After the Election

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I shared the letter below with our team at Incandescent this morning: a personal reflection on how this moment in our national history connects to our firm as a community and to our work.

In a time when so many of us find ourselves in new territory as leaders and as citizens, wrestling with what this time asks of us, I decided to share this reflection publicly.

Team,

Many of us are reeling from what played out yesterday across a divided America, wondering what this news tells us about the country we live in today and about how this next chapter in our history will evolve.

Whatever our individual conclusions on questions of conscience, beliefs and calling, let's renew our collective commitments.

As members of a firm who have resolved together to work on building great institutions, let's be reminded of how critical and how fragile such institutions are — subject not only to the winds of history and the pressure of markets, but also to the frailty of human emotions and human judgment. And capable too of being created, shaped and uplifted by passionate, imperfect individuals — as so many examples should remind us at precisely those moments when the sense of what's possible diminishes.

Let's ensure that we do important work. Let's stare hard at the way we spend our precious days and make our efforts count.

I believe the work we are already doing is even more important than it was yesterday. I also believe the work we are doing today is only the beginning of what it can be. In less than four years as a firm, we've not only gone from nothing to something—we've earned the right and built the capacity to play the long game. Let's ask where this gift can matter most.

When we affirm our goals, let's apply ourselves relentlessly. Yesterday underscores the perils of overconfidence. Yesterday reminds us that our ideas are only as good as our ability to persuade diverse people to act upon them — act upon them when they are in crisis, not just when their lives feel safe. Yesterday reminds us just how much work that is and how little we can take for granted.

Let's strive to exemplify what we believe in. Let's hold ourselves to the highest standards — in how we are with one another, and in all the ways we face the world.

Feelings like loss, fear and anger can't be rushed past or glossed over. Pause when you need to pause, step back when you need to step back. However long it takes, and whatever it requires of us, let's come out of this together, stronger than we were before.