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As many of you know, we do a weekly radio show. You can listen to past shows here. You can also visit the Learning Center, which has a variety of educational audio and video presentations designed to educate you. Revisit often, as we are constantly updating content.

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Introduction

This just in – the end of the world as you know it is NOT imminent!

Of course, you'd never know that from the media today. Granted, the media have always been catastrophists, but the recent dialing up of the volume of their predictions of the end of the world/end of the U.S./end of capitalism and democracy has reached new levels.

We have long preached about the dangers of the media's message. Through our radio programs, workshops, and one-on-one we have counseled all who would listen that you must first determine the motivation of the speaker before you take heed of his or her words.

We now find ourselves in a time of excessive fear and panic – levels not seen for decades – courtesy of the media. As a nation, we are panicked. Accordingly, doomsday predictions grab our attention more than ever. For most of you, this is the worst you can remember things feeling; ironically it is hardly the worst you've lived through.

Today, we issue you a challenge that goes far beyond our previous requests that you ignore the media. We want you to take a "media holiday". We promise that the only thing you'll miss is that familiar feeling of anxiety you've been carrying around for months. We assure you it will be nearly impossible for you to "miss" anything of significance that occurs. Indeed, you'll find that it is nearly impossible to avoid the media.

You'll find the details of our media holiday challenge below. Please update us frequently with your progress. We'll share success stories. The only thing we can legally guarantee you is – you'll feel better, sleep better, and you may become better looking!

Why You Need A "Media Holiday"

We understand that times like this – times of great fear – inspire people to seek information. You want to be comforted by some good news to alleviate your worry and concern about the future. But virtually any information source (local news, national news, internet, columnists, "experts") has an agenda (including us),

and if you are not aware of their agenda or are not an expert in the field being discussed, you may be largely unaware that their message is heavily slanted.

Many of you have told us that you agree the media send out a message that intentionally lacks perspective, distorts or ignores the facts - a message that is primarily designed to attract you emotionally (usually through scare tactics) so you will continue to watch/read/listen. Yet, like moths to a flame, you have continued to watch/read/listen constantly. We know this because on a daily basis, we get well-meaning calls and emails from many of you asking our opinion or reaction to whatever the talking heads have dreamt up that day. Apparently, while you “agree” with us that the media are misleading, your favorite media hype artist is the one you can trust, and all of the rest are the bad guys.

Let’s review just a few of the dozens of the hot crises/ideas that we’ve heard recently. As incredulous as you might be, we are currently not worried about or interested in:

- **Hyperinflation** that should occur momentarily due to the massive worldwide governmental spending programs;
- **Investing in Gold Coins** as a “hedge” against portfolio losses;
- **A New Global Currency** that will replace the dollar as the world’s reserve currency;
- **Deflation** as a result of the consumer refusing to spend any money;
- **Banks refusing to lend money** for people to purchase homes or autos;
- **The Stock Market going to zero**;
- The US entering the **next Great Depression**.

If we simply go back nine months, the whole world was certain that high rates of inflation were here to stay as evidenced by oil prices at nearly \$150 a barrel (and heading to \$200) and other commodity prices going through the roof as well. Then came the political bungling of what could have and should have been a run-of-the-mill financial mess, which led to a vastly unexpected panic, which then led to the level of economic problems we have today.

Just months after high inflation was a certainty, we were told to fear several years of deflation that had to set in as the Great Depression 2.0 became our new reality. Panic ruled the day, and people sold every asset they had and fled to cash – for a while even money market funds were deemed too risky. As the government took a disjointed approach to addressing the problems (which, by the way, they always have in the past and always will in the future), we were told by these experts that each program would fail and nothing would ever get us out of this mess.

Suddenly, when the government created policies that they hope to help with the banking and real estate issues, we were told that we apparently were not going to face the next Great Depression, with its accompanying deflation, but in fact we were going to face hyperinflation and soon would become like Zimbabwe or Germany in the early 1900’s and we’d all soon be lugging wheelbarrows of dollars to the store for bread. Because, evidently, prices cannot be stable – ever.

The truth is none of the “pundits” you have brought to our attention have added value to your lives. Not Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, or Bill O’Reilly; not Bill Maher, John Stewart, or Keith Olberman. Not anyone else. What you have to understand is that each of these “pundits” is an entertainer. Their jobs are to attract listeners/viewers/readers. What they have done is added stress and anxiety to your life while padding their pockets by padding their ratings. They’ve caused you to lose sleep. They’ve caused your friends and neighbors to liquidate their appropriate long term investments while they are temporarily on sale, and to accept a near zero rate of return in the name of “safety”.

As we have discussed previously with you, this current decline was steeper and faster than any since the 1930’s. Yet by any objective measure, our economic problems are only comparable to ones we faced in the 1990’s, and not as severe as what we dealt with in the 1980’s and 1970’s. The only conclusion is that investors were convinced to panic more this time than at other times when we faced more severe problems. Score one for the talking heads!

Why You Don't Need To Monitor The News

My associates and I at Rogan & Associates have combined for nearly 100 years of experience. Through the decades we have been advising people like you, studying the economy and investment markets – every day, and we have learned much and gained a tremendous amount of perspective and insight. We've seen movies like this before, and we know how they end. And they always end the same way.

Through the years, we have come to rely on many sources of information that have proven to be accurate – none of which scream “Boo-Yah”, sell newsletters, or are currently hyping a new book. We have vetted our information sources and are intimately familiar with their biases and agendas (yes, even our “good” sources have their own biases that our expertise let's us account for). We have developed a healthy distrust of new “Chicken Littles” who are suddenly in the spotlight because they supposedly predicted the latest disaster – mostly because we remember so many of these “broken clocks” from the past that so quickly faded into obscurity.

You never have to question our motivation when we deliver our advice to you. If we grow your wealth – long term – we grow our compensation. If you suffer short term, we suffer along with you. If we thought there was a reliable way to predict these periods of volatility, we'd use it. Please accept as an article of faith that no such process exists. We get no enjoyment from our clients (or their friends or families) worrying.

We have learned through the years that people are wired wrong when it comes to their investments. We know that even though the market declines on average every four years or so, each decline will be generally be treated as though we've never seen one before. We know that despite our markets having recovered from these frequent declines every other time, the consensus will be that this time the world as we know it will have ended.

We are very aware of how scary these times can be. It's precisely because of these times that we have structured your plan the way we have. As we noted in previous editions of this update, your plan should be structured so that only your long-term money has exposure to full market volatility. This has always been, and continues to be, the appropriate advice for anyone who needs to have a growing income in retirement. While your friends and neighbors may feel safe, or even smug, as they sit in cash earning virtually zero it's critical to remember that none of you have a long term goal of making it to next month. All of you, absent a note from your doctor, have a long term goal many years into the future. Indeed, your long term goals may well exceed your life expectancy. Feeling “right” or “safe” in the very short term may well have irreversible significant lifestyle costs in the long run.

It is important that any of you who have questions or concerns about your plan make an appointment today to meet with me to review your goals. The plan review will bring comfort. The media will only add anxiety.

Section 3 - The Challenge

Throughout the past several months, my associates and I have all spent countless hours learning the details of the nonsensical ideas being spouted by the entertainers who act as informants on news programs, so we could effectively combat them with logic, details, and historical facts. This has been quite time consuming, since some of these entertainers broadcast messages daily, and therefore have to invent new crises frequently to keep you tuned in. (Remember, some of the most effective entertainment includes horror movies and thrill rides.)

Every so often, as we begin to unleash a torrent of facts and logic, a client interrupts us with the comment, “Oh, I don't care about that; I don't watch the news/TV”. After an awkward silence, we then move on to the much more important matter of updating their plan for any changes that have occurred in their lives.

What we've noticed is that these clients who have rejected the news are always calm, relaxed, and have a positive outlook on life. By contrast, our media junkie clients are always amongst the most nervous and rattled folks we see. So it occurred to us that our job is to challenge those of you who are glued to the tube, or even those of you who only occasionally hear the media's message, to take a "media holiday".

Here's the challenge. Beginning Friday morning, your challenge is to make every effort to avoid all media messages for the weekend – until Monday morning. This includes your family's, friends', and neighbors' attempts to breathlessly share with you whatever crisis or disaster they just heard about. Politely tell them you are enjoying a "media holiday" and invite them to join you. On Monday morning, make sure you tune into the morning news programs and ask yourself – "did I miss anything that matters to me and my loved ones?"

Now, since that answer will definitely be "NO!", you can proceed to the second part of the challenge. The "weekend retreat" may not be quite enough for you to feel significantly better, so now we move on to the "one week challenge". For those of you who are feeling empowered, start the one week challenge immediately after the Monday morning news program. Avoid the media this time for one whole week. When the following Monday arrives, tune in once again and you'll notice you have not missed anything important.

The ultimate proof comes from the "one month media vacation". You may not believe it now, but if you make it one month you will have broken their power over you. You will feel better. You'll have more energy, less anxiety, and as I mentioned, you may even be better looking. The media will now be powerless over you. During the month, you'll have become reacquainted with the other people who live with you. You'll have taken in your surroundings and may have noticed how beautiful the world really is. If you go out to dinner, you'll probably notice how crowded the restaurants still are. And if you take our advice, you'll have enjoyed several beautiful sunsets with your loved ones.

Your Progress Reports

Please take this challenge seriously. We know this will help many of you regain your perspective and your positive outlook on life. Be absolutely assured that if any major event happens in the world during your "holiday", your well-intentioned family and friends will let you know. The only thing you'll miss is the anxiety.

Please let us know of your results. We promise to publish excerpts from you in an upcoming issue of "Why We Plan". Good luck!