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Expert says key to solid financial planning is the ability to think in the long-term

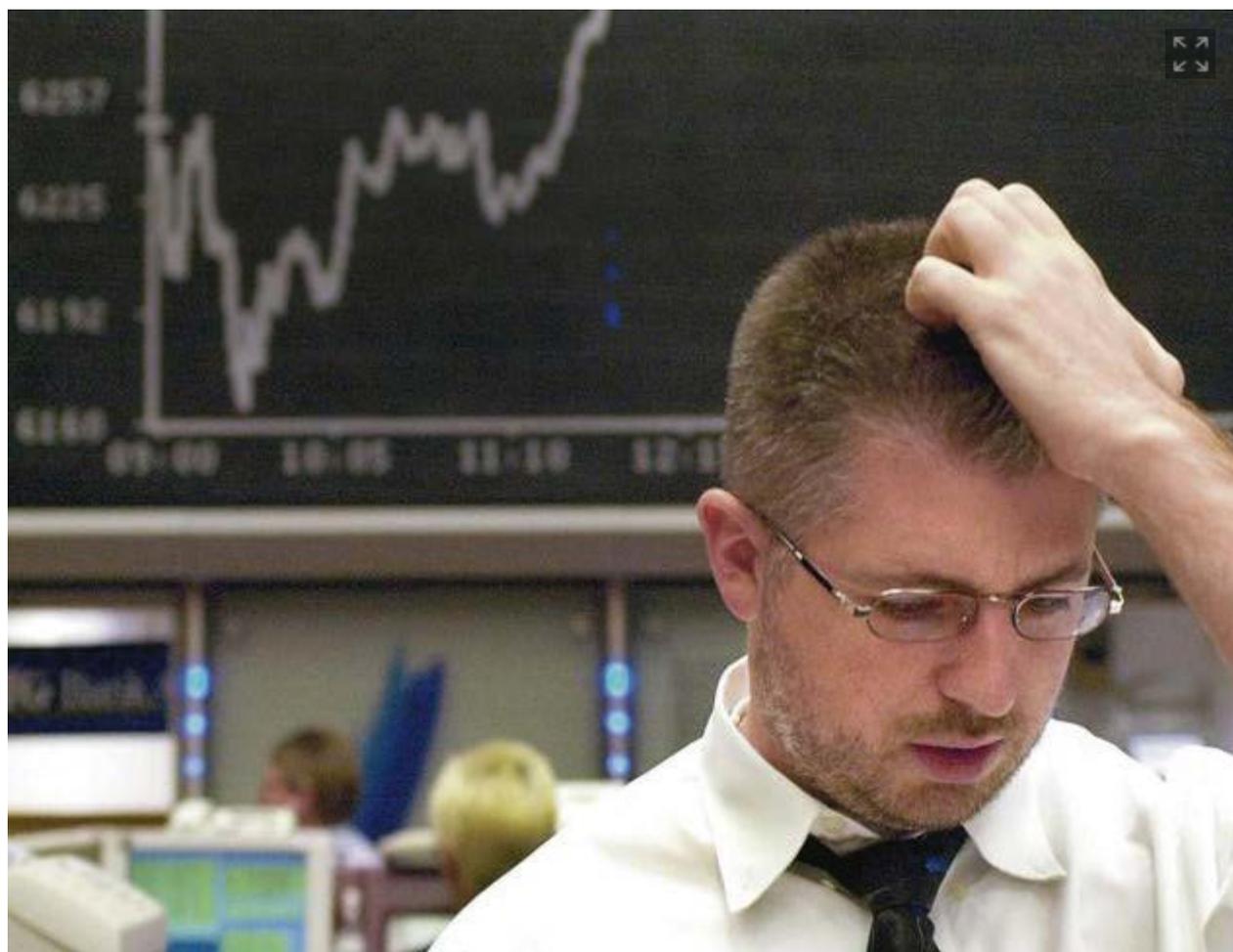
BY LEE STOERZINGER / DAILY NEWS CONTRIBUTOR / Monday, February 29, 2016, 6:00 AM

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While we spend time building our plans, monitoring progress and celebrating successes, we often find ourselves sharing too much of that time managing emotions and trying to prevent poor investment decisions.

The markets have been extremely volatile. Once again, many people are wondering what it all means, and what they should be doing with all of the

information out there.

This provides a timely opportunity to take the discussion to a deeper level and possibly look at things in a different way.

For much of American history, those who came before us didn't have to worry about investing and stock markets, and the word "retirement" wasn't the concept it is today.

People worked until they couldn't, and often lived together with family until they died. They saved what they could, grew their own food, helped their neighbors, and did their best.

As time went on, both Social Security and pensions were born, and provided a well needed structural backbone to our lives as we emerged from an industrial society.

(Due to many factors, both have now been put under stress and have challenging futures in front of them.)

In the 1980's we shifted again; this time to create wealth through mass investing in the markets. Much of the change was due to the introduction of the 401(k), and only increased as we gained access to global economies.

As we come to the present and now spend our days flooded with information about investing, I want to step back, if only for a moment and ask one simple question: Why?

As someone who has personally spent almost 25 years using investment markets to help people build plans for themselves and create the opportunity for wealth, I have found that success can be had through the process of dedicated long-term investing. The opportunities are abundant and the tools are all there, we just have to use them.

However, due to a multitude of factors, significant confusion has also been introduced to our world at large for the average investor as they look to planning for their futures; this is both financial and emotional.

Where should we invest? How much do we need? What if the markets crash? How will we pay for college? How do we care for aging parents, etc.

So while we spend our time building our plans, monitoring progress and celebrating successes, we often find ourselves sharing too much of that time managing emotions and trying to prevent poor investment decisions.

Think about this for a minute. You get up in the morning, check the markets,

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and hear that things are going to be "ugly" today. You immediately wonder what that means for your portfolio, and how it will affect you.

Right there sums up the deep shift in how we think about money and how it has permeated our culture as investors.

First, we have been trained to measure 30-year life plans in five minute intervals, while at the same time being told to hang in there because investing is for the long-term.

Second, continuous monitoring of our finances is creating an unbalanced picture of what "wealth" is.

And third, we create emotional situations that are much too powerful to be dealt without greater context.

Yet, that's exactly what we are doing and it all seems so normal these days.

It is my belief that we have the opportunity to again evolve, and are ready for a new era as it relates to investing.

In fact, we must. We have flooded the earth with commentary and systems on "how to invest." The experts are far and wide. In addition to where we are, I say it is time to dedicate a little more effort to "why we invest."

I'm not talking about the image of two people walking on a beach in a television commercial. I mean addressing the emotional, financial, spiritual and intellectual reasons we have about what's important to us, and the real decisions we make each day as we grind along in this world.

From how we think about money, what we want our legacy to be after we're gone, talking to our parents about their wishes, to how we serve humanity, it is a call to better align the time we spend working so hard and saving, with the true reasons why we do it.

The awesome thing is that not only will this process help us find deeper meaning in our lives, but over time, it will cause those shorter term emotional responses to drift away, and take on less and less influence. It's a pretty good deal.

Let's all look to the roadmap of life lessons from our past, and combine them with a strong and tactical trail to follow for those who come after us. We owe it to them.

Lee Stoerzinger, author of the new book "On the Back Burner," is a certified financial planner professional and registered representative with SII



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investments, Inc. (Leestoerzinger.com) His perspective on "true wealth" involves celebrating what we already have, honoring our commitments, and helping those who need it most. Securities and advisory services offered through SII Investments, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC & registered investment advisor. Lee Stoerzinger, Inc. and SII are separate and unrelated companies.

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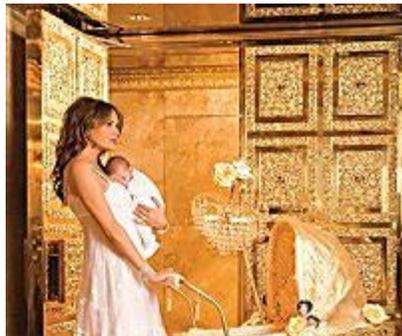
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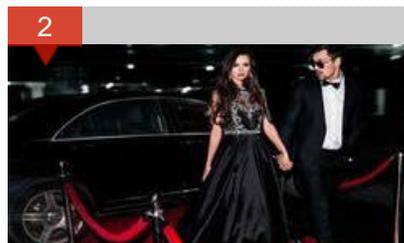


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