



## **My View**

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### **The Need to Sensationalize!**

As if a global credit crisis followed by a capital market meltdown wasn't enough, we are now faced with a health pandemic, which not only threatens each of us personally, but also instills financial hardship on many sectors of the economy.

Swine Flu is caused by those strains of influenza that usually infect pigs. The current flu outbreak is due to a new strain of influenza, a virus subtype, H1N1, which contains genes that appear to be closely related to swine influenza. The origin of this new strain is unknown. However, if one were to believe the media hype, we might see ourselves growing a snout, fangs, and tail, starring in our very own horror movie. This obviously is not what is happening but the constant bombardment of visual images via radio, television, newspaper, and the Internet is enough to make anyone buy into the emotion. Unfortunately, it may well bankrupt some pork producers, slaughter houses, handlers, shippers, and retailers along the way. Once again the power of the media never fails to amaze me. If they could just learn to use it to promote the positive instead of the negative, what a different world this would be.

By allowing your mind to focus on this health alert any minor symptoms automatically lead to self-diagnosis. If you feel a sniffle, a tickle in your throat, or congestion in your lungs... "My God, I must have the Swine Flu!" Not a cold, a sore throat, or simple allergies.

Knowledge is good, and being informed is important, but it should not rule our lives. Those who live vicariously through soap operas or TV melodrama, lead a sad existence. How is what is currently going on any different than the capital market meltdown? We focused on it and then it became our reality. Both cases are based on some truths and issues that went wrong but how much is fact versus fiction?

Wash your hands with hot water and soap; do not sneeze on people or into your hand and then touch someone else; avoid crowds, especially in a confined environment like an airplane; stay home if you are not feeling well as to not to spread your germs around. These are all common sense behaviours which we are all guilty of not doing on a regular basis. Life sometimes gets too busy and maybe this is just one way that we are forced to slow down and refocus our priorities on what is truly important.

Behavioural finance and behavioural psychology are closely interrelated, and by understanding ourselves and the behaviour of others and/or the capital markets, this enables us to come from a position of strength instead of one of reactive weakness.

That's my view

Victor

