

# Sound Advice



## Saturday Morning Shopping

By Rod Tyler, CFP, R.F.P., CLU

One recent Saturday morning, I decided to change my usual ritual. For as long as I remember our family has been organized along the lines of doing what you are good at, and letting others do likewise. Translation – I would wash and service the cars, get the different errands completed that you couldn't do on week days, and maybe, just maybe, sneak off to the coffee shop to meet one of my friends. Earlier in life, I also spent many a Saturday morning driving boys to and from the hockey rink or Tae Kwando, or some other venue. I think you get the idea because if you have children, you too have likely spent a bit of time apprenticing for your professional chauffeur's license.

However, I decided it was time for a change, time to see how the other half lives, to go where no brave man (me) has gone before. I told my wife that I would go with her and help her with Saturday morning shopping. She immediately gasped, asked if I was okay, and then said, "Yes, now I can show you where all the food in those fantastic meals really comes from and how hard it is getting it all organized." So off we went.

Our first stop was at the Farmer's Market. We have always included lots of fresh produce in our family meals, and what better way to get fresh vegetables and fruit than directly from the people who grow it. I quickly learned that, if you want

the best, freshest produce, you need to be there early! I also learned that we were not alone. The rest of Regina's market garden clients apparently had this figured out as well.

After we had gathered all the week's produce, carried by hand off to our vehicle, I said to my shopping partner, "That was easy! I am glad I came." She then reminded me that we were just getting started. Now we needed to get all the other things we use in everyday life. So off we went to the grocery store. It seems that I had forgotten that there are certainly a lot of other necessities in life that I had taken for granted would always be there when I wanted and needed them. Silly me!

As we passed through the aisles, I suddenly realized that the dish and laundry detergents, the paper products, the cleaning agents, the razor blades and the ketchup and mustard were all very much part of my everyday life. I just hadn't thought about having to buy them. They had just always been there. I also felt a wave of embarrassment that I had never given my better half adequate credit for doing all this work and making my life so easy. I also



*Procter & Gamble*



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realized that many of these “convenience” items had, in fact, become “necessities” for all of us.

Then a second thought occurred. If this was true for me, how many others were in the same boat. The answer came quickly. Just about everybody in the western world, and the rest of the world too, particularly in Asia, South America and the Middle East.

Then I began thinking, “I wonder what companies are supplying all these modern conveniences and necessities?” I took out my cell phone and “googled” a few of the brands of goods in the shopping cart. The answers came quickly. The razor blades were made by Gillette. The cleaning products were from Procter and Gamble. Many of the delightful sauces and specialty foods were produced by various companies in the Nestle family.

Our Saturday morning shopping routine also included a pit stop at Tim Horton’s for a bagel and cup of coffee. That was after we picked up some home supplies at Canadian Tire and some products from Shoppers Drug Mart. Oh yes, and we did stop to get an HP ink printer cartridge at our friendly computer retailer. At that moment, my cell phone vibrated. It was a message from my friend, asking if we were going to meet at the usual place before going to the Rider game!

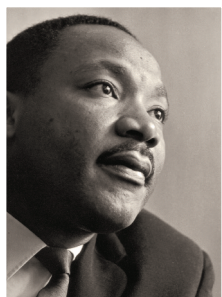
Then it dawned on me that there was an obvious theme about everything I was doing. I was buying the goods (my razor blades) and services (my cell phone service) that I wanted and

needed and for which I was willing to pay. And I knew I was not alone. Everybody else was doing the same! Well, maybe I didn’t really need that extra special Dijon mustard, but I did want it and I did buy it!

Then came the final epiphany. If I and everybody else were doing the same thing, buying goods and services which we all wanted and needed and were willing to pay for, then there was money to be made. Why not buy the shares of those companies supplying all these modern goods and services? And maybe, just maybe, these companies could be purchased at an attractive price. After all, the headlines for months, nay years, had continued to insist that the world was near collapse and we should all place our faith in buying gold, or real estate, or government bonds or lotto tickets.

When I got home, I opened up a recent statement from a couple of the mutual funds I own. I looked down the list of the top ten holdings. Magically they included Shoppers Drug Mart, Tim Horton’s, Johnson & Johnson, Nestle, Research in Motion (my BlackBerry), Apple Computer and a whole number of other companies whose products and services I was buying every day.

This really reinforced that the best way to assure myself and my clients that they would have a means to afford all of these much needed goods and services was to actually own a piece of the company that provides them to us. I was not just a consumer, but an owner!



## Estate Planning Failures:

# Martin Luther King Jr. – A tale of greatness and procrastination

By Rod Tyler, CFP, R.F.P., CLU

By the time you read this story, the U.S. will have just celebrated a national holiday in honour of Martin Luther King. You have, no doubt, heard or read of King’s famous speech, “I have a dream”, delivered on August 28, 1963 from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to a quarter of a million people of diverse ethnicities at the largest gathering of protesters in Washington’s history.

Today, at a time in U.S. history when the distinct lack of political leadership and the presence of petty political bickering are on display for the whole world to see, it seems appropriate to consider the legacy of a real leader, Martin Luther King Jr. It should also be noted that King maintained a policy of not endorsing a political party or candidate. He said, “I feel someone must remain in the position of non-alignment, so that

he can look at both parties and be the consciousness of both – not the servant or master of either.” Given the present circumstance, that sounds refreshing!

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia, the son of a minister of the same name. As a student at Booker T. Washington High School, he was a precocious student, skipping both the 9th and 12th grades, and entered college at age 15 without formally graduating from high school.

Early in life, King was heavily influenced by his father’s classmate, the noted civil rights theologian and educator, Howard Thurman. In 1959, King following the influences of Thurman, undertook a trip to India, to the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi. The trip affected King in a profound way, deepening his understanding of non-violent resistance. He was now even more committed to the struggle of civil rights, especially for black Americans.

King organized and led marches for blacks’ right to vote, desegregation, labour rights and other basic civil rights. Most of these rights were successfully enacted into the law of the United States with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Along the way, there were predictable outbreaks of violence, but King stood committed to a non-violent approach. It is a testament to his character that many possible outbreaks of violence were probably deflected or avoided by his example. Inevitably, he became the lightning rod for the most extreme of bigots and hate mongers. On April 4, 1968, King was assassinated by a gun man, an allegedly escaped convict, James Earl Ray. Even today, there remains a conspiracy theory as to whether Ray was the real assassin.

King was forever aware of his vulnerability to dying a violent death and he carefully planned what was to be said to the public in this event. However, even though he was clearly aware of his mortality, he could not bring himself to have a will drawn up. As a result, he died without one, or as it is said in legal terms, he died intestate.

Some of the most significant parts of King’s legacy include his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 as well as numerous other national awards for his work towards civil rights. Today more than 730 cities in the United States have streets named after King. It is on the 3rd Monday of every January, each year that Martin Luther King Day is celebrated.

The rest of his legacy has been marred by in-fighting amongst his children over the handling of his estate. There have been claims of secrecy, mismanagement and appropriation of assets. After considerable legal cost and family humiliation, the estate and his children entered into an agreement that ended the first round of fighting.

Eventually King’s heirs formed a corporation to manage the



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estate, but inevitably that just resulted in more legal battles as to who would control the corporation.

In more recent developments, Howard Ballou, a television anchor in southern Mississippi, and the son of one of King’s former confidants, was sued by the estate for being in possession of many of King’s personal papers and historic documents.

In addition, Martin Luther King Jr.’s son, Dexter King, is demanding on behalf of the estate that the Library of Congress pay \$20 million for the papers previously donated to this public institution. In order to pay for them, there are plans to mint a commemorative Martin Luther King Jr. coin in 2014.

The lesson to be learned from King’s life is pretty clear to all of us today. Civil rights for all people regardless of colour or ethnicity, are a basic freedom to which everyone is entitled. The other lesson must certainly be that procrastinating about writing your own will is not a very good strategy. Had King even written the simplest of wills, most of this public airing of family matters might never have happened.

**If you or someone in your family could benefit from discussing your personal wishes for your own estate and will, please call me. I will be pleased to offer you my guidance and then put you in touch with a lawyer specializing in this area of law.**



# TEAM UPDATE

As we move into a new year, it's important to take a moment to reflect and to appreciate achievements and accomplishments of the year past. We've mentioned many times before, that at Tyler & Associates we continuously strive to increase our knowledge through continued education, and to make continued improvements to the level of service we offer to you.



## Here's what we were up to at Tyler & Associates in 2011.



**Rod Tyler, CFP, R.F.P., CLU**

- In 2011 Rod was awarded the **FELLOW OF FPSC™**, a national award given by the Financial Planners Standards Council for significant contributions to the field.
- Rod achieved his **Accretive Elite™** Advisor designation. This designation is granted to advisors who undergo a rigorous process to show that they exceed the market standard for client service excellence.
- Rod was also featured in an article in the *Financial Post* in March of 2011 which you can read on our website at [www.tylerandassociates.ca](http://www.tylerandassociates.ca). Just go to the "What's New Tab" and select "Readings". The article is called "Tending to the Future".



**Mea Cicansky, CFP**

- This past year Mea participated in the Life License Qualifying Program course of study and successfully completed both examinations.



**Zena Amundsen, CANDIDATE FOR CFP**

- In 2011 Zena continued to work toward the completion of her CFP designation.
- Zena also participated in the Life License Qualifying Program course of study and successfully completed both examinations.



**Lorraine Hope**

- Lorraine joined our team in October of 2011.
- She has already begun working diligently on the course of study to complete the Canadian Investment Funds Course.



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