

October 2007

Dear Client,

Attached are your quarterly account reports and sustainable investing newsletter from First Affirmative.

During the past few years, I've been regularly going to California to visit and help my parents. My dear father passed away peacefully in his sleep at home on September 17 at age 85 after suffering several years from the cruel disease, Lewy Body Dementia. Of course Alice and I dropped everything and went down right away. About 200 turned out for the funeral two days later. I delivered one of the eulogies, helped carry the traditional simple casket, and finally shoveled a little soil. Shoveling soil into the grave, a Jewish tradition, is considered the ultimate act of kindness because it cannot ever be repaid. Humble WWII fighter pilot, retired educator, ceramicist, tennis player, observer of the human condition, and humorist, he was loved by all whom he touched. His unconditional loving-kindness is remembered by his wife of 53 years (my mother) and the rest of our family. With a straight A+ report, he passed the school of life with honors—and for extra credit he helped us see a little humor in it all.

A helpful little book I'm working through, [The Grief Recovery Handbook](#) by James and Friedman, says that grief is the body's reaction to loss and the adjustment from what was to what is. The book is accessible and written for regular folks like us who want to learn about resolving grief. I'd recommend it whether one is experiencing a new loss, old unresolved grief, or expects to someday experience any loss—of a loved one, divorce, change in health, job, status, etc.

One observation in the book is that because we are uncomfortable with negative or painful emotions, we try to “help” those around us by trying to get them to quickly and heroically get over their grief—“you'll get over it soon” and “don't feel bad, you can just get another [dog, spouse, father, job, leg, etc.].” This does not help. It stops short the grief resolution process—feeling normal and natural emotions and moving through them. Simple, quiet, accepting listening seems to be one of the most powerful ways we can help grievers.

On another note, I'm looking forward to the annual First Affirmative retreat and Social Investment Forum conference in November. I have been attending these conferences since 1986. By participating, networking, sharing ideas with colleagues, and bringing back ideas and knowledge, my service offering can be greatly enhanced for client benefit.

If you have questions, comments, or changes to report that might affect how your finances are managed, or anything else, please contact me. Otherwise, I look forward to talking with you at your next scheduled financial review.

Best regards,

