



faith . discipline . patience

Do you remember Debbie Downer in the old SNL skits?

You know, the character who'd remind the newlyweds of the rising divorce rate. No matter how wonderful the setting you could count on Debbie to point out a downside.

In general, I find the financial media to use a variation of the Debbie technique. If there's good news it is often rounded off with a 'but it could turn for the worse' point to keep us tuned in.

But when we have bad news, like now with inflation, rising mortgage rates, or supply chain problems, I don't see many 'but it could get better' counters.

And I don't really blame the media. The 'it could get better' angle just doesn't grab us in the same way.

Danger gets us in a way that calm doesn't.

But just because our nature draws us towards the scary and negative doesn't mean the positives are absent.

So pay attention to your media diet. The more you allow yourself to get sucked in by the negative, the more it can seep into the groundwater and become your dominant mindset.

Down that road may lie not just Debbie-ness but also poor financial decisions.

'I shouldn't invest in stocks because of the Ukraine war.' Or whatever else – there will never be a shortage of scary stuff that could derail the near future.

I suggest one of two antidotes: focus on the longer term and how history is on the side of the optimist, or search for good news.

Yes, it's actually out there. For example, look up stories about scientific progress. Pick up a magazine. Scientists and entrepreneurs are working on some amazing stuff.

Maybe Alzheimer will be treatable in a decade.

Maybe we'll find a financially viable way to be carbon neutral.

Or maybe another cancer type will meet its vaccine.

None of these things may come to fruition. Just like the negative possibilities also may not.

Balance your media diet. It might give you a truer view of the world and improve your financial decision making.

Good luck.

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