

One of the features of a new year is there is a sense of rebirth. This will be soon matched by days of increasing sunlight, warmer temperatures, already experienced here in Austin, and eventually spring. We hold on to the notion that life goes in circles, just like trees, even if we passengers on Earth head but in one direction with each passing year. There is nothing like aging during a pandemic and flu season to put an even finer focus on the fragility of life. My wife thinks we need to make up for lost travel time....all in 2023.

We must hang tightly to the threads of optimism, a new Congress (even though they can't unite behind one Speaker), improved vaccines, and an economy that WILL improve.

Importantly, this new year began by reading Dan Rather's book What Unites Us. You know Dan from CBS, going back to the 1960's, his Emmy Award winning reporting and his wonderful conversations on The Big Interview. From the book, I am pondering these questions:

1. Is America suffering from a deficit of empathy?
2. Do native Texans have a different level of empathy?
3. Why do certain people in the US lecture us on morality and personal responsibility when they sit from their porch of privilege?
4. How did the Republic of Texas (from 1836- 1845 before it joined the United States) encourage immigrants to their young nation?
5. How can we recreate the "united citizenry" quilting together different cultural fabrics?
6. Will stereotypes die off as generations depart us?
7. How do we defeat the forces of intolerance and emerge as a stronger, united nation?

I urge you to read this profound book. Visit your local book store and order a copy or do the usual dance with Amazon or Barnes & Noble.

Favorite Podcast of Week One: We opened 2023 with several podcasts that included Dr. Lee Fredriksen of Hinge Marketing. For those of you, like Steve Lundgren of ID Edge, you might enjoy hearing what Lee says about the value of trade shows and how buyers are changing.

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/4383588/lee-fredriksen-of-hinge-marketing>

Quote I'm Pondering: "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality." Martin Luther King.....as cited in Tim Love's new book- Discovering Truth. (destined to be a best seller!)

Here's to a great week. Make it significant. Rick