# Market Downturns and Life Reflections

by Dave Polstra, CPA, CFP®, CIMA®, PFS, Wealth Advisor

Winter 2009

Bear markets… ouch! I don't like them, but in my 27 years in the investment business, I've counseled clients through four major market declines. In doing so, I've discovered some common traits shared by those who are able to successfully navigate the downturns. One of my recent financial review meetings occurred during a particularly volatile time in the markets. A couple in their early 80s have been clients for over twelve years. The husband is known for his dry sense of humor. As he entered our conference room and set his briefcase down on the table, he looked at me and said, "David, I came into this world during the Great Depression and it looks like I'll be leaving this world during the Great Depression." As we chuckled together, I assured him that this downturn was much different than the Great Depression! We went through the numbers and their financial outlook is good. While their accounts are down, their cash flow is steady, and they didn't seem too worried. Why? Because this couple has done a lot of things right in their financial lives.

## BEING DEBT-FREE HAS ITS MERITS

These clients have zero debt. No margin loans, no real estate debt, no mortgage. While individual circumstances may dictate a different approach to optimizing the financial decision, there's something psychologically positive about not having a mortgage payment. I like to tell folks that although carrying a mortgage can make perfect economic sense, many times from an emotional perspective, there is tremendous peace of mind in owning your home with no mortgage.

Being wiser in how we spend our time, maybe slowing down a bit, and investing more in relationships are just a few ways we can enrich our lives during uncertain economic periods.

## LIFESTYLE CHOICES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The most potent weapon at your disposal while waiting for a recovery is your expense level. Take a look at your expenses and ask yourself, "Is this a need or a want?" If you can cut back on your expenses, then less money will be needed from your portfolios, which means that more money is at work for you to enhance your long-term wealth as the market eventually recovers. My wife Betsy and I are implementing this currently, cutting out our 'wants' while saving and investing more with the difference. Furthermore, we are finding creative ways to have more fun on less. For instance, this past month Betsy and I attended a holiday concert at Morehouse College. The choirs were great, but best of all, the concert was free. Finally, we all have resources that we can spend other than money. Being wiser in how we spend our time, maybe slowing down a bit, and investing more in relationships are just a few of the ways we can enrich our lives during uncertain economic periods. Times like these can be reflective times that help us determine what's really important in life.

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# 2008 in Review and 2009 Outlook

by Chris Dardaman, CPA, CFP®, CIMA®, PFS
Chief Investment Officer

Decades from now, business school students will study 2008 as one of the most extraordinary twelve months in U.S. and global financial history. As housing prices began to drop, the mortgage crisis escalated into a full blown credit crisis. The incredible rise of oil and gasoline prices fueled a contraction in consumer spending that helped drive the economy into recession. Frozen credit markets created panic. Higher energy costs also reduced corporate profits, causing companies to start eliminating jobs. The speed and velocity of the financial crisis was mind boggling as many of the largest financial firms were sold, went bankrupt or restructured. Do you remember Countrywide Financial, Bear Stearns, Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Washington Mutual, Wachovia, AIG and Citigroup?

The stock and bond markets struggled as many investors were forced to sell declining assets. Mortgage backed securities and other non-government guaranteed bonds had more sellers than buyers. Leveraged investors, mainly hedge funds, were forced to reduce debt and meet redemptions, resulting in massive, indiscriminate selling. The investment banks liquidated their inventories while insurance companies, mutual funds and pension plans sold assets to raise cash. The SEC enforced "mark to market" accounting rules, which required banks to continually reset the values of assets on their balance sheets at distressed levels. These technical factors created a huge disconnect between pricing and fundamentals in many asset classes. Real estate values, stock prices and bond prices—virtually everything went down.

As the crisis developed, companies and whole industries in the U.S. began to look to Washington for assistance. "Bailout" has become common terminology, and not referring to removing water from a boat. While the immediate impact of the bailouts will likely be helpful, the American people will have to eventually pay the bill. It is ironic that leaders in Washington think that this crisis caused by excessive spending and borrowing can be fixed with more of the same. One article I read suggested that even divorce attorneys should be eligible for government assistance since people can no longer afford not to stay married.

The free market philosophy that guided the past 25 years or so appears to be giving way to an era of bigger government and more regulation. Even with that, we expect certain areas of the economy will likely do very well as projects like rebuilding the nation's infrastructure become a focus again. Reform in areas like mortgage underwriting and other lending standards should help get the banking system back on more solid footing. Industries that have long had excess capacity will be forced to adjust. Downsizing will be painful and cause many job losses.

Despite the current concerns, there are significant reasons to believe that long term investors will earn good returns over the next five years. First, we believe the worst of the market declines are behind us. The markets almost always bottom while the headlines are still grim and the fundamentals are still weak. This time should be no different with unemployment rising, consumer confidence low, and consumer spending shrinking. Bull markets often start during a period of economic weakness, while corporate earnings continue to decline and unemployment continues to rise.

The current recession began around the end of 2007, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. While the average recession since 1892 has averaged 15 months, we expect this one to be a little longer. If this recession lasts 18-24 months, it should end sometime in the second half of 2009.

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## 5 Principles for Managing Through the Downturn

1. Spend less than you make
2. Keep adequate cash reserves
3. Maintain 5-10 years of cash flow needs in bonds in your portfolio
4. Stay committed to your long-term strategic asset allocation
5. Use Time Arbitrage to your advantage (see related article)

# Investment Strategy Q&A: Investing in Commodities

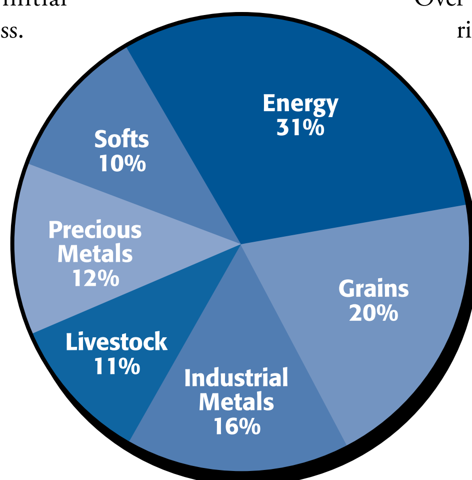
by Don Wilson, CFA, CFP®
Director of Portfolio Management

One of the most positive developments in our economy the past few months has been falling oil and gasoline prices. The first few times I filled up my car with gas under $2 a gallon, I did a double take to check the receipt since it seemed so much lower than just a month or two earlier. Crude oil began 2008 at a then-unheard-of $100 per barrel. It climbed all the way to $147 per barrel in July, and then prices came crashing down. By early December the price had fallen to $41 per barrel as the global economic slowdown curtailed demand. Many different commodities ranging from energy to livestock to grains to metals experienced similar volatility, rising the first half of the year and falling in the second half of the year.

Although commodities can be very volatile, over the long-term they have provided strong growth during certain time periods and additional diversification to a portfolio of stocks and bonds. While we believe it is still early to invest much in commodities now, we expect they will become more attractive as the economy begins to recover. In light of this, we wanted to give a brief introduction to commodities and the expanded future role they might play in our portfolios.

## WHAT ARE COMMODITIES AND COMMODITY FUTURES?

Commodities are physical assets. They are raw materials and are often the initial inputs in the manufacturing process. Commodities can be divided into categories including energy, grains, precious metals, industrial metals, livestock and softs (food and fiber). Examples include crude oil, natural gas, corn, gold, aluminum, lean hogs, sugar, and cotton. See the chart at right for the group weightings of the commodity categories for the Dow Jones AIG Commodity Index, a popular commodity index. Investors typically do not trade the actual physical assets. Instead they invest in contracts called commodity futures that are traded on an exchange. A commodity futures contract is an agreement to buy or sell a specified quantity of a commodity on a future date at a specified price. By selling the contract prior to the delivery date and buying a contract with a later delivery date, investors can gain exposure to the commodity without taking physical delivery of goods.[1]




**Dow Jones-AIG Commodity Index Sector Weightings**

## HOW ARE COMMODITY FUTURES DIFFERENT FROM STOCKS AND BONDS?

Stocks and bonds are long-term financial assets. Companies use stocks and bonds to raise capital for the business. They are claims on the future cash flows of the business over very long time horizons. Investors are compensated for bearing the risk of the change in future cash flows. In contrast, commodity futures don't raise capital for a company. They are short-term contracts based on real assets. They allow a company to lock in the price of its future inputs or outputs. For example, a corn producer can lock in the price he will be paid per bushel of corn when his harvest comes in. He is then protected from an unexpected drop in the price of corn. An investor bears that risk by buying a commodity future. To take this risk an investor will require that she be paid an "insurance premium."

## WHY INVEST IN COMMODITY FUTURES?

Over the long-term, commodity futures demonstrate risk and return characteristics similar to stocks. They typically perform well during periods of high or rising inflation, and because they react differently to market dynamics, often do well when stocks and bonds are doing poorly. This is not always the case, as deflationary pressures in recent months have shown. Commodities can be volatile. However, because of the tendency to behave counter-cyclically to stocks and bonds, commodities can actually dampen the overall volatility of the portfolio.

*Due to space limitations and our desire to cover this topic comprehensively, we have posted the full version at www.Brightworth.com/InvestingInCommodities.pdf*

[1] *Dow Jones-AIG. Commodity Index Sector Weightings as of 11/30/08.*

# Behind The Scenes At Brightworth

- Congratulations to **Lisa Brown** and **Annika Ferris** who earned their Certified Investment Management Analyst[SM] designations. This designation is recognized by the industry as one of the highest standards in investment consulting expertise.

- **Brightworth** was recognized in the *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* annual lists, "Atlanta's Top 10 NAPFA Fee-Only Investment Advisors" and "Atlanta's Top 25 Financial Planning & Advisory Firms."

- **Chris Dardaman** was quoted in the September 29th edition of *TIME* magazine in an article entitled, "O.K., Don't Panic: How to find your way through the market mayhem."

- In October, **Marie Hurt** participated in the Atlanta Breast Cancer 3-Day Walk. The funds Marie raised, and the 60 miles she walked, will go a long way to helping Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund save lives.

- The October issue of *Atlanta Magazine* listed **Dave Polstra, Chris Dardaman, Alan Gotthardt,** and **Ray Padrón** as "2008 Five Star Wealth Managers for Best in Client Satisfaction."

- In December, **Dave Polstra** spoke to a group of attorneys at the Basic Fiduciary Practice seminar on "Planning for Retirement Benefits."

- *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* quoted **Chris Dardaman** in recent articles entitled, "Economist: Georgia's job losses to grow until 2010," and "It's Official and it Began Last Year: Nation in a Recession."

- In December, **Brightworth** was recognized by Creative Growth Group and The Atlanta Business School Alliance in their 3rd Annual "Client Advisor Award." **Brightworth** was a finalist in the mid-sized professional services firm category.

## *Market Downturns and Life Reflections*

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### SPEAKING OF REFLECTIVE TIMES…

During a different meeting with another couple, as I was talking about the markets, I was interrupted by the husband, who said, "David, everyone knows the markets are down this year, but I want you to know that we're not worried. We know the market will recover and that we will be okay financially. We count our blessings every day. We never expected to save the amount of money we've accumulated over the years, and we are still amazed at how large our net worth is whenever we review our finances. We never imagined that we would be this wealthy and we are grateful for all that has been given to us. We have three grown children and six grandchildren. We're both healthy and so very thankful for all we have." Wow. I want to spend all of 2009 in that spirit—enjoying my blessings while discovering new ways to save money and invest for the future.

## *2008 in Review and 2009 Outlook*

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Historically, the stock market bottoms slightly more than halfway through a recession, which would support the theory that the stock market bottom was likely on November 20, 2008. An encouraging statistic is that the average performance of the S&P 500 twelve months out from the market bottom is + 44%.[1] Stock valuations globally are extremely attractive. From these valuation levels in the past, future performance has been strong. In late November, the yield on the S&P 500 was higher than the yield on the 10 year U.S. Treasury bond for the first time since August 1958, over half a century ago.

Real interest rates are extremely low, which will help fuel future corporate profits. In fact, the Fed has taken its key lending rate to the lowest level ever. Cooperation among global central banks has been unprecedented, with most of the world's top economies working together to help re-liquefy the global banking system, lower interest rates and provide large economic stimulus packages.

Finally, Americans are starting to save more and have less debt. The decline in oil and gasoline prices creates extra spending money for consumers and lowers prices of many

items due to lower transportation and manufacturing costs. The positive effect of this should be similar to a very large income tax cut or economic stimulus plan. Over time this will create more demand for stocks and bonds as people realize that money markets and CDs will not earn real returns after taxes and inflation. Much of the cash will eventually be invested back into the stock and bond markets. In short, many years of financial excess are being forced out of consumers and businesses around the globe in an extremely volatile short period of time. We think the foundations are being formed to support a more robust and stable economic environment for the coming decades. Those who are conservatively positioned on cash flow and strategically positioned on their investments should prosper in this new era.

[1] *The Leuthold Group, View from the North Country, October 2008.*

# Managing Income in Retirement

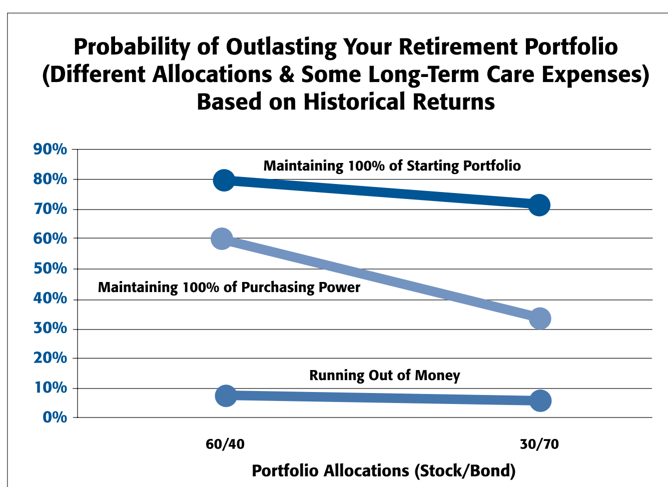
## Part I – How Much is Enough to Retire?

by Lisa Brown, CFP®, CIMA®, Manager of Financial Planning

How much is enough? For many investors, determining the answer to this question is often a top priority in their financial planning process. Another way to ask it: How much do I need in my investment portfolio to retire and maintain a certain lifestyle for the rest of my life, with little chance of running out of money? Not only is this a question that pre-retirees must plan for, but those who are currently retired must continually review whether they continue to "have enough."

A sophisticated and preferred approach to determining "how much is enough" is using portfolio simulation. This method simulates the future based on historical returns and correlations of the various major investment classes. The results are based on thousands of trials and project the value of an investment portfolio over many years taking into account distributions, taxes, inflation, and a historical range of random investment returns using a mathematical process. Investment results do not come in a straight line, meaning you may average 7% per year, but rarely will actually earn exactly 7% in any given year. Therefore, it is best to see how an investor's results could be impacted based on variable and random investment returns over time. This method of projecting the future better communicates the potential best and worst case scenarios in order for the investor to understand the impact of planning decisions and to be more confident in turn.

This Chart illustrates a hypothetical age 60 retiree who desires to spend $100,000 per year adjusted for inflation, and wants to assume they incur an extra $30,000 of annual long-term care expenses, in today's dollars, from age 85-90. They begin retirement with $2.5 million of investment assets. In Portfolio #1 they invest 60% in stocks and 40% in bonds. Portfolio #2 invests 30% in stocks and 70% in bonds. As is evident from the illustration, maintaining a higher allocation to stocks increases the chances they won't spend down their principle while maintaining the ability to buy the same amount of goods and services (including healthcare costs) in their latter years of retirement. As inflation is one of the greatest risks a retiree will face, protecting one's purchasing power should be a key factor in portfolio design.




Portfolio simulation can be applied to an investor's annual planning using the 4% Withdrawal Principle. Portfolio simulation supports the conclusion that you have a low probability of depleting your principal over time if you withdraw no more than 4% of your beginning portfolio balance. For example, if you have $1 million in your portfolio on January 1st, studies indicate you can safely plan to withdraw $40,000 per year, adjusted for inflation each year. The higher the annual withdrawal rate, the greater the probability of running out of money. In fact, based on portfolio simulation, we estimate that increasing your withdrawal percentage from 4% to just 6% increases your likelihood of running out of money dramatically (from 6% to 48%).

The time period in which you retire will have an impact on your portfolio, and could steer you off course from staying within a safe withdrawal rate. Looking at historical market returns for a 60% stock/40% bond portfolio, if an investor retired in 1973 their average portfolio return the first five years of retirement was 2.40%. If another investor retired in 1993, their five year average return was 15.45%. The 1973 investor would have been spending down principle during those first five years if they budgeted to retire and withdraw 4% per year.

Retirement planning should never be "checked off the list" the day you decide to retire. Personal income and lifestyle decisions change, family goals are adjusted, health issues may arise, and economic conditions vary. Making periodic changes to your portfolio and spending habits in retirement is necessary to ensure long-term financial success, a low probability of running out of money, and increased peace of mind that you're still on track.

# Time Arbitrage – A Powerful Edge for Investors

by Alan Gotthardt, CPA, CFP®, CIMA®, PFS, Wealth Advisor

Some years ago while attending an investment conference in New York, I was struggling to stay awake during an afternoon session when the words "Time Arbitrage" jolted me back to full consciousness. Joel Greenblatt (author, professor at Columbia University, and successful investor) was discussing his "edge." As happens to me occasionally, it was at that moment that many concepts, ideas, and cherished beliefs coalesced into one elegant thought: Time Arbitrage. The supreme advantage of all the giants, from Warren Buffett to Peter Lynch to people you've never heard of who have quietly made billions through their investing prowess. Never has this tool been more valuable, and possibly never in shorter supply.

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All professional investors seek an edge—a research method, a trading tactic, an information source—that creates a higher probability of successfully making a return on investment. An easy example is insider information. If you had non-public knowledge that Company X was developing a new technology that would revolutionize its industry, you could make a killing by buying the stock and potentially selling the stocks of Company X's competitors. Called "insider trading," this edge became illegal back in the 1930s. Legal methods of collecting proprietary information have long been the foundational advantage for many investors and institutions. However, increasing regulation and the speed and volume of information flow has dramatically changed the value of pure data. Today, investors around the world have almost perfect access to the same data and react (or overreact) in concert. Ironically, it is still believed by many that "having the data" leads to successful investing. In a world of free-flowing and instantaneous information, time arbitrage is a tremendous edge when so many investors are measuring success in days, weeks, and months. Like the CEO of a privately held company who can make decisions for the future without worrying about next quarter's earnings, the savvy investor uses time arbitrage. He or she is able to benefit from historically-valid investment tactics without the anxiety, and often financial ruin, that comes from frenetically chasing the next short term trend.

## KEEPING TIME ON YOUR SIDE

Time arbitrage essentially takes advantage of having an investment strategy, a personal discipline, and a tactical structure that allows time to be on your side. At the strategy level, consider the implications of a philosophy that compares the major stock market indices to cash and other fixed income investments. If you don't need the cash in the next few years, your strategy could dictate investing a substantial portion in the S&P 500 or other stock investments versus fixed income. Simply because you have the time to weather through ups and downs in stocks in order to achieve what have been historically superior returns point to point.

Consider an example using the string of performance numbers in the S&P 500 during the period 1972-1976. Up 19%, down 15%, down 26%, up 37%, up 24%. If you invested $1,000,000 near the peak at the beginning of 1972, you caught the last of the good times and then '73 and '74 took your investment down almost 40%. See Figure 1. However, since you didn't need the cash, you used time arbitrage to your advantage and held tight. Two years later your portfolio is up 70% from the bottom, and importantly, your annualized return from the initial investment through the bottom and back is 5% per year. Six years later, your portfolio has recovered 164% from the bottom, bringing your annualized return to 8% per year for the nine years of your investment. Through the ups and downs of the 1970s, including one of our country's worst bear markets, your portfolio grew through time arbitrage properly applied in an investment strategy. Then you were properly positioned for the bull markets of the '80s and '90s. And this "blunt instrument" time arbitrage does not even consider the potential for superior investment talent, tactical allocation shifts, or even diversification across geographical boundaries.

## PRICING DYNAMICS ARE THE KEY

Markets are short-term pricing mechanisms. The numbers flashing across the screen on CNN reflect the current price at which buyers and sellers come together. They do not necessarily reflect intrinsic values of the underlying assets for four important reasons:
1. gaps in information flow, 2. imperfect knowledge of the future, 3. structural buying and selling, and 4. emotional swings of investors. Each of these factors moves prices back and forth daily without regard to underlying value that could eventually be realized by a patient investor. Structural selling in 2008 due to the forced deleveraging of major financial institutions and hedge funds created a break between pricing and fundamentals that we believe is unprecedented. Litman Gregory wrote of this in their recent commentary: "Empirical Research estimates that hedge funds have eliminated almost all their leverage.

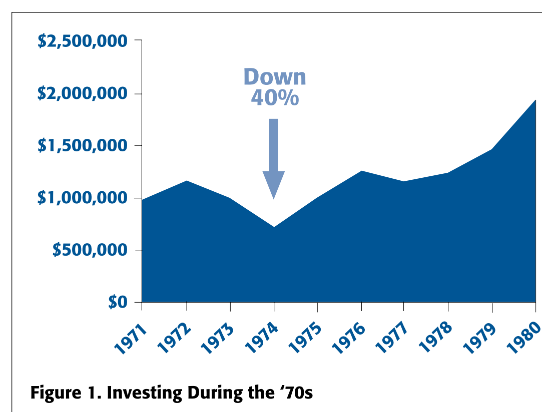



**Figure 1. Investing During the '70s**

In total, Empirical estimates that hedge funds, and to a lesser extent mutual funds, have resulted in $1 trillion of selling, about 7% of the entire equity market and almost 10 times the effect of mutual funds alone in their worst years." Whether you are a real estate investor, small business owner, or stock market investor, it is not difficult to understand the dynamic created by forced sellers. Tremendous opportunity for those with time arbitrage on their side.

### TIME ARBITRAGE ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR SHORT TERM GUESSING

Time arbitrage can be applied at multiple levels of your financial strategy, including asset classes, market subsectors, and individual stock and bond selections. Say you are considering an investment in Acme Shipping Company (a fictitious example). Acme has global operations and dominant market share. Based on earnings of $4.00 per share using a normalized average of the past five years, the current price at $32 reflects an 8x multiple. Your analysis estimates an intrinsic value closer to $45. The company pays $1.50 per share dividend each year. After careful analysis of all facets of the company, management, industry, and economic climate, you determine that normalized earnings in 2013 (5 years out) should be at least $7 per share even on conservative assumptions. You expect the multiple paid on earnings for Acme will return to its historical trend of 10x which, using a very simplistic valuation measure, puts the future value estimate at $70. Including dividends, at today's price, your five year pre-tax return would be roughly 20% per year assuming your conservative case works out for the company and you sell the shares at the end of year five. Importantly, price fluctuations along the way do not change this result, either up or down, unless you sell or invest more cash along the way. See Figure 2. The potential returns for investing in Acme appear compelling when compared to government bonds yielding 4% annually so you decide to buy shares.

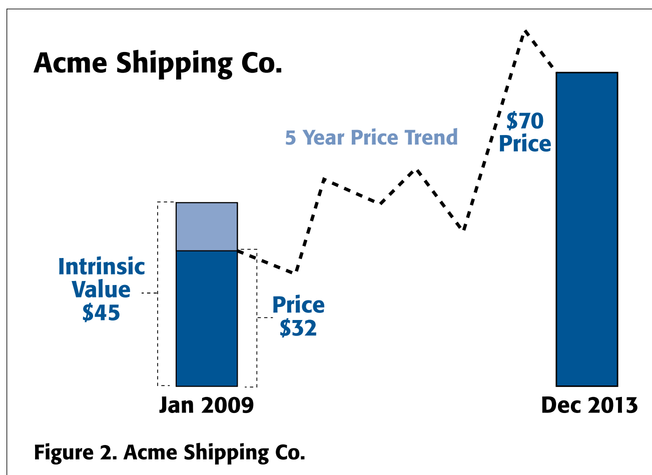



Figure 2. Acme Shipping Co.

If your investment approach depends on forecasting market prices (whether day-trading, technical or trend analysis, reading tea leaves, what have you) you must now determine whether Acme is going to trade higher or lower in the next few weeks or months based on all the factors that drive short term market pricing discussed above. You are concerned that buying at $32 may create a paper loss if the price drops to $28 in the next few months. You are concerned that if you don't buy today, the price may go up to $40 next week. Faced with the Herculean task of predicting market movements, your emotions will ride the roller coaster while you analyze mounds of data (including the latest feeds from MSNBC) in a desperate attempt to stay ahead of daily price movements. And, you are not comforted by the dismal results of such attempts at fortune telling. Nor do the investing greats offer much hope of success. As William Ackham of Pershing Square wrote in his latest investor letter "If we believed that it was possible to accurately predict short-term market or individual stock price movements and we had the capability to do so ourselves, we might have a different approach."

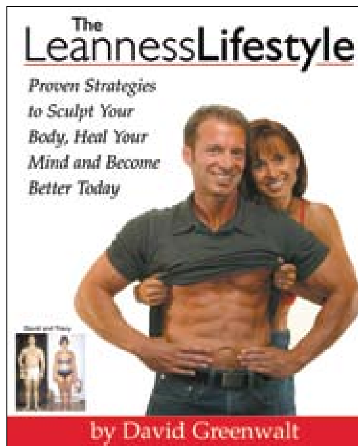
### NOT EASY, BUT EFFECTIVE

Investing in a world of uncertainty requires making educated decisions that create the highest probability of success. Time arbitrage is not easy. Every month of a bear market can feel like years. The impulse to "do something" can be overwhelming. Unfortunately, that impulse, more often than not, hurts the investor's long-term returns. Time arbitrage, on the other hand, yields tremendous financial and psychological benefits for those with the discipline to hold fast against the noise. This is an edge worth cultivating. It costs nothing but time and can be applied by everyone from novice to expert.

# Client Focus

## Brightworth Clients Featured on HGTV

Larry and Dianne Samuelson of Atlanta, Georgia were recently featured on an episode of the new HGTV series, "My Big Amazing Renovation." The show filmed their Colorado mountain home renovation project for over a year and a half, including interviews with Larry and Dianne, their children, and the builder overseeing the project. The renovations included expanding their living space and adding three master suites, a media room, a new kitchen, and a large family room. Dianne indicated that her favorite new feature is the chic rustic look of their new kitchen countertops and cabinets. The Samuelson family spent this holiday season relaxing in their fully decorated and updated mountain home.




# Fitness in the New Year: It's Not Simple, But It *Can* Be Successful

by David Greenwalt, B.Sc., CSCS, Founder of the Leanness Lifestyle University

It's a New Year and this is going to be the one where you conquer those weight problems and get in shape. But how to begin? You've been told that weight loss is supposed to be easy. Family, friends, co-workers, and the perpetually thin offer you their unsolicited five-word diet advice absolutely free of charge. "Eat less and exercise more!" Twentieth-century journalist H.L. Mencken once said: "For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong."

"For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong."
*–H.L. Mencken*

Everyone knows a little something about food and exercise and most everyone knows they can't take in more calories than they expend to maintain weight. This knowledge coupled with an oversimplified, five-word diet approach to weight loss creates a mindset of "I know what to do…I just need to do it." And if you are someone who has battled your weight and failed more times than you've won you probably feel guilty. You wonder what the others have that you don't. "Am I just weak willed? Am I just lazy? Is my metabolism broken? Am I doomed to my genetics?" If this describes you then you are what I call a "weight fighter."

My experience is that for the most part, weight fighters are not weak-willed, you are not entirely lazy, your metabolism is not broken and you are not doomed to poor genetics. You might, however, be unable to manage your weight on your own with basic information and a hope. None of us gets it all. None of us acts as our own physician, attorney, plumber, accountant, and electrician. We all rely on others with various expert knowledge and skills to fill in the gaps. Weight management is no different. Over the years I've developed strategies that address the total package of what it takes for success, starting with knowledge but then moving to mindset and finally the physical activities. The strategies listed below, what I've called the Weight Fighter Six, will get you going in the right direction:

1. You must understand and then properly set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound) goals specific to the weight-loss journey.
2. You must develop an incredibly clear "WHY." Your WHY gives clarity, purpose, and internal motivation to the journey.
3. Think leverage. You must understand how to use takeaways and rewards properly. We call this leveraging. The right level of accountability combined with leveraging can be amazingly powerful.
4. Education plus tools. You need a proven, science-based body transformation system encompassing not only nutrition and exercise, but also biological, habitual, and emotional-hunger drivers. This education must be backed up with applicable strategies to incorporate livable nutrition and exercise tools.
5. You must honor a promise to give yourself a bit more personal attention and time during your weight-loss journey.
6. Get help. Just as you would hire a financial advisor, electrician, physician, or attorney who specializes in something you aren't trained or equipped to handle, you probably need to employ the knowledge and accountability of a wellness coach who has the skills necessary to empower you to move forward.

When it comes to fitness and nutrition, an effective plan takes more than simple knowledge of "calories in minus calories out" plus the desire to change. Twenty-five years of experience working with thousands of women and men have convinced me that the Weight Fighter Six strategies will put you on the road to success. Complete implementation of these strategies will make your scale behave, once and for all.

*David Greenwalt (815.973.0142) is founder of The Leanness Lifestyle University. His coaching service has helped clients across the country achieve their fitness and nutrition goals through a combination of personal attention and process-driven accountability. Brightworth partner, Alan Gotthardt, and at least one Brightworth client are very pleased students of The Leanness Lifestyle. www.LeannessLifestyle.com*