

Episode 74

Head to Head: A conversation with Louise Gunderson and Nina Gunderson of UBS

Kirsten Pickens:

Welcome to Head to Head, a podcast by FS Investments, where we get personal with the people of financial services. I'm Kirsten Pickens.

Ryan Robertson:

And I'm Ryan Robertson. We are the co-heads of distribution at FSS Investments and together we sit down with some of the brightest minds, innovative thinkers and thought leaders in the financial services industry.

Kirsten Pickens:

Today we're excited to welcome Louise and Nina Gunderson. They are not only an incredibly successful advisor team, they're also mother and daughter.

Ryan Robertson:

Louise Gunderson is a Managing Director and Financial Advisor at UBS Private Wealth Management with over 50 years in the financial services industry. Louise is a Barrons and Forbes top ranked financial advisor and the top female advisor at UBS.

Kirsten Pickens:

Her daughter Nina Gunderson is a Vice President and Financial Advisor at UBS. She started her career in the highly selective UBS graduate talent program, and over the following eight years has applied her unique expertise in millennial investing to growing and protecting client wealth.

Ryan Robertson:

In this episode, Louise and Nina discussed running a team like a family, blazing new trails in financial services and working together to build multi-generational relationships that help clients achieve their goals.

Kirsten Pickens:

So let's get started. We're excited for you to hear our conversation today. Good morning ladies. Thank you so much for joining us today on Head to Head. How are you doing?

Louise Gunderson:

Great, and thanks for having us. Excited to be here.

Kirsten Pickens:

Absolutely. We're excited to have you. In fact, Ryan and I, we've been doing our podcast for about a year now, and we've been really eager for today's discussion with both of you. You're the first advisor team that we've had the opportunity to interview, but even more special mother-daughter team, which is of course super rare. So we can't wait to dive into all the intricacies of that. But before we do, we just want to start with your backgrounds. We want to hear a little bit about your personal journeys that got you into financial services. And of course Louise, we have to start with you. So you are a 50 year veteran in this industry. You're one of the top financial advisors in the country. You're the number one female advisor at UBS. Can you just take us back to the beginning because you were also one of the first female financial advisors ever, so that could be a totally separate podcast in and of itself, but you've truly paved the path for so many women in this industry and we love to hear how it all started.

Louise Gunderson:

Well, thank you and I that it doesn't seem like a half a century in my life. I guess when you really love what you do, time kind of just keeps moving on. I got into financial services by being a banker first actually lending money to private individuals and in their private investments. And someone said to me, why not go and think about the other side of the business, which was really the asset management, the preserving of all the money that they made. And so, I joined the financial service industry on the investment side and about 13 years ago joined UBS and created a team of 10 individuals who serve a broad range of different skills, talents, and professions. And the proudest moment for me was having my daughter join the team almost eight years ago and successfully paving the way for the future.

Ryan Robertson:

Louise, do you remember your first day as a financial advisor?

Louise Gunderson:

Boy, my first day, I can remember my first day on a job because I took the bus into New York City into Port Authority and walked to IBM's headquarters. And in those days, they didn't have the security that they have today. And I took the elevator to the personnel department and basically said I'd like a job and was interviewed, did I think a very simple math and English test and was offered a job at IBM and I loved what I did. But when they offered me the first data processing salesperson, what I said is, as much as I like what computers do, I didn't like the fact that they weren't personal. And that was my foray into getting into the banking industry. And I went to work for Chemical Bank and spent 22 years there in various areas, the last being running the private banking division, which I really loved. And that helped me get set up for the other side of what I do today in investing people's personal assets.

Ryan Robertson:

So Nina, Kirsten and I both have three children. I dropped my daughter off at school, she's texting me this morning. She's got her very first class. I am encouraging her and wanting her to be a financial advisor. She's in the business school and fingers crossed that goes really well for four years. I'm curious, at what point in your upbringing – were you a child, were you in high school, was it all the way until college – where you said to yourself, you know what? I'd like to be a financial advisor like my mom, or I'd like to do the same thing.

Louise Gunderson:

We're laughing, we're laughing together.

Nina Gunderson:

It's a little bit of a roundabout to how I got here, which started with me thinking starting like your daughter. I was on track to go into the business school at Wake Forest. You started as a sophomore, you applied during your freshman and sophomore years having taken a certain number of prerequisite classes. And I was actually interning at UBS in what at the time was called the business development group, which was the conduit between wealth management and the investment bank. This was between my freshman and sophomore year. And I was on track to take my last prerequisite course of accounting before applying to be a finance major because mom and dad had always been telling me, you should follow in mom's footsteps. You're a natural for the business. And you generally as a child, think your parents know what's best for you and trust them, especially when you have as good of a relationship as I did with both of them.

And so I didn't think anything differently. And math happened to be my favorite subject in high school and was enjoying it in college. And I was interning for UBS and working on a project in the healthcare sector when I said to myself, I've always been passionate about medicine, and I interned at the Duke Cancer Center spending time in the OR, research, etc. and loved it. And I said, I need to try pre-med because I don't want to wake up when I'm 45 and ask myself would've, should've, could've.

Louise Gunderson:
I didn't jump off the bridge by that point! Almost!

Nina Gunderson:
So what I tried to do was pursue both paths and at which point I was told by the Office of Academic Advising that I was trying to request to take three weed out classes, so I should probably pick a path if I wanted to maintain my enrollment at the university. So I said, you know what? I'm going to go all in on medicine and at least pursue that. And about partway through organic chemistry, what I realized was what I loved about medicine was helping people and being a resource during probably some of the most vulnerable and important points in your life. And over the course of my childhood and growing up, I got to see my mom be that person for so many of our clients as it pertained to their financial wellbeing. And I sort of took a step back and said, you know what? I don't want to wait until I am so far down in my career going through med school and residency and all of that to be able to really start making an impact. And I realized that I could jump into my career and dive in at a much earlier stage if I pursued finance. I then went on to do a summer business program for liberal arts majors that Wake does where it's nine classes in five weeks, and finance and accounting were my best classes and finished top of the class there. So I think that was my way of figuring out, okay, mom and dad were right all along, but I had to get there on my own terms, which they supported a hundred percent. And so here we are.

Louise Gunderson:
Here we are.

Kirsten Pickens:
That's awesome. That's such a great story. And, like Ryan said, we both have three kids. I have two daughters, one that's a senior in high school now, and I can tell you they want nothing to do with my career. They say that they, they just have no interest and I still, I'm going to do everything I can to try to get them there. I still got a little bit of ways, but one of the things that you both said is just the fact that building relationships, well, you just said it, Nina, you want to help people, you always wanted to help people. And the fact that being a financial advisor is so much about building relationships and helping people, how does being a mother-daughter team help you build on those relationships or make you so differentiated in the industry?

Louise Gunderson:
I think it's generationally. I mean, my friends are my clients and my clients are my friends. And so what happens with that concept is you socialize with them, you get to know their family, and then when you're fortunate enough to have another generation in the business with you, Nina and I just got back from California and visited a very longstanding client relationship, a very significant one that has two children. And Nina was front and center because we got to be with the children and explain to them exactly what we were doing. So having these two generations and being able to cover that is a pretty nice broad experience for us. Nina's generation is very different than my generation. I mean, they're so far ahead of us with what technology has done with their life skills that they learned in school. Very different when I was growing up and when I was going to college. And I think today, having Nina's generation covering that aspect for me personally is a real plus.

Nina Gunderson:
Yeah, I mean I think clients appreciate having a team that understands the multi-generational dynamics. So it's giving our clients a sense of reassurance that their legacy is able to be honored through future generations by having someone on their team that they feel like their kids, their grandkids can relate to and connect with. So it gives the matriarch or patriarch of the family that confidence that their legacy that they have planned for and strive for so many years can be really honored and understood by their financial advisor team.

Ryan Robertson:
So when you walk into that significant relationship and you see generations of a team representing them, that's got to make them feel really good. That's got to make them feel

confident, that's got to make your clients all feel like they're in really good hands. So I guess I would be curious, in your minds, what is the difference between millennials and maybe clients, Louise, that you started working with 40 years ago? I'm sure the differences are vast, but what comes to mind when you think about the differences between millennials and somebody in retirement?

Nina Gunderson:

I think I'll start and then my mom can jump in and add some more color on it. But I think what I've noticed at least is it's financial planning. It's just a question of what stage of your life you are in. So it plays such a vital role in your process in life. And so for us with the millennials, we're talking about things like buying their first home, setting up a 529 plan, life insurance, do you have a will? All of those things that give them that foundation financially to set their family up for success versus when you're talking with someone in retirement, it's much more about the legacy planning and preserving your cash flows to cover your lifestyle, preserving cash flows and dollars so that your legacy requests, whether that be for your kids, your grandkids, for charity, whatever it may be, are protected and then figuring out what else.

Louise Gunderson:

And I also would point out that years ago it was much more of a quote secret business of what your financial assets were, what you shared with your family. I don't think that's really the case today, and maybe it's education driven, but I think families today want their kids to be part of their financial world a little bit more than ever before. And so I think that the role that Nina and I play in trying to quote educate and get close to is really vitally important. Hence, we do every meeting together. Sometimes we include one of the analysts if there are some very detailed hedge fund conversations. But for the most part, Nina and I do the conversation together and the meeting together, and we try to include not just the children generationally, but I'll tell you it's also for the wife who never used to be part of the financial world before and now has become very vital person to be knowledgeable and carry out for the family.

Nina Gunderson:

UBS also has some great resources too that will give us the tools to be able to have those important conversations. So they are family advisory and our philanthropy office. They have a lot of great conversation starters so that you can really lead those family conversations pretty simply and easily so that you do feel like you are starting to engage with the whole family rather than just one or two individuals.

Kirsten Pickens:

Yeah, I think that's really powerful. UBS definitely has a lot of excellent resources on that front, but I want to dive in here a little bit more. I've heard you talk, Nina, about just your passion for showing the difference in financial literacy for millennials and helping with that. And Louise, you talk a lot about helping to be a voice for women. When Ryan and I started this podcast, we started coming off of, actually we had just finished an executive MBA program with Darden, and through it we spent a lot of time on just bringing diverse talent into the industry and learning a lot about the stats, obviously. And we all know this is a huge industry-wide issue, but when you think about the fact that bringing women into this industry is getting more and more challenging, if you look at the stats today, Ryan and I probably do 30 interviews a month and maybe less than five are women. I would love to hear your guys' perspective on why you think that is, just given both of your passions, all that you've done being voices for women, why do you think that is the case and any thoughts around that?

Louise Gunderson:

I'm going to start by saying I wasn't given the opportunity, and then when I finally was given the opportunity, I attended the Harvard Executive Program. When I was at Chemical Bank, I was the only woman out of 26 people that were nominated by the bank, and I had just had my first child. So, I just came off of my pregnancy and I had to go. And to leave my child then was gut wrenching, but I had to go to represent not just the financial institution but had to go to represent the women. I talk about being the only woman in the room as a senior officer when I would get the refreshments because clearly they would turn to me and say, we need water, we

need this, we need that. So I've been through that ringer for this half a century that we've talked about. And I think that the world is starting to see that they have to catch up having minorities, having women, and unfortunately women have the baby and when they have the baby, sometimes they figure out they want to stay home. I've raised two children and worked and it sounds like you also have Kirsten, so that doesn't enter into our worlds, but it's a real challenge. And I say today, post pandemic, the challenge goes to: if you're not happy with your job, then you quit and you find something else or you go live at home. So the world has also put a wrench into giving the female or diversity an opportunity to advance.

Nina Gunderson:

And I think honestly, a lot of it has to do with just giving women the tools to be empowered, to be informed and having a seat at the table and making those decisions. And so that's something that we stress really crucially as a team and making sure that women are involved in the conversations, are involved in the annual reviews. We always put the woman's name first on the agenda instead of the husband's name just because as a small way of showing and whether or not they notice, who knows, but from our perspective, we feel like we're at least doing our part. And I think it's just the little things to give women the tools to feel like they can educate themselves and have that kind of sense of responsibility to take on such a vital role in being involved in the family's finances.

Kirsten Pickens:

Those are all sorts of good points.

Ryan Robertson:

They're great points. And I was just going to say to Kirsten, we've talked a lot her and I about her own career, about how when she had her first child, she brought the baby to a board meeting one time.

Louise Gunderson:

I can relate!

Kirsten Pickens:

I'm sure you can.

Ryan Robertson:

So Kirsten, maybe you can expand on it. I would just be curious why is the industry in such need of more females? And yet to your point about our interviews and to the success that Louise and Nina have had, there just is a lack of, I don't know if it's interest or just desire, but we need more females in the industry and I'm curious how you would expand on what Louise and Nina just said.

Kirsten Pickens:

Yeah, I'll try my best. It's funny that you bring up that story though, Ryan. I use that movie *Sweet Home Alabama* where she goes into the bar and she's like, "you have a baby in a bar?" I spoke on a panel, I don't know, it was like a year ago, and I said, that's how I felt when I went to the boardroom. I was the only woman in the boardroom. It was right after I'd given birth and I had a baby in a boardroom and they had to deal with it. They needed me there. It's pretty funny. But I think that women, and I don't know the answer to that question, Ryan, because it baffles me even with my own daughters, just to expand on what Louise and Nina said, I think they don't understand it or they don't know how you could have such a exciting, fun, rewarding, impactful career in this industry.

There's a lot of other areas that they want to go into because they shut down when they hear finances. I won't say I'm old, I'm seasoned. I've been in this business a long time, and even if I'm talking to my own generation of women, they shut down when I start talking about my job, they just have no interest. And then we go to the Gen Zers, which is my daughters. They also have no interest. So I think it's a matter of education, exactly what Nina said. You have to provide the

tools, the resources, the education. It's like educating on alternatives. You have to educate to women on this industry.

Nina Gunderson:

And I think part of it is just, it's also about our generation and not understanding that this is even a career opportunity. I think the wealth management arm is something that a lot of people my age and the next generation that's going through college now, they don't even think of. They think of, oh, that's my parents' generation. They don't think that they can set themselves up for a career in this side of the business. They think of finance and they think sales and trading, investment banking, private equity, hedge funds, those types of things rather than wealth management and becoming a financial advisor. And quite frankly, I would argue this is probably one of the greatest areas of opportunity for that next generation of individuals because we're coming up on this huge wealth transfer, first, certainly women, but also then to that next generation. And if you don't have someone on your team that you feel like those younger clients can relate to, it's a huge opportunity miss for you to be able to engage with them and connect with them.

Kirsten Pickens:

A hundred percent. I mean, ditto on all the things that you said.

Louise Gunderson:

I'm going to one more thing while we're on this topic and then we can move on. The thing about women and their reputation, they say they're good listeners, they're calmer, they're patient, they take good notes. A lot of the things that we get talked about I think is very relevant. Being a financial advisor. I mean, you really do have to be a good listener, be patient, be detailed. And it's not a question of man, female, I hate to say that, but whatever are the natural traits that a woman has leads to the successful things as being a good financial advisor. So just wanted to add that little piece to it.

Kirsten Pickens:

Yeah, I'm glad you said that, Louise. I mean, not to speak for Ryan, but I will speak for him. He oversees sales and he wants as many female regional directors in the field as he could possibly get. The problem is they just don't come. And I think to that point is because women, we do all of those things really well. We have high EQ and we are good listeners, active listeners and really help broaden out the team, but trying to get them here in the first place is the difficult part. It's just a challenge in our industry and something that we're really working hard to help with here. Ryan, were you going to say something?

Ryan Robertson:

No, I think you said it perfectly well. It's a challenge and a struggle and it's inspiring listening to Louise, you and Nina talk about the impact that you've made in your clients' lives, but also in the industry.

Kirsten Pickens:

Yeah, absolutely. I wanted to just ask you guys about your team. We came together initially, Louise, I met you through our colleague Bill Kelly, who just speaks so highly of you.

Louise Gunderson:

I love him.

Kirsten Pickens:

I have to tell you this, our jobs are to call on financial advisors, right? Bill Kelly's been doing that for almost three decades. He says that you are in the top five of every financial advisor he would ever give his own personal money to because the way you run your team, he says that you run your team like a family. So there's obviously you and Nina, but the whole team is operated like a family. And I would love you to expand on that because that speaks the volumes about trust.

Louise Gunderson:

Well, let me start by saying that on Saturday night, my family increased because my right hand and my assistant gave birth to her second child at seven o'clock in the evening. A baby girl. So I like to believe I was after the husband and all the family members, I was the next one on the list to get notified. So we are indeed a family, and one of the things I'm particularly proud of is the lack of turnover. I think continuity is a vital, important aspect when you're dealing with clients. They don't like to get to know somebody all over again after they've had a good relationship. And so my right hand in operations had been with me 17 years, and she's impeccable in how she runs the day-to-day, whether it's a wire or whether it's compliance, all the things that are really vital both to the client and also to keep us honest, I always say everybody's got to keep me honest.

I have a clean U4 and I want to get out of here having that clean U4 when I decide to retire. So I think that's important. I think the way I communicate my background is Italian. I'm open, I'm honest, I'm very forthright, and so I don't really have secrets. It's not closed doors, confidentiality that we're really very familial. We meet every Monday morning for about an hour and a half, and we go over the week and what's important to us, but we talk about the weekend and what happened. When anything good goes on, I want to know about it. And when something bad goes on, I want to know it. I like to tell them I support them emotionally, financially, they do a good job. I want them to be very well paid. And so I always support when I have to do their reviews with senior management that my team is well respected for what they do.

Nina Gunderson:

People used to ask me, are you nervous going in as the boss's daughter and the concept of nepotism and everything that comes along with that? And I said, quite frankly, I'm really not because my mom has such a familial dynamic with the entire team. And I think that's just our entire relationship as a group universally. And that starts at the top with my mom and kind of the values that she's instilled in our team, certainly about just building strong relationships with each other. Certainly we focus on strong relationships with our clients, but I think we do a good job as a team of connecting with each other. I mean, there was a reason why when I got married last year that the entire team was invited, not because I felt obligated, because I genuinely wanted them there, because they're my work family. I see my husband who doesn't have that same kind of dynamic, and I recognize how fortunate we are. That all started because my mom created such a familial dynamic with each and every member of this team. I may be the only one that's related to her by blood and has the same last name, but it's something that we all carry through.

Louise Gunderson:

I have a tagline that has been with me for a long, long time. My friends are my clients, my clients are my friends. I've done scads of interviews and explained that concept. But because we get so close and dive deeply to all kinds of familial emotional financial situations, you get very close to the people and they trust you. And for me, the respect and trust is probably the two most important things that I want for my clients, my team, and for myself and my family.

Ryan Robertson:

Louise, I heard you use the R word a second ago: retirement. You have a super successful team. You have a daughter on your team. It doesn't sound at all like you are slowing down or that you want to retire, but I'm just curious at this point in your career, is that something on the horizon for you?

Louise Gunderson:

So I affectionately say they're going to carry me out in a box. I hope not, but I know how to play bridge. I know how to play golf. I know how to do a lot of those things that a lot of people in my age do. I just really love what I'm doing and to have the opportunity to work side by side with my Nina every day and the clients, there are not enough hours or dinners that I can have. I'm out nine nights a week. I mean, you do the math on that. And I just feel like that's part of who I

am. It defines who I am. It makes me happy, and I feel like I'm giving back to other families and people.

Nina Gunderson:

I love it too. I hope she never retires. I mean, what I can learn from my mom is endless, and I grew up with her as a role model to me as a mother and as a woman. But now having this opportunity for her to be my mentor and role model as a professional is such an incredible opportunity. And I just feel like what I can continue to learn from her each day, I can't ever imagine not working in the office right next to her. And people tease us. They're like, how often do you really talk to your mom? Every day? And because I'll call her even as I'm walking to the office. We also have that personal relationship too. So selfishly, I hope she never leaves the industry.

Louise Gunderson:

I'm going to share a very cute story for you. The pandemic arrives. We rush out to Newark, New Jersey to buy two computers, the last two that are left in Apple, and we drive out to our house, and we sat at this kitchen table for seven months with our computers. And if you talk about how Nina could learn by baptism very quickly, I mean, we sat there day by day, 10 hour day with each other doing what we do for a living. And everybody said with two type a's, did you ever fight? And we said, no. Until the very last week before we were coming back to New York, we decided to go out for a walk and Nina was moving in her new apartment and she had a view on what the drapery should look like. And I disagreed with her vehemently. And so we started to literally have an argument in the street about draperies, and about two minutes into the argument, we looked at each other and we started to laugh hysterically and said, we worked for almost nine months at the kitchen table, loving each other, cooking with each other, doing everything that you did in the pandemic and look what's happening. So that gives you a little bit of insight into our relationship.

Ryan Robertson:

Drapes! Which just brings me to my next question, and Kirsten and I were talking about this. We were wondering: what is Thanksgiving? Are you all able to turn it off? Are you all able to be mother-daughter? And of course you are, but I just am curious, is it easy for you all to turn it off and not just talk about business all the time?

Nina Gunderson:

I mean, I do think we do value that time outside the office together and spending quality time as mother and daughter together. It's not to say that when we're out east, one of our favorite things is to walk into town and get a cup of coffee and back before we start our workday. And it's not to say we won't necessarily talk about work, but I would say those are the times when we probably have the most impactful conversations about taking a step back and the perspective and just helping teach me and give me that perspective that my mom has as such a trailblazer in the industry. But fortunately, Thanksgiving is a lot of fun. We both love to cook, so we're actively in the kitchen. And we're also very fortunate that my sister, my in-laws and her in-laws all live within 30 minutes of each other. So we have one grand old time at the Thanksgiving table with our whole family altogether.

Louise Gunderson:

I would say business is always part of our life, but as I mentioned to you, my friends or my clients, my clients or my friends, so we do get the opportunity to do business with the people we love. So we just can't cut it off and segregate it. I have to tell you, I don't think we ever will.

Kirsten Pickens:

That's why you'll always work, right? I mean, you don't work a day in your life when you're having fun and you're enjoying what you're doing. Your story is very inspirational.

Louise Gunderson:

I can take a couple of bucks on the golf course from clients. I don't mind taking their money for a change.

Kirsten Pickens:

I love it. You did say to me, Louise, when we were at Forbes that golf is a skill, not a sport. I've been saying to Ryan, I got to take more golf lessons because I got to get better so I can get out there because it's, it's where you can actually make an impact there too. It's definitely a skill.

Louise Gunderson:

And it's a fun thing to do with somebody. It's a little, we play tennis also. Nina's a great tennis player. Tennis, you're against somebody with golf, you are side by side. And so it's a great sport with clients because you really are kind of captive for those three and a half to four hours and you're walking side by side, but you're not competing against each other. So I've encouraged the woman I'm sitting next to who has very good golf skill, but has not put it to good use yet to enter into the foray,

Kirsten Pickens:

Get there. Absolutely. I hear you're pretty good at bowling too, Louise.

Louise Gunderson:

It is true. I love sports. I love watching them.

Nina Gunderson:

We had a great time with Bill at the bowling alley together. Talk about a good bowler - Bill Kelly.

Kirsten Pickens:

Is he really?

Louise Gunderson:

Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

Kirsten Pickens:

There's our next event, Ryan at our sales meeting. There we go.

Kirsten Pickens:

Well, you guys hit on so many of these things. I want to kind of dive back in and maybe just get a little bit more specific as we get closer to the end of this. Maybe starting with you, Nina, you've talked a lot about on so many things about your passion in this industry and working with millennials, but I'm curious where the Gen Z generation just starting earlier, high school, even grade school, to try to get them more interested in financial services. What's your take on that and do you guys do anything around that in addition to all the family conversations that you have?

Nina Gunderson:

Yeah, absolutely. So I am fortunate that moving back to New York, I'm close to the high school that I went to K through 12, the Chapin School. And I am fortunate to actually be asked to come in and teach financial literacy classes to the upper school students. And I certainly keep things pretty basic, but I open it up to whatever is on their mind because it's not necessarily about teaching certain things, but it's really about, you want to just be able to connect with them and answer the questions that are on their mind. It's just the fact that they're showing an interest is more important than what they're showing an interest in. So if they want to ask me about what are the five stocks I should buy or how much money I should keep in my checking account, or what should I do when I start in college and I have a job, it doesn't matter to me what their questions are, but just the fact that they are asking the questions and are showing an interest is what's most important. So I think the thing that we try to do is just connect to as many of our networks as we can and encourage them to have a foundation in financial literacy that's earmarked and geared towards that generation. Because to your point, it's just about exposure and making sure that they're not taking that head in the sand approach and will figure it out eventually.

Louise Gunderson:

And we do some fun client youth events teaching them about mortgages and about lending, teaching them about their 401k. So we've sponsored over the last couple of years, more recently, I know it's called like a bar crawl series.

Nina Gunderson:

Yeah, the Financial planning bar Crawl Series.

Louise Gunderson:

And we teach them, we try to, again, not just for the youth, but during the pandemic, I did a flower arranging series with 45 women on Zoom during the pandemic. I did a recipe a month, Lulu's Kitchen. So I just sent out three this past week. I didn't do it after the pandemic, I sort of stopped doing it and we looked at each other and said, oh, maybe we want to reinstate that and send out Lulu's kitchen again.

Kirsten Pickens:

I love that.

Nina Gunderson:

We get more responses to the Lulu's kitchen than we do when we send out the investment related emails.

Kirsten Pickens:

That's fantastic.

Ryan Robertson:

So Nina, I'm going to ask you a question that Kirsten and I like to conclude all of our podcasts with, and then I'll let Kirsten ask your mom the same question. So this, Nina is just to you, what advice would you give to your 20 year old self?

Nina Gunderson:

So it's a good question, and I think my 20 year old self is a little closer in my mom's 20 year old self. I can think back a little bit more closely, but honestly, the advice I would give to anyone, and especially to my 20 year old self is just be open-minded for how your journey can really evolve. So for a type A planner like me, I went into Wake Forest thinking that I had it all figured out what my major was going to be, what activities that I was going to do, where I was going to study abroad, what my career was going to be, everything. And then my major changed three times and I ended up where I am today. And I honestly could not be happier because I know wholeheartedly that this is the job and the career path I was meant to take. But the fact that I had supportive parents and a mentor like my mom who let me take my journey to ultimately end up here, it was an incredible learning experience. But now I realize that I made the right choice and I honestly couldn't envision doing anything else than working side by side with my mom every day.

Ryan Robertson:

Yeah, congratulations.

Kirsten Pickens:

That just gives me chills, seriously having daughters and wanting them to hopefully turn into this at some point in time. I love that advice because you said it before your mom let you take your own path, right? It wasn't like she forced it on you and you came to your own decision. And that's really, really key for kids, for parents, and for kids to have that relationship.

Nina Gunderson:

She did bring me to the office in the carrier as a baby and rock me with her foot because she was brainwashing me. So maybe there's hope for your daughter that your brought to the boardroom.

Kirsten Pickens:

There's hope. Yes. Alright, well that's great, Nina. Thank you, Louise. We get to have you close us out with this exact same question.

Louise Gunderson:

I have my great answer to what you'd asked Nina. It comes right to mind. There's no substitute for hard work. I mean, it's got to be first that you are willing to put the time and effort and the commitment and learn on the job training, whatever you call that. Not everybody is cut out to be a financial advisor. So you can do that for any profession. So I'd say make sure you love what you do, make sure you have that passion. And then I'll finish this by saying, be prepared, communicate and make sure it's confidential. In my business, confidentiality is very important, but the communication, the C in that is vital.

Kirsten Pickens:

Very well said. Love what you do. I want to say, Louise, I know that you get asked all the time to speak at many events and conferences and you're very, very selective with those. So it's an honor that you took the time to be on Head to Head with Ryan and I. Nina, Louise, thank you both so much. It was such a great time having this conversation with you.

Louise Gunderson:

Well, we were happy to do it. It's our pleasure and working with people like yourself, and as you know, I love Bill and I love the company and so we're happy to do it.

Nina Gunderson:

Thank you for having us. This has been a great conversation.

Kirsten Pickens:

Thank you both so much. Thank you so much for the insight. Have a great rest of the day, and thanks for being on Head to Head.

Louise Gunderson:

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you

Kirsten Pickens:

Both. Take care. Have a good day.

Ryan Robertson:

Thank you so much to Louise and Nina Gunderson for joining us today on Head to Head. To get the latest episodes as soon as they're available, be sure to subscribe to the FireSide podcast.

Kirsten Pickens:

For more on this episode, visit www.fsinvestments.com. Head to Head. This episode was edited and engineered by Aaron Sherman. Special thanks to show coordinator Lara Coleman. Thanks for listening.