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Better Decisions

A bulletin devoted to helping you make better and better financial decisions

“It’s Not a Question...

by

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...of being communist or socialist or capitalist. What matters is that each system should be human. It should be for the people and with the people.”

- Lech Walesa
Solidarity leader, Poland

That’s the basic problem right there.

Our version of capitalism is neither for nor with the people. It has taken on a life of its own. It’s unjust, old, rickety and falling apart.

The rather feeble Washington lingo of rescue and stimulus doesn’t cut it. If the government feeds the beast as is, the infusion of cash simply flows to those who are already ahead of the game. Folks (as George Bush would say), we have a structural problem on our hands. Our brand of capitalism wobbles and fosters disparities. Dare I say it is inefficient? Perhaps obsolete?

We need something more flexible, accountable, efficient and just. Like, maybe, a streamlined upgrade of democratic socialism. (I know, I know. This is America where I can get jailed just for saying the word “socialism” out loud. The mere mention of the word brings Joe McCarthy back from the dead! By the way, notice how I have totally bypassed invoking the more diminutive and rather meaningless term,

“liberal?” Delete the word from your online dictionary. It’s useless.)

My analysis, of course, paints less than a pretty picture for you. I know that. And I am not here to depress you. I am actually quite hopeful. But for now, what you need is a coping strategy. Let’s look at the word: *cope* --- to face and deal with responsibilities, problems, or difficulties, especially successfully or in a calm or adequate manner.

If we dig deeper into the definition we find: *adequate* --- as much or as good as necessary for some requirement or purpose; fully sufficient, suitable.

Okay. Putting the pieces together, here’s your plan for coping. Approach each financial choice by asking yourself: 1-Is it necessary? 2-If yes, what is the best way to do it? 3-If what I am considering is necessary and I can do it the right way, will I get the results I want?

Please give this simple plan a try. (Hint: Question #1 is the real show stopper. Impose a 5:1 rule --- 5 “no’s” for every “yes.”) Hopefully, this plan will keep you afloat; at least until later this year when it is anticipated that, out of total frustration, President Obama will replace capitalism with something far better.