

#OptimisticInvesting

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By Gary Greene

Perhaps the single greatest challenge facing financial advisors isn't managing assets, it's managing emotions.

Humans are emotional by nature. And, conflict makes us stop and pay attention. Ratings soar when we're glued to the screen to see what the villain will do, who's broken, who's crushed, who will fight and who will take flight. We're bombarded with 24/7 "news" that fuels misperceptions, phobias, and fears. At every turn, "of the moment" sound bites capture our attention and distract us from a more positive, broader, historical perspective. Emotion trumps reason with a mere click of the mouse or touch of the remote.

The great underreported story of the last half-century is the dramatic improvement of the human condition around the globe. Even a cursory glance at the evening news would give you the opposite impression, and would have us believe that the world is "coming apart at the seams" as they say.

This is based on two factors:

1. Fear sells! Neuropsychology has demonstrated that human beings respond quickly and virtually unconsciously to fear; and the news media, along with advertisers and politicians, have been exploiting this response throughout recorded history.
2. The explosion of news outlets with the advent of cable and the Internet has exacerbated this problem geometrically as they ratcheted up the fear to capture an increasingly fragmented market.

So how do we stay the course despite our emotions and misperceptions? Can we find a framework for optimism and remain focused on long-term objectives? Over the course of 2017 we'll share reasons to remain optimistic about the future. We'll remind you of timeless principles to help keep you on course. And we'll do our best to counteract the constant drip of crisis and fear that swirls in the media around us.

Despite what we hear all around us, there's never been a better time to be a human on this planet. We'll try to balance the scales and demonstrate the extraordinary achievements we've made as a society both here and abroad that you will likely never hear about on the nightly news.

Connect with us and follow #OptimisticInvesting to fill your year with reasons to keep planning, dreaming and pursuing your best future.

Happy New Year!

Source: *Compelling Wealth Management Conversations* by Oppenheimer Funds