

# **PUTTING THE MARKET INTO PERSPECTIVE**

## **OCTOBER 1997**

Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, was a day that brought bad tidings from the financial front, but, more personally, it was the early morning phone call I received from my mother that was most devastating. My grandfather had passed away suddenly, from pneumonia, at the age of 90. At the office we were inundated with calls from other brokers, some posing theories about the market crash and others seeking advice and reassurances. Amidst the panic and chaos surrounding us, my brother and I were concerned, not about our stocks but about the welfare of our family.

Later that week at the wake I took my place with my family, greeting the other mourners. By that time, even in my small hometown, near Albany, the hot topic of conversation was the market crisis. I hadn't expected, however, so many concerned inquiries as to how my business would fare. It reminded me of some people's skepticism about the brokerage business, as if it's no more scientific than legalized gambling.

I explained to them that, ironically, it is our methodical approach to the business, and picking stocks, which gives me confidence. On that day it allowed me to grieve properly for the loss of my grandfather unburdened by the mini crash and free of panic. We adhere to our method for investing that involves extensive research into the strength and durability of the companies we choose to invest in. Unlike a lot of people in our business, we don't take risks bouncing from one 'stock du jour' to another, falling prey to fleeting trends. We allow for the natural fluctuations of the stock markets, by selecting only those stocks that will weather any stormy days.