

64% of people believe they have less than a 2% chance of becoming disabled during their working career¹. The reality is 25% of people who start their working careers at age 25 are likely to have a disability that knocks them out of work for longer than 3 months². And this is just an average. If you are a smoker and a little overweight your chances approach 40%. Furthermore, 90% of disabilities are due to an illness, whereas only 10% are as a result of an injury³. Illnesses are the leading cause of bankruptcies in the United States. After all, the average disability lasts about 5 years. Few Americans can keep their financial situation afloat for anywhere near that long.

Here are 5 quick tips to make sure you are properly protected:

- 1) Decrease your chances of becoming disabled by maintaining a healthy weight, eliminating any alcohol or substance abuse, and maintain a healthy work life balance with 7-8 hours of sleep per night. You can control these things.
- 2) Build up at least a 6 month rainy day fund for a disability or any other unexpected loss.
- 3) Purchase disability insurance through work if it is offered.
- 4) Purchase additional disability coverage to protect any uncovered earnings and be sure that it is specific to your occupation and includes a rider called Residual Disability. This rider protects you from partial disabilities which are more common than total disabilities, but can also have a devastating impact on earnings.
- 5) Speak to a Certified Financial Planner to make sure that all your various risks are covered. This will protect your assets which builds the framework to grow and preserve your net worth today and in the future.

People are quick to insure against their homes and cars becoming disabled. And that is important. But to insure against your body and earnings becoming disabled – is this less important? OF COURSE NOT!

Regardless of the facts, most people still think of disability insurance to protect against something catastrophic like a terrible accident or an awful stroke. In reality most disabilities are much more subtle. The last three claims that I helped process for clients were for people that continue to stay active. Their ailments are preventing them from working at full capacity, but they are collecting partial disability.

For more information please see Disabilitycanhappen.org, or for more information on Ari Fischman, please see www.afischman.com

¹ Council for Disability Awareness, Disability Divide Consumer Disability Awareness Study, 2010

² U.S Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet February 7,2013

³ Council for Disability Awareness, Personal Disability Quotient (PDQ) calculator

