



The Gift of the Recession

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7 Strategies on how to Recession Proof Yourself from the Inside Out!

The fact that we are globally undergoing a significant shift in how we live life due to the sustained slowdown in economic activity is indisputable. However, whether I allow this fact to compromise my peace of mind, my health or my faith, is up to me. Despite the constant flow of negative news about the recession, to stay healthy and stress free, I have chosen not to give up my space and therefore, my energy, to it. And far from being a declaration of denial, by dealing with this situation from the inside out, I maintain a healthy perspective, acknowledging that ‘change’, with its constant ebb and flow, is synonymous with life so that ultimately, ‘even this too shall pass’.

A fresh perspective allows us to recognize that every situation is also an opportunity for growth, for there is always a gift in every situation. In ancient China, this is illustrated by the Mandarin character for ‘Crisis’, called Wei Ji, which means both ‘Crisis and Opportunity’. Perhaps they knew something that we need to be reminded of! What I do know

for sure though, is that investing in fear, worry, anxiety and the ‘why me’ approach, only results in more of the same. It is a poor investment which is guaranteed to compromise our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. So why do that to yourself?

Instead, rather than feeding the frenzy by being reactive, consider choosing an approach with a different perspective which empowers you to stay calm, centered and prepared to gracefully ride out the downturn with acceptance, clear thinking and faith. Here is some food for thought on how to recession proof yourself by taking a ‘cause’ oriented, inside out perspective.

7 Strategies for Recession Proofing Yourself

1. Recognize that what goes up must come down
Simply put, acceptance plus perspective are key here. Just like a roller coaster, know that whatever goes up must come down. When we are well anchored and properly strapped into the seat, then the downward run doesn’t harm us. Likewise, by establishing a clearer perspective and making the appropriate arrangements, you too can cushion the impact of the ride down, offsetting the fear of the unexpected, or even the inevitable.

2. Deal with ‘short term’ changes, but not at the expense of long term solutions

Recognize that dealing with causes, versus symptoms alone, is essential to truly recession proofing yourself. For the short term, plenty of advice is available on how to stabilize your circumstances, especially financially. Curiously, a quick internet search unveiled pages of links giving short-term advice, yet advice on long term solutions was non-existent. Yet, you must investigate what thinking, attitudes and choices have fueled the current situation. For example, a short term solution may be to downsize your home, but a long term consideration would be to examine the reasons and appropriateness behind the need for getting a bigger house in the first place. By addressing causes and making positive changes, we have the opportunity to create a better life for the 21st century.

3. Re-examine needs
One core cause of our current situation has been our own unabashed greed! The inability to discern between wants and needs, and pursuing these so called ‘needs’ at any cost, is now having clear consequences. Therefore, re-examining our values in terms of what our ‘needs’ really are, must take priority regardless of how ‘uncomfortable’ it may feel. Remember, it is not about ‘blaming’ but rather ‘naming’ the dynamic that has contributed to our current woes. Learn to distinguish wants from needs by asking yourself questions such as, “What is my intention in wanting/needing something”, “What feeling do I think this need may satisfy” and “Is there an alternate healthier way I can have this ‘need’ met?” Also, please answer these questions honestly, enlisting helpful feedback from family and friends or a professional coach.

4. Know that we are individual but not separate
Part of the sickness of a booming economy is that we become even more self-centered. The ego takes hold and we forget that every action we take has implications for others. We become totally ‘head’ centered, forgetting that without the wisdom of the ‘heart’, we become top heavy and inevitably, will fall. When we come from the head alone, money becomes top priority and time the costliest commodity. We simply believe that we have no ‘time’ for anyone or anything that doesn’t translate into material gain. If this describes you, then now is the time to return to community. Choose to proactively reach out to others on your street, or in your community, with kind deeds and words. Banding together and supporting each other always leads to a win/win solution. And, by giving of



ourselves, studies have proven that we always feel better, often overcoming depression, self-pity and the disease of indifference.

5. Be selective about what 'information' you allow in Often we rely on mainstream information systems to know what is going on and how we should think. But have you ever asked yourself when presented with a piece of information, "To whose benefit is this?" The point being that reality is a function of perception, and you have the right and obligation to ensure you are seeing the full picture! Exercise due diligence by checking alternate sources to verify stories. Personally, I have observed that the 'news', over the past 15 years, has progressively gone from bad to worse, lacking in perspective or balance. So I have become very selective about what I buy into, and always look for independent sources to verify what I'm being shown! And this is what you may wish to do too, for there is unbiased, and yes even good news in the world today - you just need to seek it out and then, determine what is true for you!

6. Learn something new An interesting fact about human beings and adversity is that unless we are challenged, we do not grow. There is no natural instinct within us that says, hey, life is so good, but let me challenge myself and invest in my growth and learning just because! Often people share that they grew stronger due to adversity in their lives! Likewise, if things for you have slowed down and perhaps you have some more time on your hands, then rather than worry, invest in yourself by learning something new. Take courses in self improvement, or indulge in a passion that has been sitting on the back burner for too long. You may be surprised at what abundance emerges from taking the time and opportunity to invest in yourself.

7. Practice Gratitude The current situation is gifting us by inviting us to be grateful for what we have, as opposed to focusing on what we could or should have had. While not to take away from those of us who have genuinely suffered losses which are forcing a change of plan and direction, the option still remains for us make these changes from fear, worry and resentment, or with faith, trust and gratitude. Although it may be a stretch on some days to feel grateful, choose to be it anyway. Push yourself to think of one thing, no matter how minor, for which you can be grateful! When S.N. Goenka, a rich industrialist and founder of the Vipassana Meditation technique, lost everything, rather

than becoming fearful and full of resentment, he accepted his situation and surprisingly, felt freer than ever before! His health and wellbeing remained intact, and he moved forward to serve humanity through teaching self-awareness and realization through silent self-observation!

Globally, we are at a critical juncture in our social evolution. The top heavy structures which we have created were bound to fall apart. Essentially, how well we fare through this time is all a matter of perspective. We can either see the current recessionary crisis as a hopeless situation, or we can, like the Wei Ji, acknowledge the opportunity to recreate a healthier, more integral society, supported by solid core values and behaviors. To do this, each of us must approach the situation from the inside out, by first accepting what is, and then recognizing, releasing and replacing negative behaviors and patterns with healthier, positive ones. We can start right now by first choosing to seek out the gifts in the challenges before us, acknowledging that 'that which we focus upon, expands!' By so doing, you will be well on your way to effectively recession proofing yourself! **S**



Life Strategist, Stress Management Expert and former Immigration Judge Taron Puri, B.A. LL.B, shows individuals & organizations how to effectively stay stress free in a crazy world! Working globally as a Speaker, Trainer and Personal Coach, he excels at turning negatives into positives and making sense of life's most challenging issues. To know more about Recession Proofing Yourself, and to share your thoughts and comments, visit www.recessionproofyourself.org, and www.energyinmotion.org