00:24:00] such a massive product proliferation

that I think sometimes the headline may actually be a little bit different than the exposure within that portfolio. And that's where we have a sustainable investing practise as part of our CIO organisation that does exactly that for our investors. So I think it's important to realise that there's a lot of options, but curation of those options matter.

Jorian Murray (24:22):

Same question, Andy, about future-ready. You are clearly very optimistic about Citi's [00:24:30] ability to grow in wealth. And talk to us more about the kind of capabilities that Citi has and what makes you confident that I read recently that you see the opportunity for the business to be the number one wealth business in the world.

Andy Sieg (24:45):

Well, it's rooted, I think, in large part in the perspective that Kris talked about, which is one of the coolest things that's taking place across categories is our clients, [00:25:00] customers, the market, their expectations are rising in terms of how all different aspects of their lives work together in an integrated way. And you were talking about impact investing. That's a great example because it used to be people thought, well, I can be a philanthropist over here, but then over here on the other side of my life, I'm going to focus on investing. And the impact investing and responsible investing is a way of saying, "Hey, you can actually bring these [00:25:30] themes together and you can think about risk and return and impact all at once." If you take that idea of a sort of integrated expectation that clients have and you blow it out most broadly, to meet that need, you need to be a financial institution with a lot of breadth and a lot of reach, a lot of expertise across different disciplines.

(25:53):

So if I was going to put a dot in the middle of the bullseye in terms of the [00:26:00] client that would see something very unique and powerful in what Citi Wealth does, it might be a client who's been very successful and is living in Hong Kong. They've got kids who are going to school in the US, they're thinking about buying a business in Germany, for example. I mean for that client, that's their life, that integrated set of challenges [00:26:30] and topics they're thinking about. And what they would love is a single institution, a single advisor, that could help them think about all of those things in the context that they think about it and it's something that they would want if they only knew it was possible. And here it's actually possible. And when we talk to our clients about our ability to be coordinated in that way and to bring a global perspective, [00:27:00] the kind of technical capabilities and wealth management, in the example I gave, investment banking, in our markets, businesses, all together to them through a single touch point, they're blown away.

Jorian Murray (27:15):

My last question to both of you, start with you, Kristen, is if there is some young years listening to this, maybe a liberal arts graduate, would you encourage them for a similar careers to you [00:27:30] to join the world of wealth and investments? And if so, why? And why might they want to join Citi?

Kristen Bitterly (27:36):

A hundred percent. So there's a couple of things I want to hit upon. I think there's this perception of finance, to enter into finance, an investment banking internship, a sales and trading internship. That's how you start your career. And certainly, look, I joined in sales and trading. I started my career in derivatives, so I completely am appreciative of those programmes. [00:28:00] I have covered all

different types of clients in my career. I've covered corporations, I've covered institutions. The value and the stakes, it's higher when you're dealing with someone's personal capital. So when it's someone's individual wealth journey, it is a very different conversation than when you're dealing with it in the context of a corporation or institution.

[\(28:21\)](#):

The clients that you get to meet, I would make the argument we learn more from our clients a lot because these are people who have built incredible businesses, [00:28:30] they have unique local viewpoints. In our travels, you can talk about Mexican elections and what's going to happen versus what's going on in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange year to date. So I think the clients that you have access to and the ability to learn from them and teach them I think is a very rewarding part of this industry. I think the second part is if you are a lifelong learner, you are always learning something.

Jorian Murray [\(28:59\)](#):

What are your [00:29:00] thoughts on that, Andy?

Andy Sieg [\(29:01\)](#):

There's just a long list of reasons to be excited about it. If I gave you my short list, every day you get to be around the world's change makers, and that is enormously energising to have an opportunity to champion them, enable them, learn from them. As Kris said, it's a privilege. Second, this is a business in wealth where you're in the middle of problem solving [00:29:30] on behalf of clients, and that's very fulfilling. This moment that we've mentioned in a couple different ways, the miracle of wealth creation, the opportunity to see impact, this enables you to, at the end of the day, feel like you're engaged in something that has a higher purpose. And again, I think that's something that is just an enormous part of building a fulfilling career. And then finally, this business, this company, it's a meritocracy, and [00:30:00] where you start has nothing to do with where you finish. It's hard work, tenacity, resilience, your ability to help clients enable and work with partners, and that's the kind of organisation I think everybody wants to be part of.

Jorian Murray [\(30:17\)](#):

Well, it's a great place to finish. I wish you both happiness and prosperity and abundance, and also the same to all of our listeners. Thank you so much for joining us today. I've really enjoyed the conversation. Thank you.

Andy Sieg [\(30:29\)](#):

Thank you.

Kristen Bitterly [\(30:30\)](#):

[00:30:30] Thank you.

Jorian Murray [\(30:34\)](#):

On the next episode of Good Things Happen, I'm joined by co-founder and Chief Product Officer of Arize AI, Aparna Dhinakaran, and Prag Sharma, who is the global head of Citi's Artificial Intelligence Centre of Excellence. You guessed it, we will be discussing artificial intelligence. Please tune in then.

Disclaimer [\(30:56\)](#):

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