



Is it just me or are scam artists getting a lot more creative these days?

Every day I run across yet another scheme to separate many desperate fools from their money. At first it's amusing, then it's sad, then it's scary.

You have to be somewhat amused at the lengths some people will go in their Quixotic quests to gain something for nothing. You have to be saddened that some people are so desperate, vulnerable, or just plain out stupid as to think these things are going to come out in their favor. And you have to be a little frightened that, not only do people exist that have some ingenuity but no moral compass whatsoever – and even more frightened that so many people seem to exist who are in fact stupid, desperate, greedy and/or vulnerable.

How does this happen?

Beats me; I'm just a guy making observations. However, one of those observations has to do with my concern that the proliferation of all these things is an indicator of some serious decay occurring in our society.

But I am guessing that a number of factors come into play here. We are bombarded all day every day with this insipid sense of entitlement and because we never really grew up, we have these temper tantrums when life takes a turn for the difficult. Hence, some guy crashing his plane into an IRS building. He blames the government for his problems – and there may be some element of truth to that – but the bottom line is that some, no, most people are not going to be successful entrepreneurs. Some folks make great lieutenants but lousy captains. Some people simply don't make it at all.

This leads me to a confession I must make: I don't need therapy.

My childhood was happy; my life was, is, and continues to be good.

Nonetheless, like everyone else in this our idiotic, self-obsessed, instant gratification culture, I have this sudden compulsion to complain – nay, actually go out and lay the blame on someone else for this my wonderful life. Since it appears to be the vogue thing to do these days, I'll blame it all on my parents.

Darn them, anyway. They didn't give me every little thing I ever wanted. They made me be responsible, honest, and hard working. They demanded that I take responsibility for my actions and work to overcome my shortcomings.

Darn them anyway. Why couldn't they just give me all the money I ever wanted and leave me to my own devices and desires? All the other kids' parents did – I know this because I told them this at every opportunity.

Why did they instill this sense of honesty that makes it so difficult to, say, go out and scam people out of their obviously undeserved cash? Why did they develop this sense that I am responsible for my actions and am the master of my own destiny, when everyone else from headshrinkers to TV twinkies tells me otherwise?

Alas, my parents messed me up. Totally. They made me a fairly honest, somewhat responsible citizen in spite of all my efforts to the contrary and all the exhortations from the rest of the known world.

Darn them, anyway...

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