

Prior to the year 2000, all of my investments were in Real Estate ... over the years, I have had 31 investments in the USA and 13 in Western Canada, all successful except for one ... for a few short years, I invested in the Public Stock markets, and like most, **lost lots of money and lots of sleep** ...

Investments in the public stock markets, whether in equities, bonds, cash, have been a sore point with me for the past 12 years. I am now, for the most part, totally divorced from investments in the public stock markets and here is WHY:

1. **I lost money, consistently**, and so did most of my personal and business peers; I hung in there, through multiple drops in the market, through the income trust legislative changes, until the stock market crisis of early May 2010, precipitated by the European bond crises ... I thought "I have had enough of all of this, I am not going to ride another roller coaster to the bottom again"
2. I realized **all four North American indices moved almost unanimously, in tandem** ... now, tell me why four indices, made of different proportional holdings of different classes of investments, would move in tandem? ... one would think all this talk about investing in the fundamentals would mean something ... wrong!
3. I realized that all **stock markets were led by 'movements of mass psychology'** ... the whole idea that one might think out their stock market moves with some degree of intelligence, simply went out the window ... not to comforting for a thinking person.
4. **Very few people made money over the past 10 years in the stock markets**, unless they invested themselves instead of relying upon 'investment advisors'.
 - To the end of 2010, all four market indices ended up at the same level, whether one compared horizons of 3, 5, or 10 years ... check it out!! ... the best was the S&P/TSX Composite.
 - Almost all investment advisors failed to do better than these four market indices!
5. **I experienced extreme and frequent volatility**; many explanations were advanced for this; for me, it does not matter; I have no intention of letting my life deteriorate to the extent that I have to watch my investments each and every day; I plan on enjoying my days including some stress free travels.
6. **Common philosophies** advanced by 'investment advisors' **do NOT work anymore!**
 - diversify by appropriate balance between stocks, bonds, and cash
 - diversify by sector and geography [I've experience things cut up into 200 pieces ... check yours]
 - keep no more than a set percent in any one investment
 - buy and hold, even through the downturns, for 5 to 10 years
 - don't time the market; WRONG! ... the only ones making money are those that do!

7. I learned of **lightening fast trading moves by computer algorithms** dominated by the big equity and pension fund investment organizations; do any of us as small investors stand a chance against these dominating forces?

8. I learned of the **access to alternate exchanges**, by the big equity and pension fund investment organizations, about 38 or them in the USA and a couple in Canada; why do they use these alternate trading exchanges? ... because they do **NOT have the regulatory oversight** that is now being put in place on the four major North American exchanges ... comforting isn't it! ... these exchanges are sometimes referred to as 'dark exchanges' and they are cutting into the business of the large known exchanges.

9. I expect all North American **stock markets to perform worse in the next 10 years**, than they have in the last 10 ... so, why would I invest here?

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