



CHEVAL NOIR INC
CLINICAL RESEARCH CONSULTING

December 2010

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Resurrecting a tradition started a decade ago, the Annual Letter serves to gather the experiences of the year and distill them into a few personal conclusions.

One of the main themes of 2010 was health challenges. It seems that so many of my friends are dealing with new and barely understood neurological and auto-immune challenges. Where cancer used to be the ultimate equalizer among us, I am encountering an alarming amount of people dealing with conditions of incapacitation, causing the medical community to shake its head. Working in clinical research gives me a unique vantage point and yet, if the drug companies don't see a market, new interventions are left to a grass roots effort. As such, my tolerance for big traditional pharma companies has waned considerably. CNI has made a conscious decision to collaborate with smaller and more compassionate businesses where scientific endeavors align with our philosophy of 'patients, then profit.' It is possible to strike a balance between the pursuit of financial security without sacrificing health protection and promotion.

I have a young friend whose parent is suffering from a debilitating neurological disease. Through our conversations, I am humbled to see the world through this child's eyes - what illness in a family can do to our emotional security. We all know the tired statement that the world is not fair. While the message is true, I encourage all of you to take time to soften the harsh edges of that truism - for yourselves, for loved ones and especially for the young people in your life. Simple gestures and offered reassurances really do have a tremendous impact.

This same young friend renewed my faith in the durability of human decency. She's one of those kids who will stand up for the outcasts - in her youthful world - the 'uncool' among her peers. That kid who sits alone in a cafeteria, or whose family culture is unusual for a small southern town - my friend will go out of her way to make that child feel better, befriended. May we all reacquaint with our inner idealistic child.

The most important message I offer you all is one of prevention. Prevention is the key to a reduction in negative outcomes. In the arena of healthcare, prevention represents the most meaningful activity to promote healthier living. As I explained to an over-achiever and dear friend recently, self-care is not selfish. We owe it to our friends, our families and our causes to take care of our minds and bodies so that they may serve us and all who need us.

I encourage everyone to see the possible.

Sincerely,
Pepper