



GREAT DIAMOND
PARTNERS

Sunday, April 5, 2020 | Smiling at Strangers

I have a new routine. After working all day at home, I hit the road for a walk at 5:00. Physically and mentally I just need to get out of the house, get the blood flowing and reacquire a sense of sanity. With phone in hand, I either call a friend to commiserate or listen to newly introduced music. It's my daily escape and reset button.

As I pass others along the route, we smile, nod and say hi. Even though we are separated by 20 feet of pavement and a double yellow line, in that instant there exists an understanding that we are feeling the same. It's a camaraderie that wasn't there before. I don't know anything about these people, but our expressions say we share similar emotions, conveying, "It's nice to see other people." "I hope you're OK." "Wow, this is hard."

The current health crisis is a great equalizer. The virus doesn't care who we are. It's infecting people regardless of age, economic status or nationality. We are all sheltering in place - one source estimates that a staggering 82% of the gross domestic product (the economy) is under a stay-at-home order¹. Emotionally, this is hard.

I could go for a walk in Seattle, Tucson or Naples, Florida and have the same experience. Smiling at strangers across the double yellow line. I don't know anything about you, but I know how you feel.

There will be plenty of positives that emerge from this experience. Even as our lives begin to thankfully diverge, perhaps we will continue to smile at strangers, but then slow down and genuinely ask how they are.

STEVEN TENNEY
Founding Partner & Chief Executive Officer

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It is not
in numbers,
but in unity,
that our great
strength lies.

THOMAS PAINE

¹ Michael Gapen, chief U.S. economist at Barclays <<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/02/job-losses-in-march-could-be-the-worst-in-a-decade-and-thats-just-the-beginning.html>>

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