



crisis politics

generational theory

what is a crisis

- A Crisis is a period of fear, uncertainty, and doubt that grips the nation every 80 years. Civic trust implodes, producing a series of high-stakes economic, political, and armed conflicts.
- Only by forging a new civic consensus and renewing the bonds that hold the nation together can the Crisis be successfully navigated and resolved.
- Our latest Crisis began with the Great Recession and could last well into the 2020s. Like winter, a Crisis is a time of dwindling resources and rising existential dangers.

what it means

- Hard times are here to stay. It is as unrealistic to expect warm, sunny weather in winter, as it is to talk of peace and prosperity in a Crisis. Happier times will return, but not for many years.
- Partisan conflict will escalate. In a Crisis, compromises, brokered deals, and half-measures only make difficult problems worse, and raise the stakes for the ultimate day of reckoning.
- Big changes are coming. Big problems require big solutions from our nation's leaders. To succeed, those solutions must regenerate the civic fabric of the nation.

what to avoid

- Do not damage your credibility. In a Crisis, your integrity is everything. Avoid making promises that are not in your power to keep, and only break them to realign with public opinion.
- Do not equivocate. If you cannot clearly define your values as choices between right and wrong, good and evil, or life and death – your opponents will define them for you.
- Do not go it alone. In winter, any animal that strays from the pack is vulnerable to the elements and to predators. Stand by your friends, supporters, and allies, and they will stand by you.

leading in a crisis

- When you win power, use it or lose it. This is not the season for restraint, deference, or respect for process. In a Crisis, power must be wielded to be kept.
- Prioritize and triage. Leaders must discern what the community needs to survive and quickly dispense with any dead weight. Stick to what is essential.
- Focus on the common good. We will only survive history's winter by recognizing our mutual interests, cooperating, and renewing the bonds that hold us together.

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