

Ethics recommends Goodwill to All and this leads to Windfall Returns

Nripesh Kumar *

Relationship means different thing to different people. But here, by relationship, I mean, one's relationship with one's friends, colleagues, relatives including inlaws, neighbours etc. Here, I propose Relationship as an investment option.

At a time when most of the investment destinations e.g. Share market or Gold are not yielding satisfactory returns, I often wonder where one should invest in terms of time and money to get a steady flow of return. Time, as the old saying goes, is money and hence I consider time also as an asset to be invested judiciously. Of course, people rich in terms of physical assets are always craving to have more time and people with plenty of available time want to have more money. But, all of us have either time or money or both to invest in Relationships, may be in different proportions. So, everybody can invest.

Share market is very unpredictable in the Short Run and one does not have the patience to wait indefinitely what is referred to as Long Term in the financial jargon. Gold, once considered a very safe option, also loses glitters at times. So, for all those rich, wealthy and affluent people in terms of time and money, I propose a safer investment option which gives

a good ROI (Return on Investment) which I refer as Return on Relationship (RoR). Think of Relationship as an investment. Relationship as an investment has got some unique features;

1. **Everybody can Invest.** Any investment in terms of time or money will do. There is no MOQ (Minimum Order Quantity). So anybody and everybody can become an investor because all of us have something to spare, either time or money. Very few people have got the luxury of having both e.g. some top government officers, senior professors or honourable judges. If you feel that you have nothing to invest in relationships, neither time nor money, please don't read any further. You are not an investor.
2. **Medium Risk, High Return :** Relationships fall into Medium Risk, High Return category of investment. Every relationship does not yield good returns. Some may yield less or some may even yield zero return but you can expect few investments to yield excellent returns. These few include those who help you in getting married, getting jobs, arranging

* *The author is presently working as a Senior Manager in Aircraft Upgrade Research and Design Centre at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Nasik. E-mail : nripeshk@yahoo.com

admission for your kids in good public schools/ colleges or even finding their life partners. These few returns can compensate for many investments gone bad.

3. **Think Long Term :** ROR gets better and better with time. Few relationship yield early returns. Most take time. Be patient. Relationships, like fruits, taste sweeter when ripe.
4. **Go for SIP (Systematic Investment Plan):** ROR is very less or sometimes even zero if you stop investing into it. But it gives a continuous flow of return if you remain invested. If you maintain a healthy relationship with your neighbours /relatives who stay nearby, you can drop your kids at their place for a few hours when you two are going out or want some private moments at your place. You may also expect some dinners / lunches during the period when your wife and kids have gone somewhere on summer vacation.
5. **Wait for Windfall :** Some ROR may not be continuous but may give a huge unexpected return. Consider your relationship with your top boss. It doesn't give return every week or every month but may help you at the time of Promotions / Raise. Let's face the fact that promotions don't depend much on one's output or efficiency.
6. **Ignore Nobody :** Here, I would like to give a word of caution. While making good relationship with top boss, your immediate boss should not be ignored in any way. Because, although he may not ensure you a promotion / raise, he can spoil the show anytime. Similarly, don't ignore any neighbour or relative at the cost of others. Remember, even a stopped clock tells right time twice in a day.

7. **Independent of Indices:** ROR does not depend on Sensex, Nifty, Bullion prices or Inflation. It is recession or inflation proof. No recession can affect a good relationship. Rather, to some, it gives better return during recession.
8. **Goodwill as Dividend:** Good relations can get you something which money can't buy. If you have good relationship with your colleagues, friends, neighbours, you can expect a good Word of Mouth. In that case, you don't have to sell yourself hard. You don't need any advertisement. You get dividend in the form of goodwill.
9. **Avoid frequent redemption:** One unique thing about ROR is that, the lesser you ask, the more you get. So, please don't rush for redemption very often. People, close to you, know and understand your requirements. You don't have to tell. Bad investments may not fetch you anything even if you ask but good investments will send you your return at the right time.
10. **No need to Time the Market:** Anytime is good to start investing in relationships. Here, you don't have to Time the Market. Consider offering lifts or vehicles to colleagues or neighbours at the time of their need. It will pay dividend at the right time. But think twice before offering similar offer to fairer sex.
11. **Generates intangible assets:** Last but not the least, Relationships are that kind of an investments, where you are never empty handed even when there is no return. Even bad investments get you something satisfaction, happiness and above all the Joy of Giving. So, friends, don't wait for gold prices to go further down or Share market to recover its lost glory. Invest heavily in Relationships. Its safe, gives high returns and is less volatile.