



RUSHMORE STRATEGY

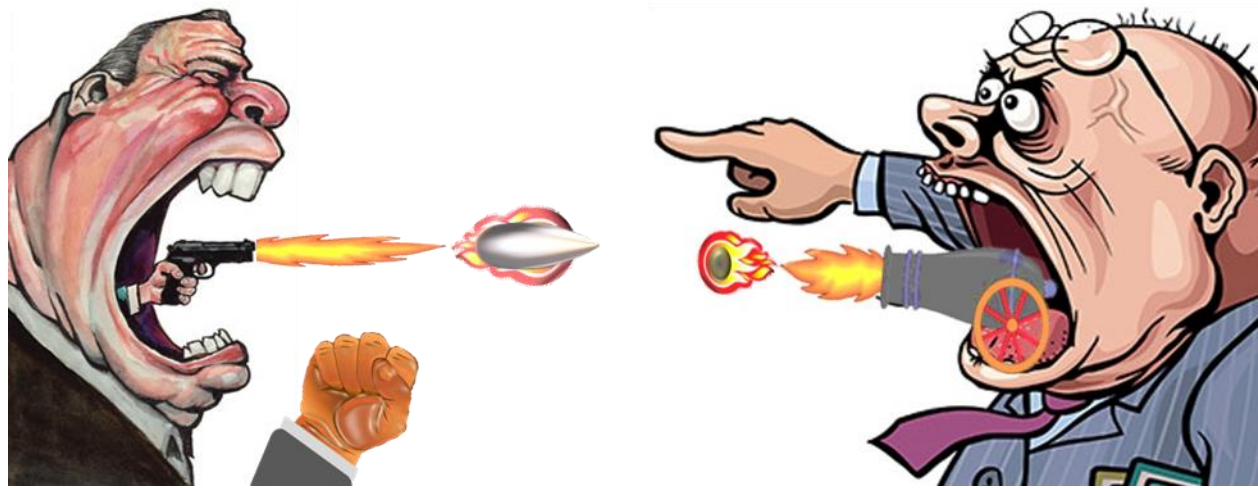


1. State of Distrust in America
2. How Great Leaders have United America
3. Strategies For Today

Robert Porter Lynch

Nov 12, 2024





Have you had a somewhat volatile argument with a friend or family member about politics?

Do you have any grandchildren who have expressed deep concern about the future?

Do you have a sense of angst and uneasiness about the direction of America Today?

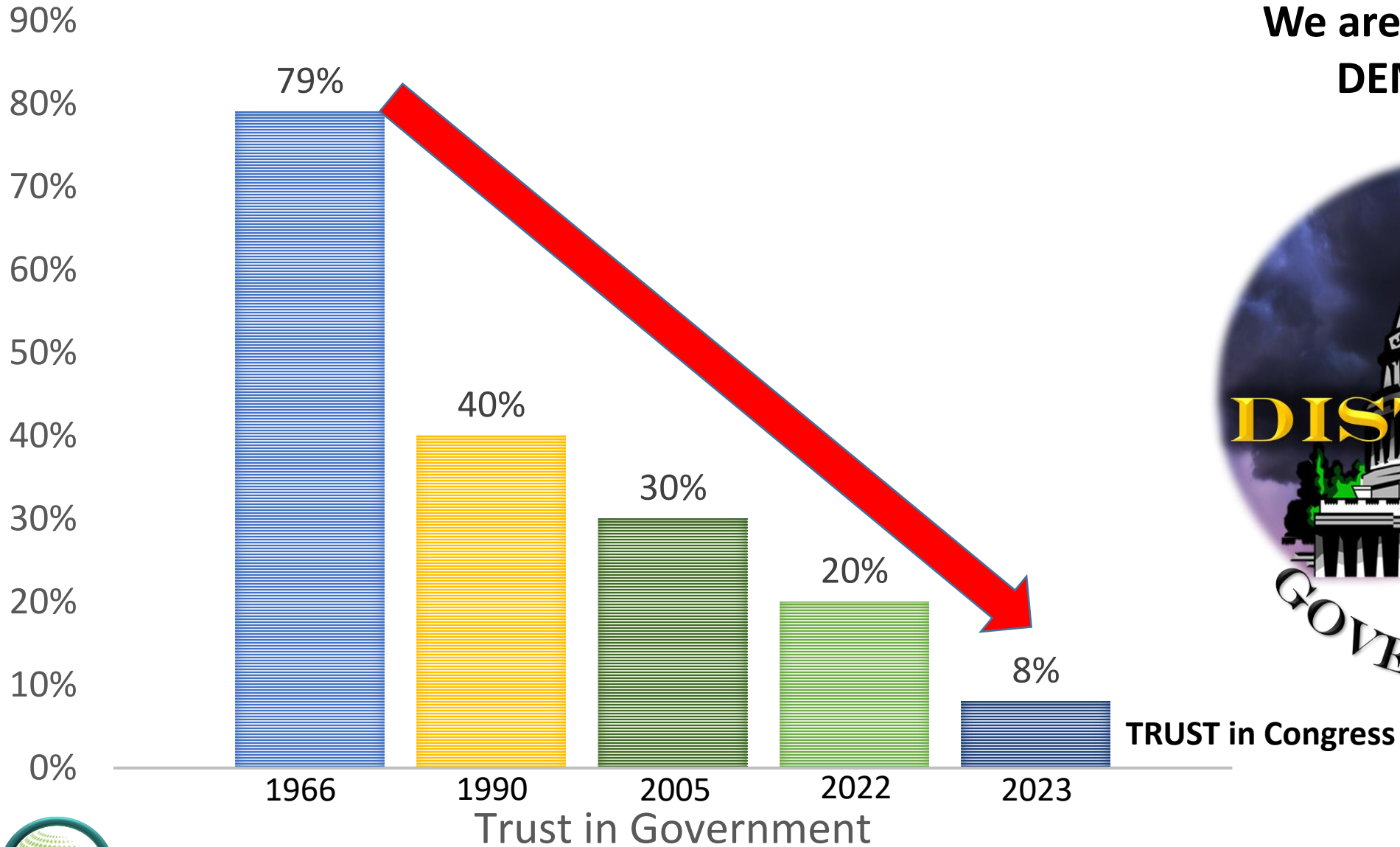


A close-up, black and white photograph of a coin, likely a US quarter, showing the embossed words "IN GOD WE TRUST". The coin is slightly out of focus, with the background being a dark, textured surface.

**If Distrust were a Disease
We'd declare a Pandemic**

THE STATE OF TRUST IN AMERICA

TRUST IN GOVERNMENT



We are FAILING OUR DEMOCRACY



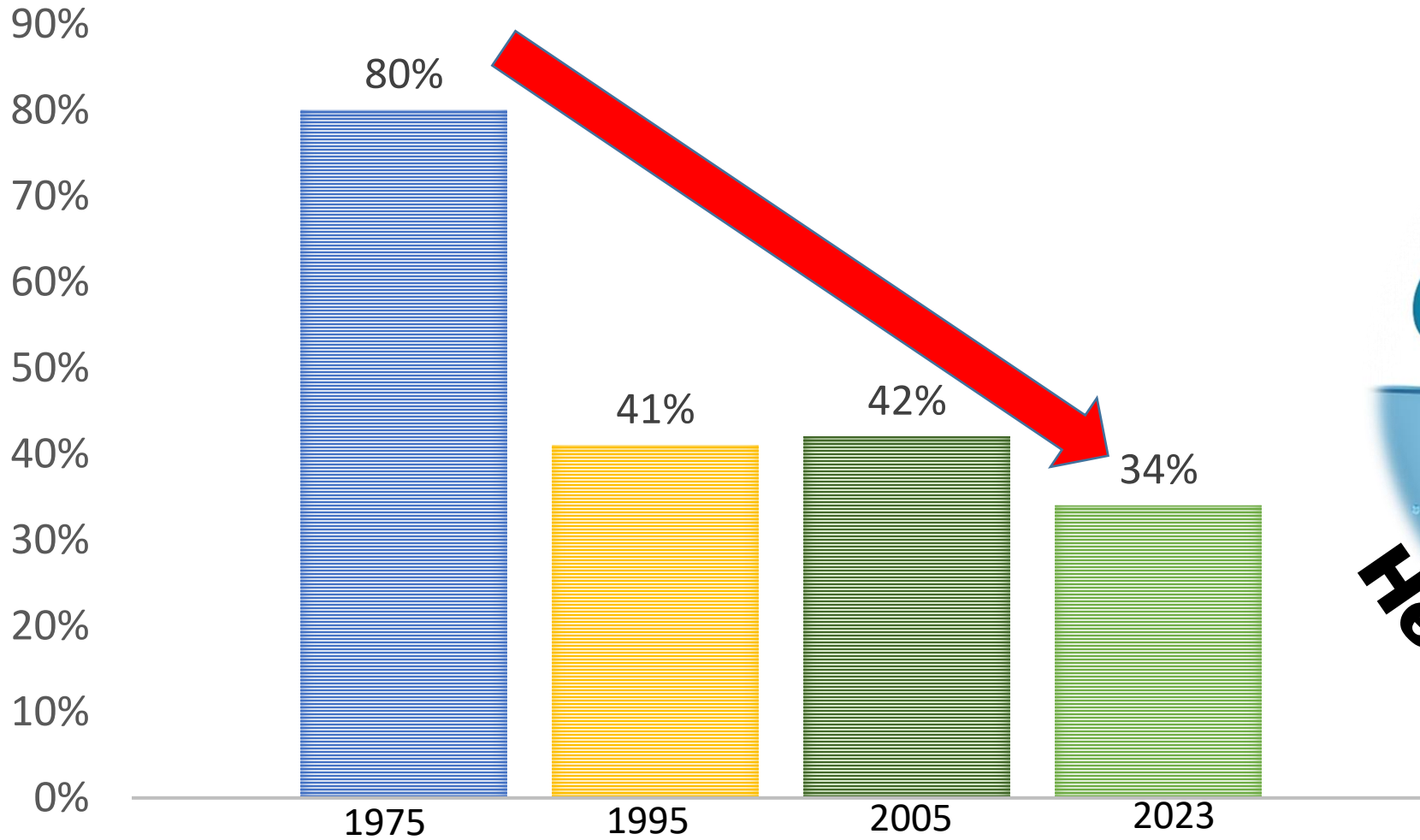
Source: Gallup Poll; Trust in Institutions 1975-2023

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TRUST IN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

1975 1995 2005 2023



We are FAILING in MEDICINE



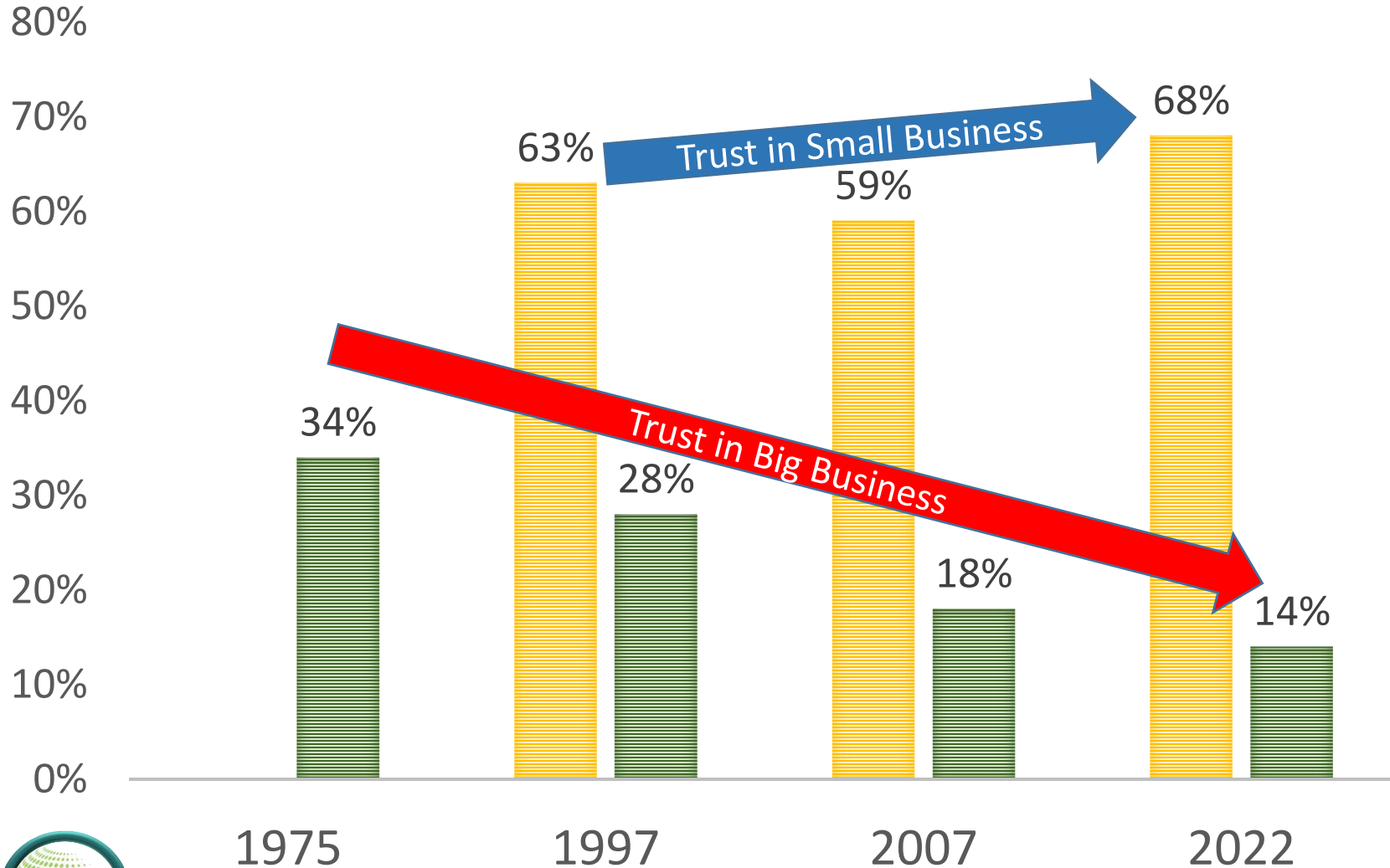
Trust in Healthcare System

Source: Gallup Poll; Trust in Institutions 1975-2022



TRUST IN BUSINESS

Trust in Small Business Trust in Big Business



Small Business is one of the few Trusted Institutions in America



Trust in Small Business is 5 times higher than Big Business

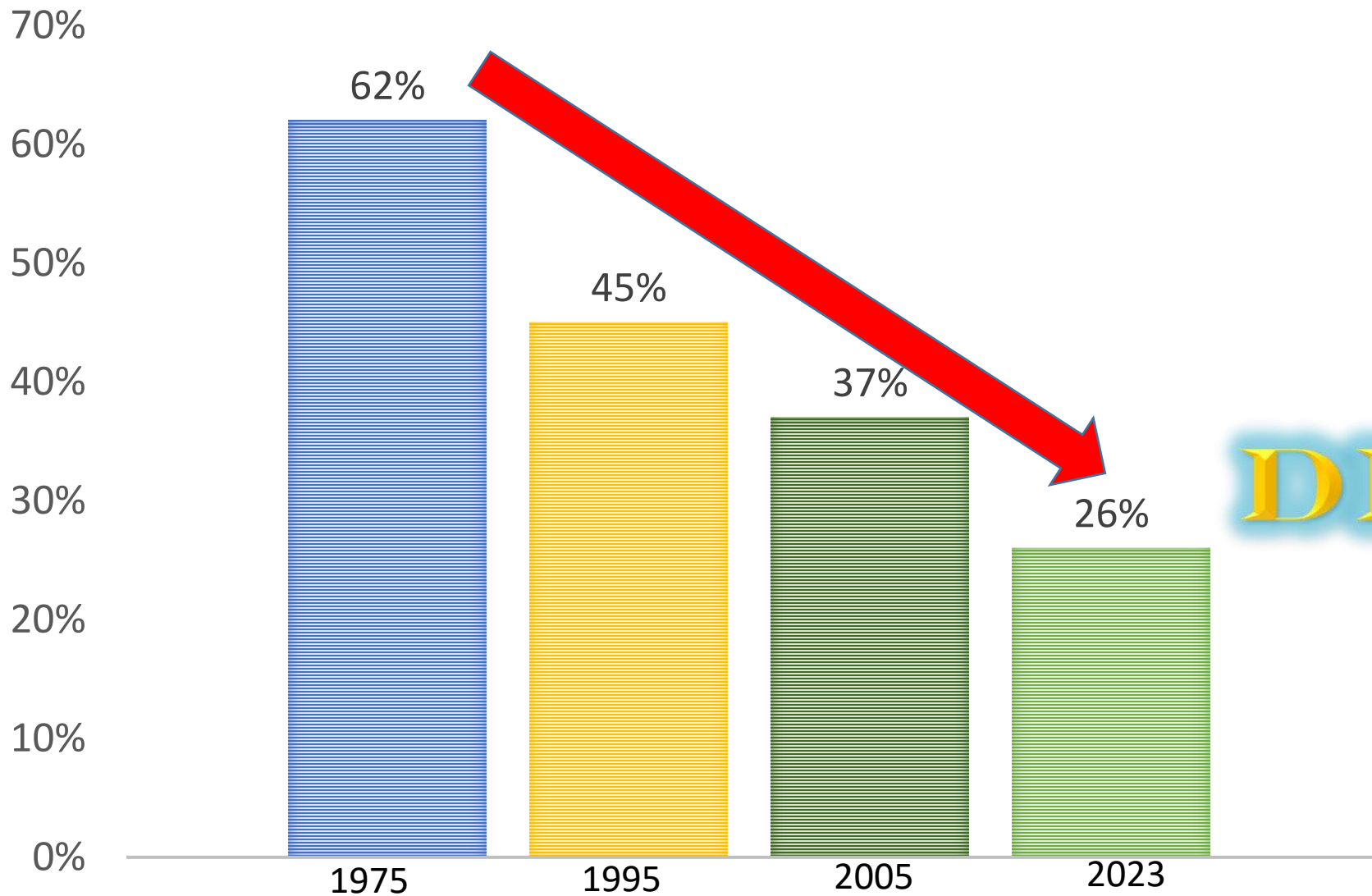


Source: Gallup Poll; Trust in Institutions 1975-2022

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TRUST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION



Trust in Public Schools

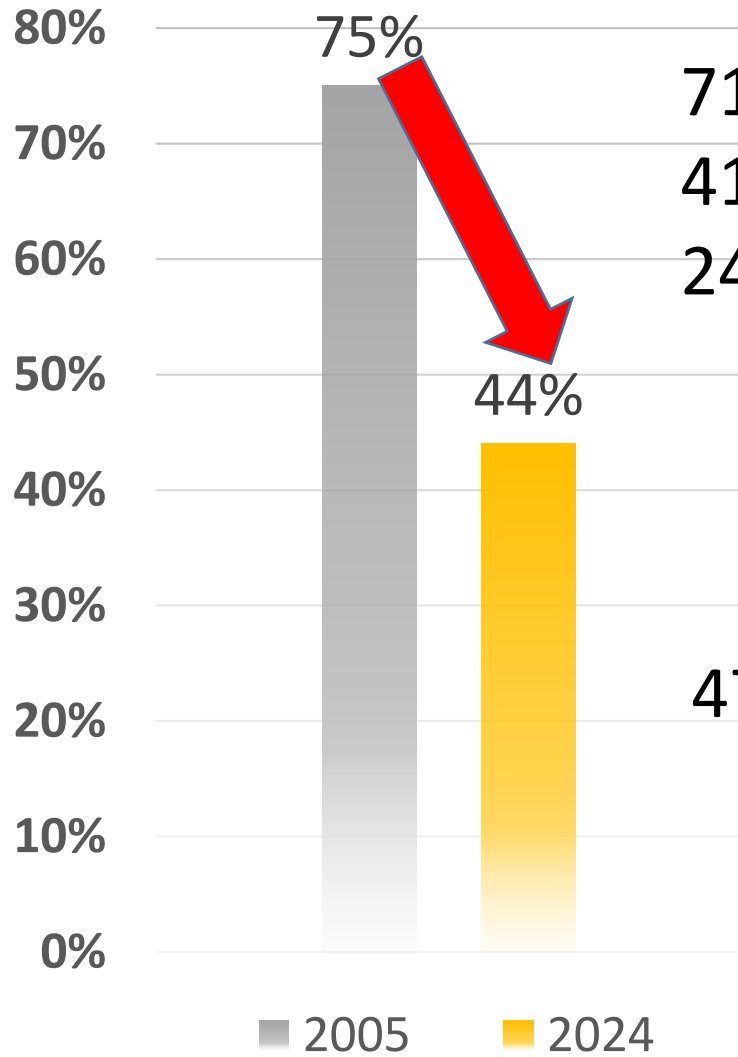
Source: Gallup Poll; Trust in Institutions 1975-2023

**We are FAILING OUR
NEXT GENERATION**



TRUST IN SUPREME COURT – GALLUP POLL

**We are FAILING IN OUR
SENSE OF FAIR PLAY**



71% of Republicans
41% of independents
24% of Democrats
Trust the Court
to act in their best
interest

47-point gap between
Republicans &
Democrats
widest recorded



Source: Gallup Poll; Trust in Institutions 2005-2024
Annenberg Public Policy Center

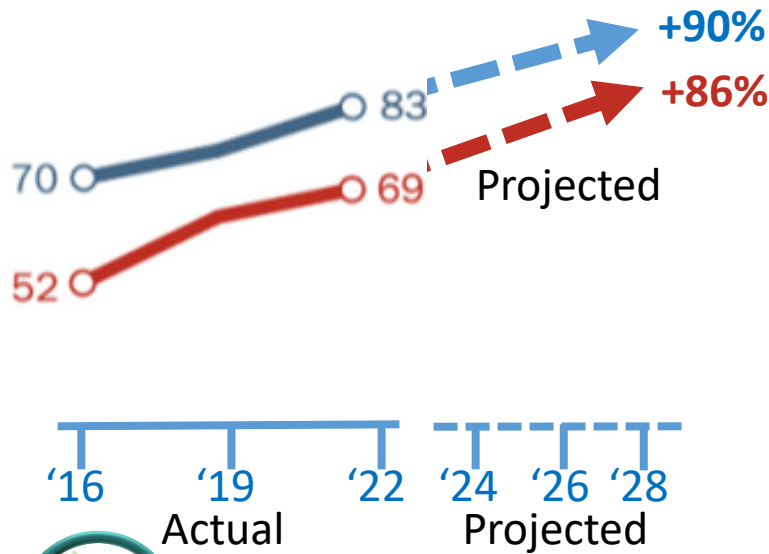


Polarization: Growing Shares of both Republicans & Democrats say members of the other party are more immoral, dishonest, close-minded than other Americans

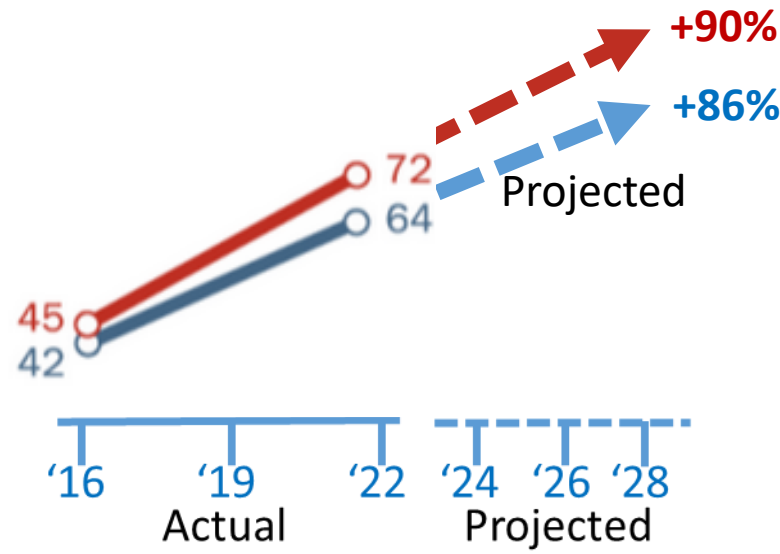
*% who say members of the **other** party are a lot/somewhat more _____ compared to other Americans*

- Republicans say Democrats are more ...
- Democrats say Republicans are more ...

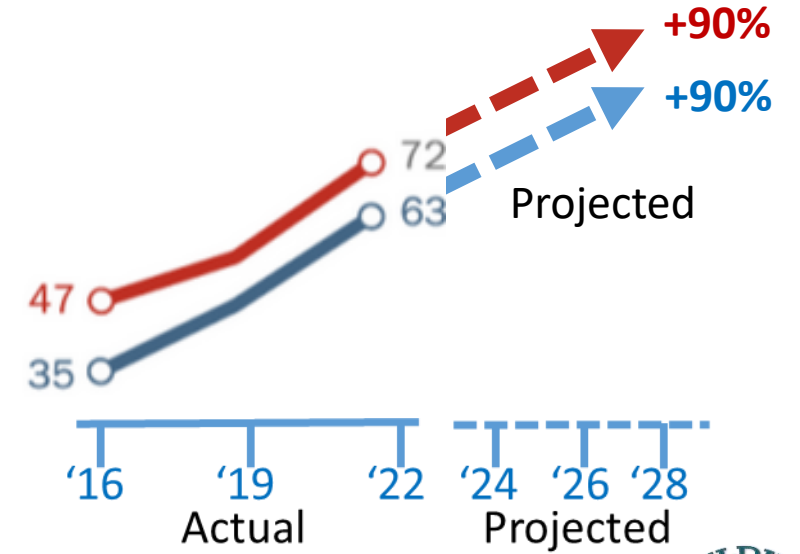
Close-Minded



Dishonest



Immoral



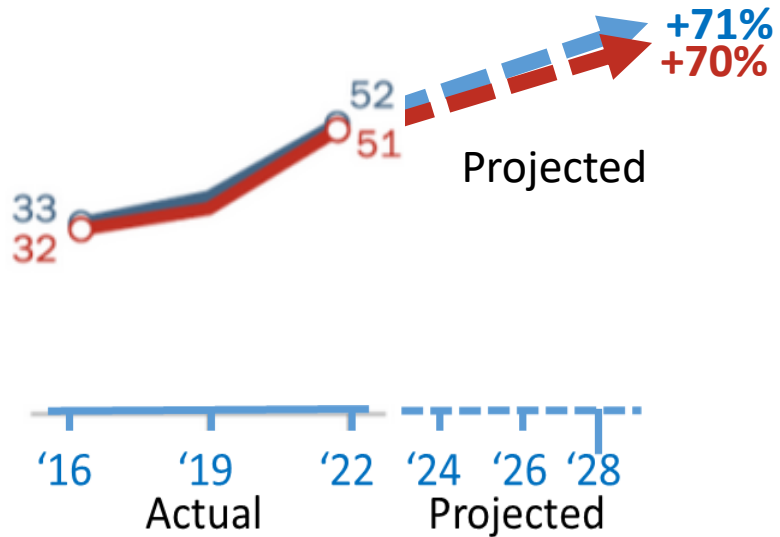
Source: Pew Research Center 2016, '19, '22



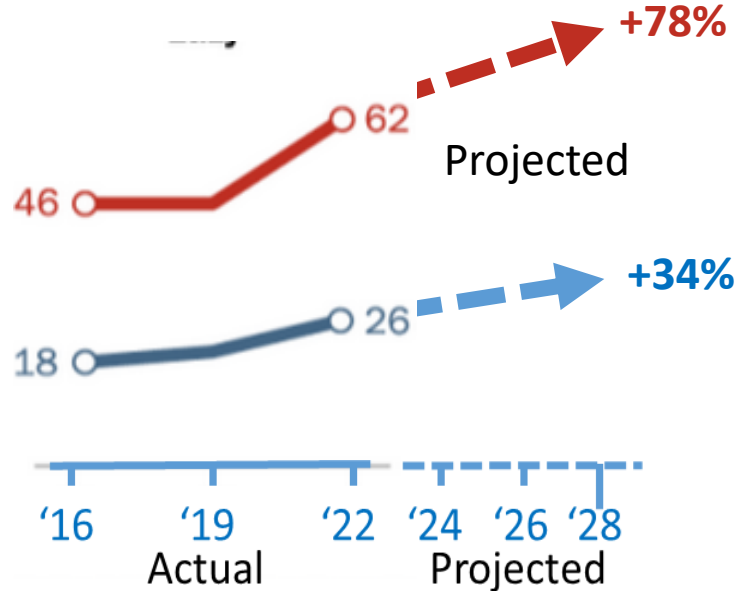
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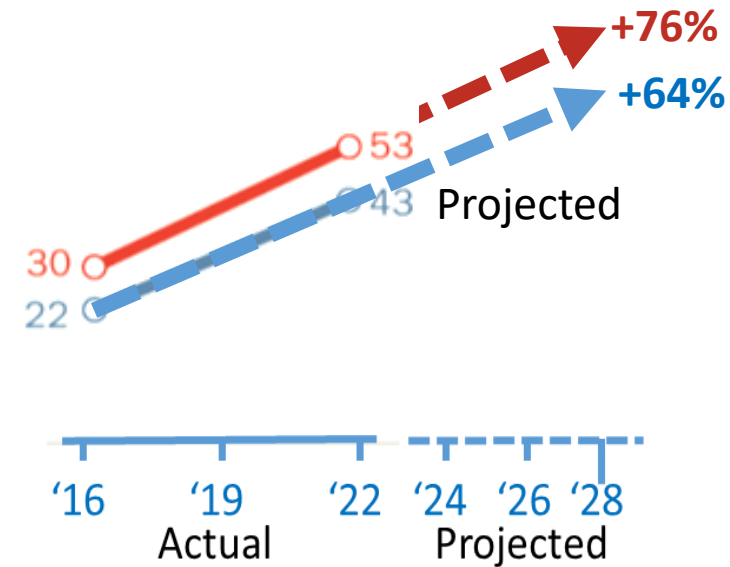
Unintelligent



Lazy



Say Four or All of these Traits



Our Youth's META Dynamic CRISIS:



MENTAL HEALTH

- 44% of high school students feel "persistently sad or hopeless"
- 37% report poor mental health
- 22% seriously considered suicide
- 70% report anxiety and depression as major problems
- 61% report frequent loneliness
- 73% spend less time in face-to-face interaction than online

TRUST & DEMOCRACY COLLAPSE

- Only 7% of young people have "great deal" of trust in government
- 74% believe democracy is "in trouble" or "failing"
- 52% feel "politics has become too divisive to solve problems"
- 56% feel "American dream is no longer attainable"

ECONOMIC ANXIETY

- 63% of millennials living paycheck to paycheck
- Average student debt: \$37,000
- 48% can't afford home ownership
- 70% report financial stress affecting mental health
- 72% believe they'll be worse off than their parents

FUTURE CONCERNS

- 68% worry about climate change impacts
- 65% fear social/political instability
- 58% doubt they'll achieve retirement security
- 49% report having three or fewer close friends
- 39% feel they have "no one to talk to"



How Distrust & Polarization Destroy Civilization

1. DISTRUST & POLARIZATION have a bidirectional, mutually reinforcing relationship:

- **Distrust fuels polarization by making people less willing to engage with or understand those who hold different views**
- **Polarization increases distrust by reducing meaningful contact between groups, amplifying negative perceptions of others**

2. Key Mechanisms:

- **When people Distrust other groups, they're more likely to:**
 - **View opposing perspectives with suspicion**
 - **Attribute malicious motives to others' actions**
 - **Reject information from any distrusted group**
 - **Seek individuals & information confirms existing beliefs**
- **As Polarization Increases:**
 - **Fewer positive interactions across tribal boundaries**
 - **Echo chambers and information bubbles strengthen**
 - **Stereotypes and negative assumptions about other groups harden**
 - **Compromise becomes more difficult as positions become more extreme**



Meta Dynamics

– Governing *Force Fields* of Human Behavior –

What is a Meta Dynamic Force Field?

1. Pattern that Governs Other Patterns

The Patterns that Influence how Other Patterns Form

The Rules that Determine how Rules Evolve

The Trends that Shape Other Trends

2. "Higher Order" or "Stronger Force" that Determines other Forces

Higher-order Process that Influences Lower-order Processes

System that Shapes how Other Systems Behave



Destructive Meta-Dynamic Force Field Matrix



1. *Higher-Order Corruption:*

- It doesn't just damage relationships; it damages our ability to repair relationships
- It doesn't just create disagreement; it destroys the tools we use to resolve disagreements
- It doesn't just separate people; it makes separation feel necessary and right

2. *System-Wide Infection:*

- Corrupts information flow (Can't trust their news/facts)
- Poisons dialogue (Why even talk to them?)
- Warps perception (They must be evil/stupid to believe that)
- Destroys common ground (We have nothing in common with them)

3. *Self-Reinforcing Amplification:*

- Each instance of distrust creates more polarization
- Each increase in polarization justifies more distrust
- The cycle accelerates as social bonds weaken
- The damage compounds exponentially

4. *Institutional Breakdown:*

- Undermines shared institutions
- Corrupts conflict resolution mechanisms
- Weakens social immune systems
- Makes reform seem impossible

5. *Cognitive Rewiring:*

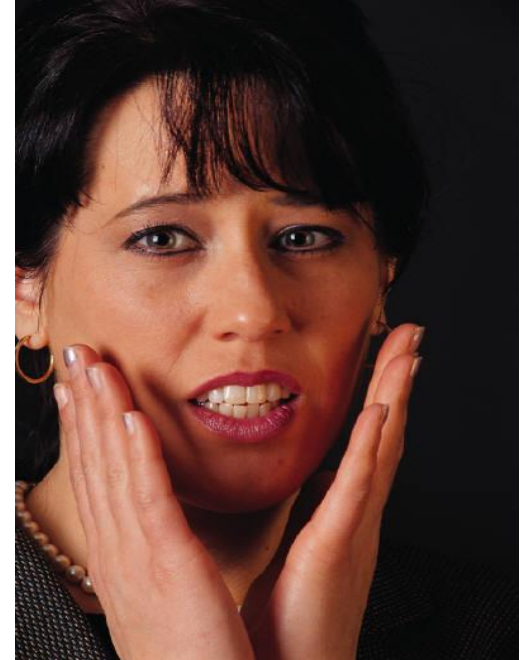
- Changes how we process information
- Alters threat perception
- Reshapes group identity
- Modifies moral frameworks



What are the Implications & Consequences of Distrust & Polarization?

In Small Group Discussion:

- **What would you predict in 2 years?
- in 4 years?**
- **Do you think our leaders are aware of these problems?**
- **Who do you think will fix it?**
- **What is the most likely outcome?**



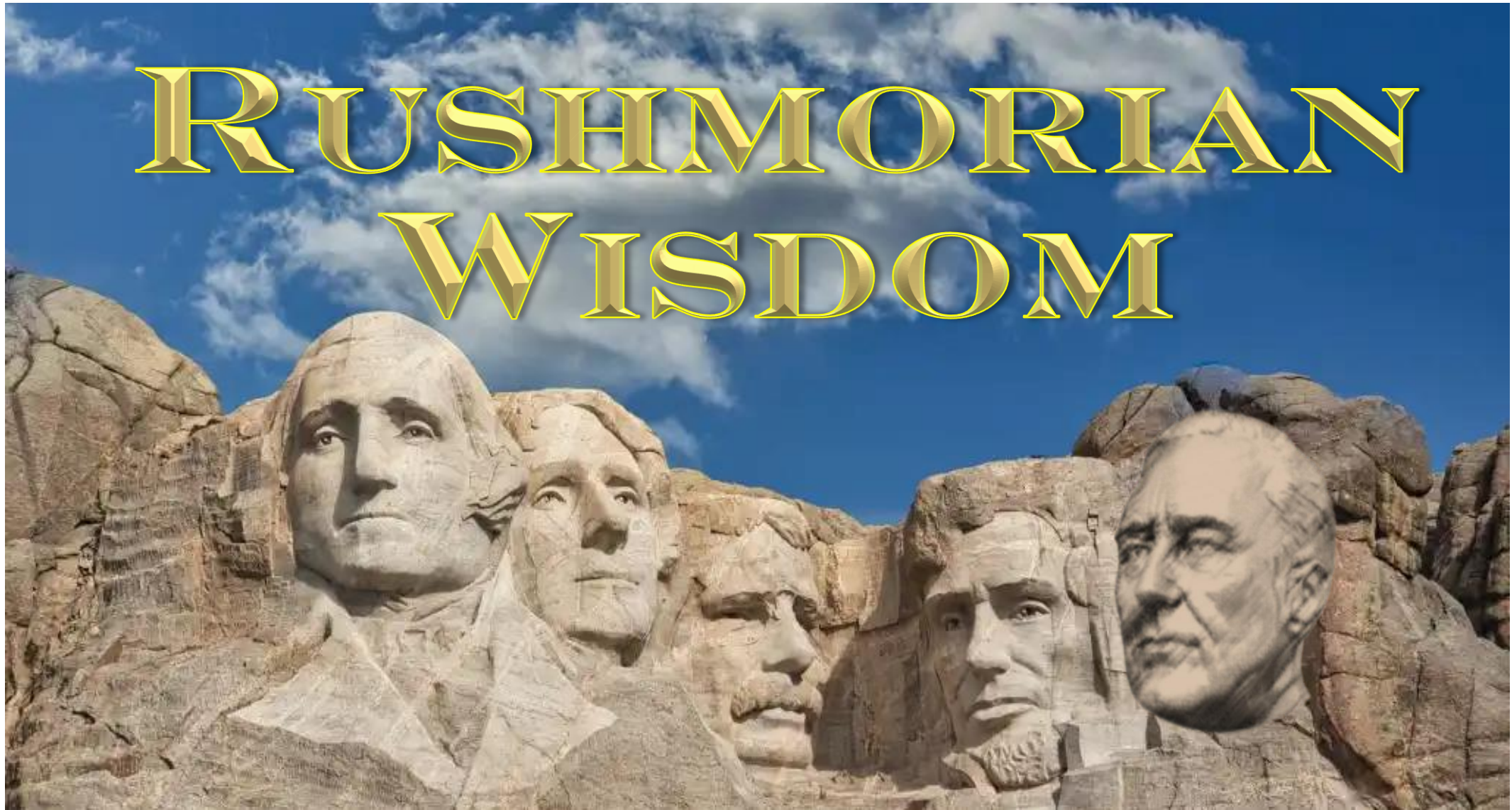
TRUST DETERMINES THE COURSE OF HISTORY, THE DESTINIES OF NATIONS, AND THE FATE OF PEOPLE

-- Paul R. Lawrence, Professor,
Organization Behavior, Harvard Business School

DISTRUST
Achilles Heel
of
**American
Civilization**



RUSHMORIAN WISDOM



Quest of the American Revolution

#1—Reason & Logic:

Using logical thinking and reasoning can lead you to the right and moral answer.
Reason is the primary source of authority and legitimacy.

#2 – Divine Natural Order:

Human Behavior and Nature was not random nor irrational.
A strong moral/ethical character was borne into humans as part of Divine Order.

#3 – Progression of Civilization:

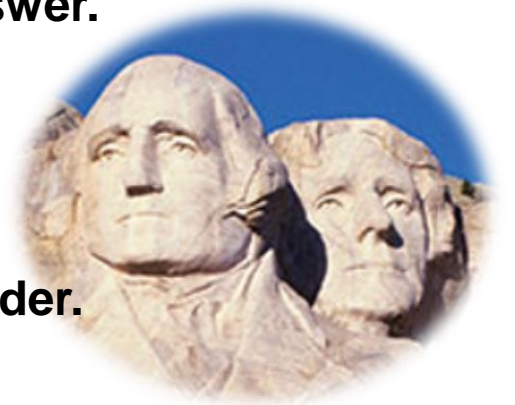
Each human being, together with civilization, should be on a steady trajectory of improvement embracing deep wisdom to make the next generation better than the last.

#4 – Democratic Governance:

An enlightened society of responsible moral citizens for the people, by the people, and of the people, balancing individual rights with social obligation.
Each Citizen had a duty to his fellow man.

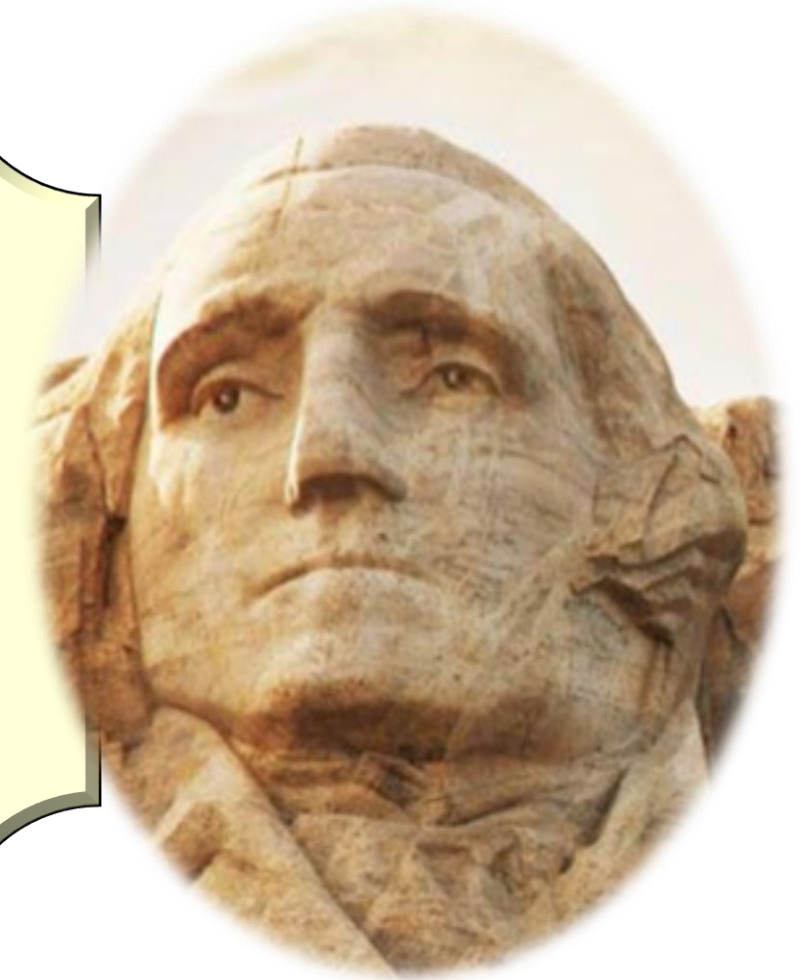
#5 – Happiness & Well-Being:

These principles create a profound sense of well-being where people could trust their neighbors, trust their leaders, and trust in a vibrant world with constructive civil debate.



Washington's Wisdom – Key Themes

- Trustworthiness & Accountability
- Embracing the Greater Good
- Use Diversity to Spur Innovation
- Preventing Polarization
- Finding Common Ground
- Unifying Diverse Interests



To Bigotry No Sanction, To Persecution No Assistance

-- George Washington's Declaration to the Jewish Community of America -- 1790

WASHINGTON's Meta-Dynamic Innovation: *"Institutional Precedent Setting"*

- Created patterns for peaceful power transition
- Established non-partisan cabinet with diverse views (Hamilton/Jefferson)
- Deliberately rejected monarchical trappings
- Set two-term precedent

Key Meta-Dynamic Effect:

- Created sustainable patterns for democratic leadership
- Established principle that process > personality
- Built foundation for peaceful power transitions
- Demonstrated how to unite former enemies (Federalists/Anti-Federalists)





Jefferson's Wisdom – Key Themes

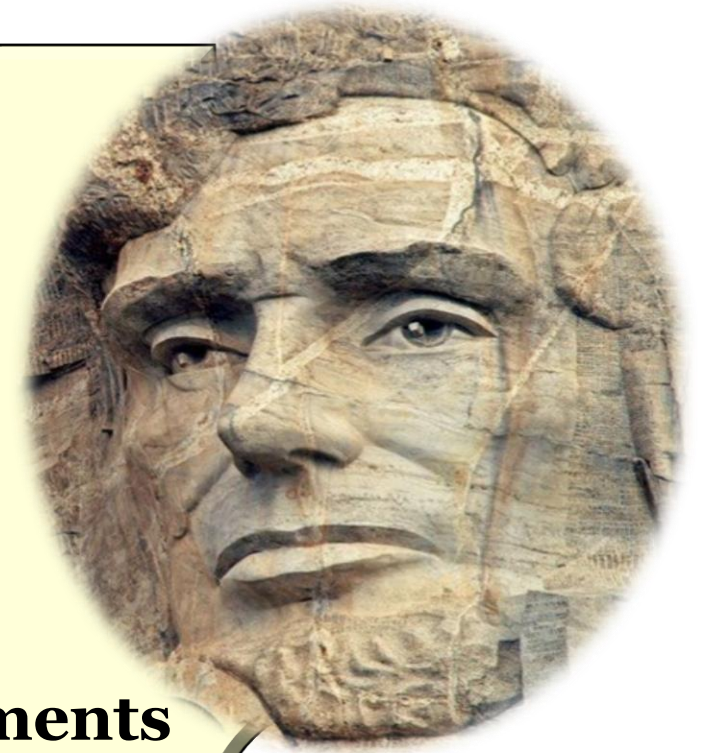
- **Preserving Rights & Exercising Responsibilities**
- **Constraining Tyrants & Protecting Against Abuses**
- **Primacy of Education to build Moral Character**
- **Building Trust & Leadership in Local Institutions**
- **Creating Communities that Cooperate**

*Error of opinion may be tolerated
where reason is left free to combat it.*



Lincoln's Wisdom – Key Themes

- **Forgiveness, Amnesty, and Compassion**
- **Handling Polarization under Pressure**
- **Courage, Character, & Charity to all in Crisis**
- **Innovation and Unity in Adversity**
- **Faith during the Darkest & Most Stressful Moments**



A house divided against itself cannot stand.

We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.

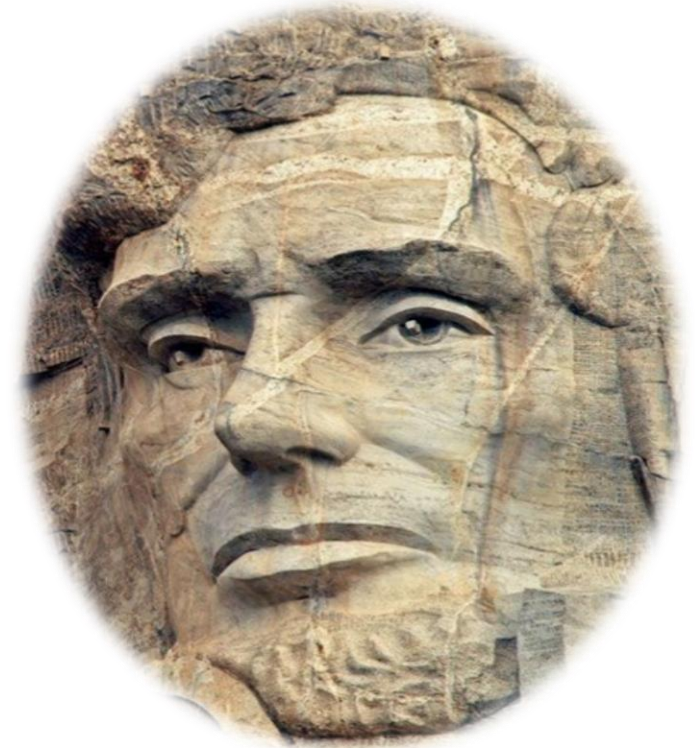


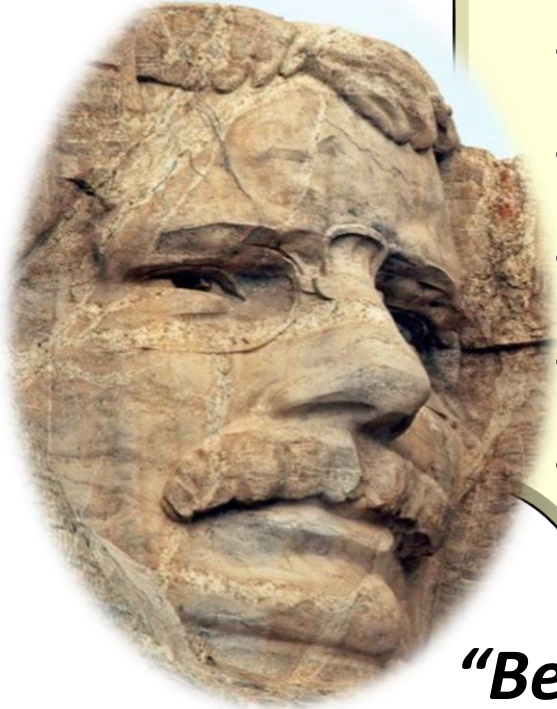
LINCOLN: Meta-Dynamic Innovation: "Transformative Reconciliation"

- "With malice toward none, with charity for all"
- Second Inaugural Address as healing framework
- Reconstruction vision combining justice with mercy
- Team of Rivals approach to leadership

Key Meta-Dynamic Effect:

- Created patterns for national healing
- Established framework for transformative justice
- Built foundation for reunification
- Demonstrated how to balance accountability with reconciliation





Teddy Roosevelt's Wisdom – Key Themes

- **Vision, Getting Things Done & Teamwork**
- **Placing the Greater Good above Limited Interests**
- **Courage, Strength, Trust, & Honor**
- **Taking the Moral High Ground**
- **Balancing Strength with Peacemaking**

"Be Practical as well as generous in your ideals.

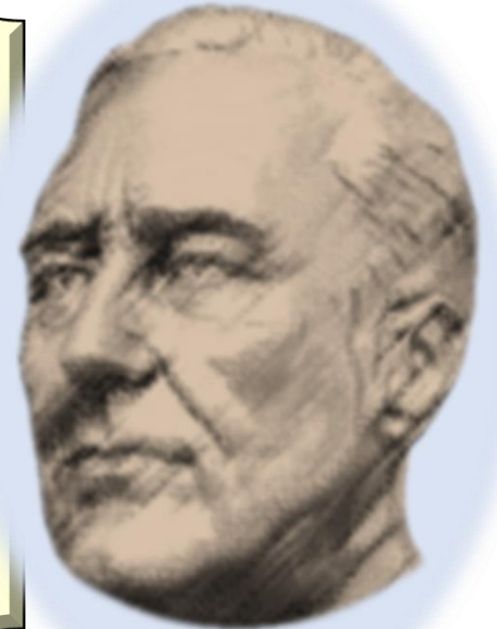
Keep your eyes on the stars and your feet on the ground."

"This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in."



Franklin Roosevelt's Wisdom – Key Themes

- **Communicate Directly with Americans**
- **Courage is Victorious over Fear**
- **Bold Persistent Innovation & Experimentation**
- **Hope is Reinforced by Good Works**
- **Focus the Nation on Winning a 2-Front War**
- **Heal the Wounds of War with Japan & Germany**



The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

In our personal ambitions we are individualists. But in our seeking for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up or else we all go down as one people.



FDR's Marshall Plan to revitalize Germany & Japan exemplified a Constructive Meta-Dynamic Force Field

1. Transformative Enemy-to-Ally Framework:

- **Transformed former enemies into stable democracies**
- **Built democratic institutions from ground up**

2. Democratic Institution Building:

- **Supported free press development**
- **Built democratic education systems**
- **Developed democratic governance structures**

3. Economic Integration Design:

- **Created economic interdependence, Built international trade networks**
- **Developed shared market systems, Generated mutual prosperity frameworks**

4. Security Through Prosperity: Implementation Strategy:

- **Economic development as security tool, Prosperity as peace mechanism**
- **Development as stability creator, Growth as democracy builder**



Meta Dynamic Strategies to Rebuild Trust & Transform Polarization

– Ideas for Consideration & Discussion –

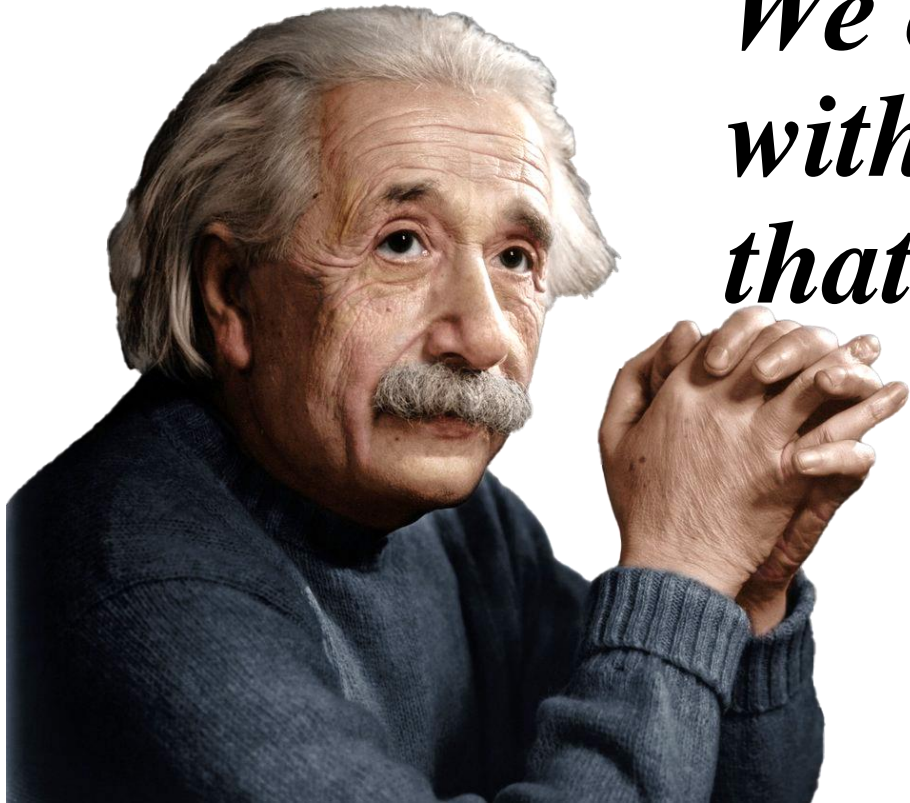
In Small Groups

1. Reinforce our Duties & Responsibilities as US Citizens
2. Educational Reform to Build Character
3. Collaborative Leadership Development
4. Universal Service to America
5. Support Bi-Partisan Political Engagement
6. Use Polarities to Generate Innovation
7. Other Ideas:



Don't Be Trapped in a Rear View Mirror

*We cannot solve today's problems
with the same level of thinking
that created the problem*





CENTER FOR CRITICAL THINKING INC.

AN INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION GROUP



**We can destroy ourselves
just as quickly by Cynicism
as by Bombs**

Open Discussion

What's Important?

What's Missing?

What Shifts in Thinking?

What's Possible?

What Actions are Required?

Key Take-Aways?



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Closing Message

Far better to have dared mighty things;
To win glory 'though checkered by disaster;
Than to take rank with those poor spirits
Who've made mediocrity their master.

Neither enjoying nor suffering much,
Always choosing to be discreet,
While they wallow in the fog and grey twilight,
Knowing neither victory nor defeat.

