



Holiday Greetings from the Ware House
100% fact free newsletter

I promise that I will NOT mention Donald Trump in this newsletter. Oops. I have officially reached "Geezerhood" as in "Old Geezer." Here's the evidence:

Daughter Alex (17) from family room: "Dad, can you turn off the oven? I'm baking brownies."
Dad: "What?"
Daughter: "Turn off the oven!"
Dad: "What?"
Daughter: "The OVEN!"
Dad: "What about the oven?"
Daughter Nikki (15): "Dad, get hearing aids."

Sad but true. I've become like the three old geezers on the park bench:
Geezer #1: "It's windy."
Geezer #2: "No, it's Thursday."
Geezer #3: "So am I, let's go get a drink."

So, I stuffed my Ego in a desk drawer and went to the audiologist. And now I am officially the bionic man, i.e. geezer. (There are many benefits to hearing bionically, though one drawback is that during speeches I can now hear the people in back snoring and others removing and shaking their wrist watches.) Not too worried about aging, I hear that 63 is the new 61.

Biggest fun these days: watching our girls in their activities. Nik made varsity basketball team as a Freshman. (Only one) She warms the bench a lot, but when she does play, Mom gets so excited that she, well, embarrasses friends and family. But being self-aware, Janey was kind enough to buy me this shirt to wear at games:



(Note: I take off my hearing aids during games...) In the photo below, Nik did play and was second high scorer:



Alex has become an award-winning dancer. And both girls are good students. Our hope is that Nikki is a good student in her own right and not from this

early practice in rubber-necking:



In one holiday letter, I joked that I never know how many dogs we own because

Janey may adopt one while I'm traveling. Indeed, my joke became reality. Pictured here is Alex with her new love, Lola.



As you know, the hardest task is taking care of a baby, AFTER

raising a puppy. Now I know why Janey is so loud at basketball games: she has a lot of frustration to let out. Lola is a hand full. The Ware house wishes you all a lovely holiday and New Year.



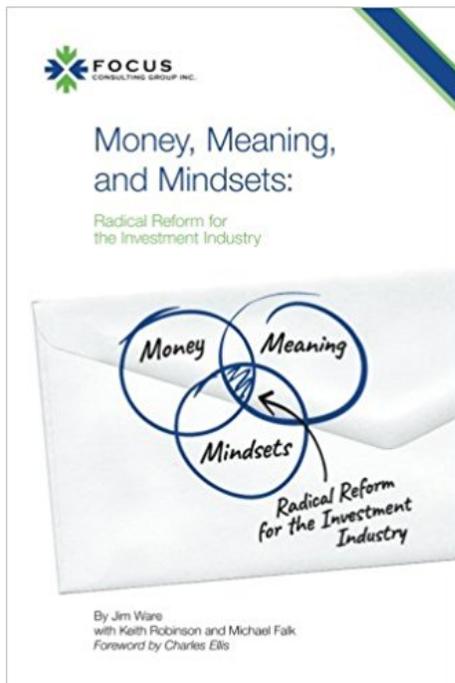
Focus Consulting Group (FCG) continues to be a founder's dream. After a mere 20 years, the team has come together beautifully. (Hopefully our clients don't take this long to assemble a winning team...)

We penned another book this year, after Michael Falk's successful one last year: *Let's All Learn How to Fish...To Sustain Long-Term Economic Growth*.

(No, it's not a book about fishing...)

Michael just returned from a European road show, speaking to numerous CFA societies about his book.

This year's offering is shown below, authored by me, Keith, and Michael, and has sold nearly 9 copies. (Admittedly, my



mother bought 5.)

Safe to say that all the partners of FCG are happy to take down time after a ton of travel. For myself, I flew around the world 5 times, with what amounted to the equivalent of a trip from Chicago to NYC almost every day.

Given FCG's workload and the availability of excellent talent, we added two new members to the team: Jamie Ziegler (co-author of the original *High Performing Investment Teams*, so actually she is

returning to the team) and Bryan Kozlowski, whose background includes time with McLagan, Casey Quirk, and Greenwich. (An investment industry Hat Trick.) Given my impaired eyesight and hearing, plus my regularly occurring senior moments, we needed to shore up some weak spots. That would be me.

Though under the heading "even a blind sow finds a truffle now and then," I'm pleased with some of the blogs I wrote, all available for free on our website.

Each year we gather for a year-end holiday party where we celebrate our victories and review my—I mean OUR—challenges. Here we are assembled under one roof—a rarity—after eating and drinking far too much.



left to right, a descriptor for each: me ("truffle thing"), Liz (efficient/helpful), Bryan (thorough/calm), Keith (effective/wise), Laura (precise/reliable), Jamie (Enneagram Queen/creative), Michael (thoughtful/deep)

During the course of a year, we hear many amusing remarks but my favorite this year was from a CEO discussing the need for high levels of trust. We explained that sincerity was a huge factor in high trust. The CEO responded: "No problem, I can fake that." (I'm not sure he was kidding...)

In all seriousness, we thank our clients for the trust they place in us to deliver value and model the attitudes and behaviors that characterize great teams.

With sincere best wishes for the New Year,

The Focus Consulting Group

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