

We are working on a private client webinar program that we hope to announce by late March. Please pay attention to upcoming communications with details on the date and time.

As of Tuesday, March 24, we have headlines that have ranged between inconsolable fear that we are experiencing a Depression or Recession and euphoria that it's a 'once in a lifetime investment opportunity.' We don't believe in spreading rumors, fear nor making decisions based on headlines. The truth is that no one knows yet, what the long-term economic impact of the Coronavirus will be. It's too early to predict and it may be 30-60 days before we really have clarity and facts.

Depression? There doesn't seem to be an economic definition for a depression, other than a severe recession. Some may argue that the "Great Recession" of 2007-2009 was a depression, and by comparison to the late 1920's, you may agree.

Recession? A recession is defined as a broad-based decline in economic activity, observed by reduction in employment, personal income, business sales and industrial production. Based on that definition, I think we can all agree that we are experiencing at least SOME of these factors which started in February and may not peak until late spring or early summer.

Because statistical reports are based on what's happened in the past, recessions are sometimes here and gone before we know it. Once the headline statistics are public, it sometimes creates a second wave of fear. Based on what's actually occurring, though, it appears the U.S. economy has already entered into a recession. In the days and weeks to come, the statistical reports will confirm the status.

Things are still unfolding in the U.S. In other countries, it appears things are beginning to improve and there are some countries that simply are not reporting anything.

Some suggestions for how you might take action.

1. Consider calling or writing an email to your Congressmen/women asking for calm, clear headed thinking and to take action to work together to provide temporary solutions.
2. Check your emergency savings and basic living expenses. Do you have enough money on hand to pay your bills through May or June? If not, talk to us about your options.
3. As of this writing, we still don't have complete clarity about the Coronavirus. Early testing results are showing some promising treatments. There is continued increase in reported new cases as more people are being tested for the virus. Test kits and medications to treat the virus will take time to produce, deliver, and inoculate people.
4. Be patient and spread calm. You may have a sustained interruption of your regular lifestyle and routine – perhaps even into May or June. Pace yourself.
5. Keep us, your financial advising team, informed if you experience a work layoff, illness or unusual financial expense. It will help us to provide you financial guidance most appropriate for your financial situation.
6. In the Midwest, the impact of this illness could get worse before it gets better. There are now positive cases among all age groups. The best way to be a part of the solution and to be safe is to follow common sense protocols, avoid being naive that it cannot happen to you, and avoid group gatherings – NOT forever, but for a short time.
7. There are multiple phases to the actions being taken by our state and federal governments – regarding both the direct healthcare responses and economic fiscal stimulus. It will take time to see results of these efforts.
8. Expect continued high levels of turbulence – and large swings of volatility, up and down – in all of our markets until there is clarity and we turn the corner and see things begin to improve.
9. There could be more scary headlines later in the summer, so if you have monies to invest, do it gradually. Expect news about unemployment, credit stability and business closures. Headlines sell. They are designed to create extreme ranges in emotions. Be careful not to allow your emotions and reactions to be dictated by headlines.

**We are now all working remotely.**

**Things will eventually turn around and get better. We are all here to help you work your plan and make wise personal financial decisions. If you have an urgent need, you can reach us on our cell phones.**

\* S&P results derived from reports issued by Raymond James Equity Research.

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