

DREAMING OF A MORE JOYFUL TIME

FOREGOING TRIP A TOUGH BUT NECESSARY DECISION, WRITES DR. NADIA ALAM



DR. NADIA ALAM
Column

I want to go somewhere. Anywhere. Road trip. Plane trip. Day trip. Weekend trip. Anything.

The funny thing, I'm not a big traveller. Growing up, my parents took us on occasional road trips. I remember sitting in the back seat of the car with my sisters, playing magnetic checkers, reading books, complaining about the wait.

We were not wealthy so these short trips were a treat.

It was a chance to see something different, to temporarily step away from our daily reality of work, stress, study and chores to something that was joyful.

So, a friend and I began planning for a weekend getaway. We thought: road trip and debated Vermont. We thought: plane trip and looked at pictures of Arizona.

Halton Hills is gorgeous. Snow-covered Halton Hills is even more so. But I yearned for something unfamiliar — mountains, desert, maybe ocean. Some-

thing so intense, so majestic that it would — for that moment — sweep everything else from my mind.

And as we planned, another kind of reality sunk in. How do we navigate the new rules of quarantine? How do we sort out work issues? What if the COVID-19 variants require another lockdown?

A simple weekend trip all of a sudden became a bigger discussion of coverage at the hospital where I work, the nursing home where my friends works, at the clinics where we both work and contingency plans for all three places, as well as our responsibilities to our families.

We stopped.

And a part of me grieved.

The grief wasn't just about a trip. It's the complexity of our daily interactions now as we navigate lockdowns and quarantine and day-to-day restrictions on our freedoms.

I miss parts of the world as it was. And I recognize my privilege and as hard as my life is, it's not as hard as it is for many others out there. This pandemic has highlighted profound societal issues of equity.

But I miss how simple some things were.

So for now, I dream, and hope that as we eventually come out of the pandemic, we will end up somewhere more joyful.

Nadia Alam is a Georgetown physician and past president of the Ontario Medical Association. Her columns also appear on www.drnadiaalam.com. She can be reached through her website.

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THE STOCK MARKET ON STEROIDS

VOLATILE SPECULATING NOT A FORMULA FOR SUSTAINED SUCCESS, WRITES PETER WATSON



PETER WATSON
Column

The stock market hit a speed bump recently.

A large number of individuals, inspired by social media, pounced on a speculative stock — in part to combine their collective force to defeat some Wall Street mega money managers.

The wealthy pros were betting against a speculative stock called GameStop. As a result of a social media frenzy, many investors who could be classified as young, novice and speculative bet

against the pros and drove the stock price upward.

It was volatility on steroids.

The opposite end of social media driven feeding frenzies on stock speculation is academia.

In the 1960s, Prof. Eugene Fama developed the efficient market hypothesis, meaning that stock prices reflect all available information.

A few weeks ago, this was true for investors speculating in the stock. There was information, and that information informed trading decisions.

For a brief time, the efficient market impacted the supply and demand for the stock, and as a result the stock price went on a rollercoaster ride.

The tragedy of this type

of volatility is that it can harm an unsophisticated investor.

Normally the markets are more rational. Each day, participants decide at what price they will buy a stock while others decided what price they will sell.

Speculating is not investing. It is gambling. It is not a formula for repeatable success.

Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at www.watsoninvestments.com.

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