



Craig's Corner | June 10, 2020

In the first few days of June I was planning to release another version of Craig's Corner, yet I have withheld it because I am compelled to touch on a different topic.

Last week I witnessed so much violence: the devaluation of human life, the destruction of property, and nationwide societal unrest. Racism and disregard for human life is incredibly disturbing to me. While our society has made progress over the past century, there is a significant amount of work that needs to be done. Everyone should be treated with respect, dignity, and provided equal opportunity to progress in today's society, regardless of what they look like or what they believe.

Have you ever been in an environment where you feel like the outcast? I know I have; it's uncomfortable and unsettling. Yet, I wonder if we need to intentionally position ourselves in those scenarios to better understand and hopefully provide context on how we can make a difference? I am interested to hear others views on how we can initiate real, lasting, and meaningful change in our society.

I am concerned about this growing trend to pigeonhole certain groups with labels. There will always be a small percentage of "bad actors" throughout the world, yet their actions should not define the groups they represent. Just one example, we're familiar with practitioners in the advisory industry who have purposely and unethically managed their client's wealth for their own personal benefit. Does anyone remember Bernie Madoff? Mr. Madoff's actions should not define the entire financial services industry, as most advisors are ethical and provide great value to the consumer. Have you ever found yourself judging an entire group because of a specific situation or scenario? In being honest with myself, sometimes unfortunately I do. One way I have tried to resolve this is by speaking to someone in that group or organization to provide me (teach me) a different viewpoint. What can you do to inform your biases? I'd love to hear your thoughts about how we can do things better on an individual level.

In my experience decisions made from a highly emotional state usually result in outcomes with mixed results at best. Plus, they often result in unintended negative consequences. In fact, I have my own 24-hour rule when it comes to responding to situations or exchanges with others that make me feel angry or offended. I encourage each of us to listen to different viewpoints and be open to constructive feedback on how we can impact change. I have challenged myself to do things differently going forward by initiating dialogue and then determining responsible actions to do my part.

To quote Abraham Lincoln, "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today".

Craig Robson
Founding Principal and Managing Director