

Crypto Education

An Interview with Ric Edelman, Founder, Digital Assets Council of Financial Professionals (DACFP)

EDITORS' NOTE Ric Edelman was named by Investment Advisor, RIABiz, and InvestmentNews as one of the most influential people in the financial planning and investment management profession. He was ranked three times as the nation's #1 Independent Financial Advisor by Barron's, is in two industry Halls of Fame, and received the IARFC's Lifetime Achievement Award. He also holds two patents for financial product innovation. Edelman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author of 12 books on personal finance, including his newest, *The Truth About Crypto*, an Amazon bestseller. He hosts "The Truth About Your Future" podcast and produces Public Television specials. He taught personal finance at Georgetown University for nine years and is Distinguished Lecturer at Rowan University.



Ric Edelman

COUNCIL BRIEF Founded by Ric Edelman, the Digital Assets Council of Financial Professionals (DACFP) is a premier provider of digital assets education for financial professionals. DACFP (dacfp.com) connects the financial services industry and digital assets communities with leading experts via live and online events, webinars, blogs, and other educational content. Its flagship program, the *Certificate in Blockchain and Digital Assets*, is an online program featuring a world-class faculty and 13 CE credits. Thousands of financial professionals have enrolled from eight countries. DACFP is also the official crypto education partner for the CFP Board, FPA, MMI, IAA, IARFC, NAPFA, XYPN, and others.

What was your vision for creating the Digital Assets Council of Financial Professionals (DACFP) and how do you define its mission?

I was introduced to bitcoin in 2012. It didn't take long for me to realize two facts: this new technology will be as impactful for the global economy as the internet has been, and the financial advisory community is unaware of that fact. So, in 2015, I created DACFP. Our sole focus is crypto education, helping advisors and their firms understand blockchain technology and the investment opportunities made available by the introduction of digital assets.

How has DACFP's work evolved since its founding?

Our array of services has grown, along with our staff which is now more than 20 employees. Demand for our services is higher than ever, as everyone in the financial field realizes that crypto is here to stay, that there is significant client demand for it, and that they – the advisors and firms – are lagging behind. Firms are struggling to craft a crypto strategy that's both compliance-safe and consistent with their corporate culture, and

DACFP is now regarded as the leading provider of services to help them achieve proficiency in this area. Our current challenge is keeping up with demand for our services.

Will you provide an overview of DACFP's services?

We serve everyone now – advisors, firms, investors, and the crypto community itself – with an array of services:

- Webinars – hugely popular programs on the latest topics in crypto. We also offer Virtual Roundtables, exclusive programs for advisors conducting due diligence on fund managers
- Live Events – our VISION event is the oldest and still largest crypto event exclusively for financial advisors and accredited investors. Other events include 1:1 Connection, Bitcoin Mining, and private events for C-suite Executives
- Keynote Presentations
- Award-Winning Podcast – our daily program is one of the top podcasts in the U.S.

- Award-Winning, Best-Selling Book, *The Truth About Crypto*

- DACFP Yellow Pages – a comprehensive listing of every product and service in the crypto field

- Consulting Services – ranging from 90-minute boardroom presentations to extended gigs focusing on helping firms develop revenue growth from crypto. Areas of expertise include sales; business and practice management; and advertising, marketing and media

- Finally, our most prominent offering is our groundbreaking education program, The Certificate in Blockchain and Digital Assets. This online, self-study program features a world-class faculty and up to 18 CE credits. Thousands of financial professionals have enrolled from eight countries. We introduced five additional tracks in Q1, creating both Basic and Advanced courses specifically for Advisors, Financial Professionals, Crypto Professionals, Consumers/Investors, and Ex-US Professionals.

How does DACFP connect the financial services industry and digital assets communities with leading experts?

We are deeply engaged in both the financial services and crypto communities. I created the largest RIA firm in the nation, and was ranked three times as the #1 independent financial advisor in the nation by *Barron's*. Since 2012, I've been in the crypto community as well – and this gives DACFP the unique ability to speak both languages and reach both communities. We know who the experts are, and we're the bridge connecting the two communities in a way no one else can do.

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Will you elaborate on DACFP’s flagship program, the Certificate in Blockchain and Digital Assets, and the impact of this program?

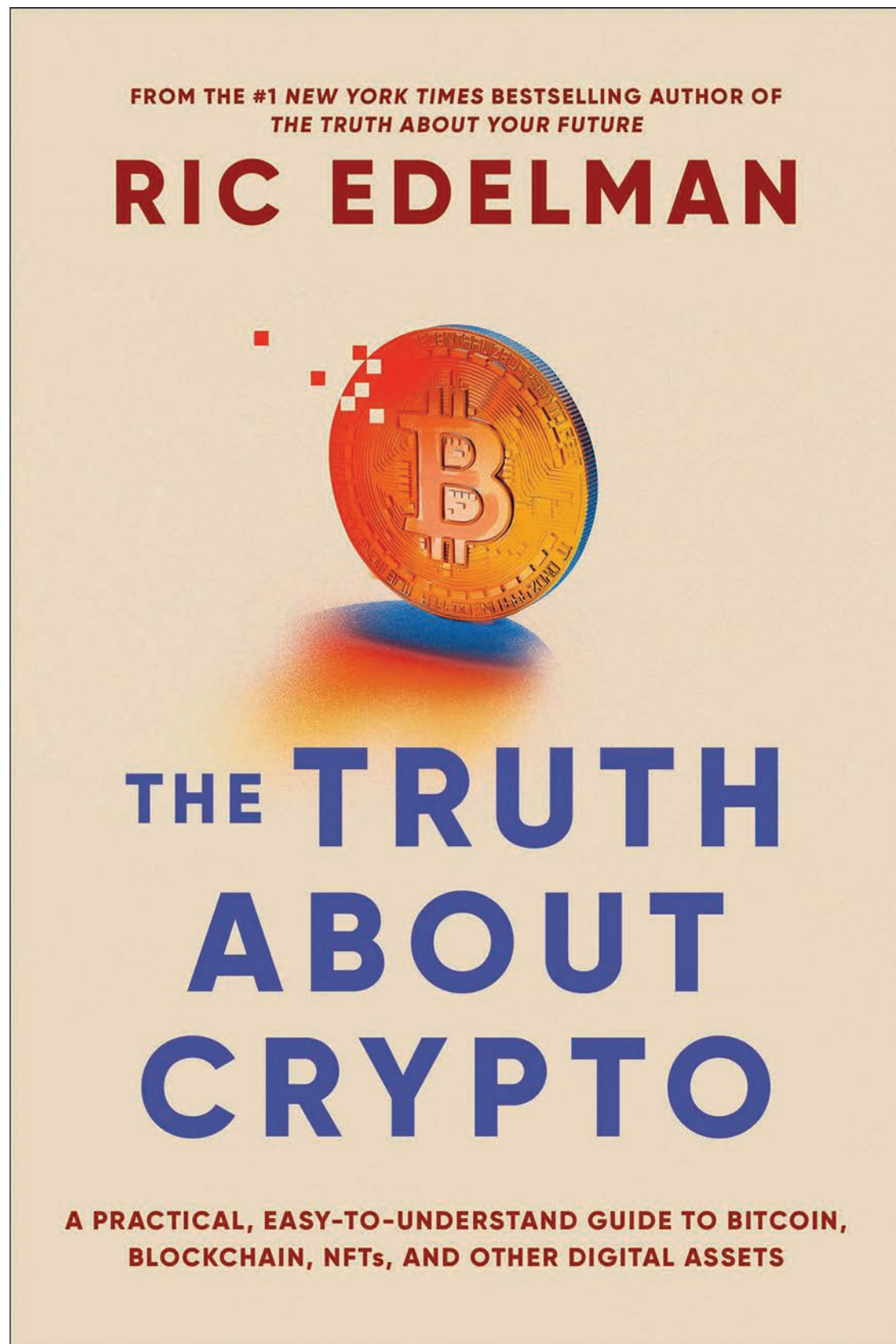
Because crypto arose outside the financial services industry, there is no institutional knowledge of the topic. CFP, CFA, and MBA programs don’t cover crypto, and nobody – from advisors to compliance officers – gets any firm-provided training on the subject. To rectify this, we created the Certificate in Blockchain and Digital Assets in 2021. It was the first and is still the largest program of its kind, and has proven to be immensely popular. For 2023, we are completing revising, expanding, and updating the course, and adding new tracks. The course is only \$879, and discounts are available via dozens of organizations. Via the program, DACFP is the Official Crypto Education Partner for the CFP Board, Investment Adviser Association, Money Management Institute, NAPFA, IARFC, XY Planning Network, and the Financial Planning Association.

What are views on the state of crypto and your outlook for the future of crypto?

The answer depends on your perspective. If you’re an investor, you had a horrible 2022, with crypto prices down 70 percent or more. Many companies in the crypto field collapsed, leaving investors with total losses. And frauds, most notably FTX of course, left many wondering if crypto had any legitimacy at all. If you’re a consumer advocate, you are angry that the SEC failed to protect investors; this will spur Congress and federal agencies to improve legislation and regulation – requests that the crypto community has been making for years. But if you’re a technologist in the crypto community, you are very excited. What the noise of 2022 masked is the fact that massive technological development is still occurring – and at a higher pace than ever. We’re beginning to see crypto move out of the lab and into the marketplace, with major corporations – from JP Morgan to VISA, from Warner Music to Breitling – deploying blockchain and crypto technology to help them reduce fraud, enter new markets, increase revenue, and reach new customers. The next five years are going to be very exciting, and I fully expect bitcoin and Ethereum to reach new all-time highs.

What interested you in writing books and what are the themes and messages you want to convey through the books?

My wife and I entered the financial services field nearly 40 years ago because, as a young couple seeking financial advice, we were ripped off by an advisor. So, we dedicated ourselves to learning about personal finance and teaching others what we’d learned – to help others avoid our experience. The foundation of our firm was financial education – as there was little then available. And the situation, sadly, hasn’t changed much today: parents don’t talk to their kids about money, few students ever take a money class during K-12, and most college grads never complete a course on personal finance, either. Nor do employers provide



financial education to their workers. This is why we have hosted thousands of seminars over the years, as well as my national radio show, the longest-running personal finance program in the country; hosted and produced several television series and specials for PBS; and written 12 books on personal finance – including my latest, *The Truth About Crypto*. Consumers and investors need this content, and few are able to convey complex concepts in plain English. I’m well known for making personal finance fun.

What are your priorities for DACFP as you look to the future?

Our mission is to continue doing what we’re doing: provide crypto education for advisors and their firms, as well as consumers and investors. Crypto represents the greatest wealth creation opportunity since the invention of the internet, and it’s important that we all understand this fact and learn how to integrate these opportunities into our diversified investment portfolios. ●