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## Robert J. Flower *Intelligent discourse*

By BILL FALLON

An avid golfer, Robert J. Flower is a longtime member at Westchester Country Club, where he carries a 13 handicap. He founded his business in 1962; it now has offices in Bronxville and on Long Island and enough Flowers on board to make a bouquet. In his spare time, he works toward making the world a smarter place via: political discourse on TV every week; a regular You Tube investment and economics presence; and three published books.

After graduating from Archbishop Stepinac High School in 1957, Flower earned

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a B.A. at Fordham University. He did graduate work at Fordham and NYU and earned a Ph.D. from Walden University in Minnesota in organizational and systems sciences. He lives in the architecture- and landscape-rich Lawrence Park section of Yonkers.

Flower and wife, Angela, a property tax consultant with Robert J. Flower & Co. L.L.C., work alongside daughter Deborah Flower, an appraiser, daughter Bobbie-Anne Flower-Cox, a real estate attorney, and son, Robert Flower, a mortgage banker who heads the Westbury, Long Island, office. "We've got the whole family," Flower laughs. "It's a challenge, but it's also rewarding."

Flower has a TV show Tuesdays on Channel 18 at 7:30 p.m. called "The Public Advocate" on which he interviews various officials "to try to formulate a new model of governance at the local, town, city and county level." His advice: "Create a public advocacy commission of private citizens with specialties in areas that impact government: accountants, constitutional attorneys, union attorneys. Have them oversee the fiscal events of a municipality." And, critically, "They would have veto power," meaning line-item veto.

Flower offers an easy smile. He possesses the seductive conversational style of your favorite teacher. Take, for example  $A + B = C$ , where A equals awareness, your greatest intelligence; B equals your beliefs or concepts of reality; and C equals communication. As Flower spins the equation, a person finds it quite logical that such a formula would improve Flower's golf game and make steady his hand in winning the New York state Western Division Trap-Shooting Championship in 1984. "I took a very impersonal approach toward the competition. And I continued that into my golfing habit – I'm about a 13 handicap."

His sports problem, he confesses, was nerves. His approach was objective: "What you become aware of and what you believe about that will always equate to how you communicate it. Always. So if you're having a problem communicating something, expressing something, comprehending something, all you need do to resolve it is look at what you're focusing on and what your concepts about that are."

Flower's ideas are available in three books: "Decoding Potential: Pathways to Understanding" (2005); "A Revolution in Understanding: Discovering Your Natural Intelligence" (2006); and 2008's "Your Exceptional Mind: Enhance Intelligence; Expand Understanding." (All are available online through Borders, Amazon and others.)

Flower has a You Tube show every week: "The Master Pattern Report" (type in natiandyou or Robert Flower on the YouTube Web site), featuring predictions and analysis of economics and stocks. "We have a nice following, about 6,000 to 7,000 hits," Flower says. Flower tags '09 "bad" when asked for a prognostication. "The first three to five or six months I think things will hold up," he says. "But I think after people see the new administration does not have its arms around what's going on, I think we'll start to see declines, rather severe declines; whether in six months or nine months, I don't know, but I'm sure it's going to happen within '09."

He said one way to unlock the economy would be to codify depreciation for houses purchased over the next two years. Buyers would accrue the tax benefits of seeing their properties officially lower in value 15 percent for two years regardless of what the housing market does. Flower believes the move would entice buyers who are now holding back. He also would institute a loss-insurance program funded by real estate purchases to buffer against downturns. He was scheduled to meet on these ideas with Westchester County Association officials – whose mission is at least partly better, smarter taxation – as early as last week.

When he spoke, Flower and his wife were preparing to jet off to Scottsdale, Ariz., for a few months. That desert state's pro sports teams have been serviceable of late – the D'backs, the Cardinals, the Suns – but Flower, it appears will never identify himself as a Westerner, nor root for teams that sprout beside the cacti. "I'm a New Yorker. I like the Jets and the Giants. I like

the Mets and the Yankees." He'll be back on the tees at Westchester Country Club this spring.

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