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Laugh More, Age Less

WHY LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR YOU

As we age, we're told to wear sunscreen, eat more vegetables, take vitamins, and even walk more — all in hope that our internal clocks will slow down and we will age better. But something as simple as laughter could actually be one of the easiest ways to slow the ticking clock of aging.

Scientists have long known that laughter can be therapeutic and help us live longer. It has been shown to reduce wear and tear on our bodies and improve our relationships. A Norwegian study found that those who prioritized humor were more likely to live past 70 than those who didn't laugh often.

At a biological level, laughter can reduce tension in your muscles and activate a powerful stress-relief response from your brain by releasing dopamine. Just one

chuckle may even improve your breathing and heart function! In fact, laughing can work wonders for the heart. One study showed that laughter therapy helped reduce the blood pressure and cholesterol levels of its participants. Their blood circulation improved, too. Studies have also found that regular laughter can help strengthen your immune system, and it has long-term benefits for those with respiratory conditions.

In addition to your body, laughter is also good for your social life. (And we don't mean that people will want to spend time with you if you have all the good jokes!) Throughout history, laughter has been an evolutionary sign of understanding. When there are language barriers, laughing together can create camaraderie and a tighter bond between people of different



cultures. The dopamine release that comes with laughter aids in stress relief and creates powerful memories that can improve your mood and strengthen friendships.

Of course, laughter has its downfalls, too. Laughing at someone else's expense is detrimental to their health and can harm your relationships. So, stick to light jokes and actively seek shows, cartoons, or people who make you laugh. You'll feel good, and your body will be pretty happy, too.



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The 8th Aspect

How Reading Helps Me Run a Successful Firm



I heard once that there are seven parts of running a law firm: marketing, sales, production, physical location, people, metrics, and money. While I do have to consider each one of these to run my law firm well, provide my clients with the highest-quality service, and hire and retain great employees, I often think about an eighth aspect that's also required to run a successful law firm: me.

I've talked before in my newsletters about how I, as the owner, have to be willing to grow in order for my company to grow. And by "grow," I don't just mean expand, though we have added to our excellent team of talent through the years, which allows us to serve more clients. I also mean that I want my firm to grow in other ways: I want to be constantly improving as an owner and an attorney, and one way I'm able to do that is through reading personal growth and self-help books.

March 2 is Read Across America Day, a holiday meant to celebrate and encourage reading. Most of the reading I do these days is with my ears, not my eyes. I'm more of an audiobook guy because I can listen on my daily commute to and from work and while I'm exercising. I'll even admit, sometimes it's nice to have a compelling audiobook to listen to while I'm biking to take my mind off exercising and help the time pass faster.

Adding reading into my routine in these ways also gives me a relatively easy way to work in a constant stream of motivating ideas. For example, in order to get the best compensation for my clients, I need to be a good negotiator. A huge part of my job is negotiating with insurance companies. So, I recently read Chris Voss' "Never Split the Difference: Negotiating As if Your Life Depended on It." Voss was the FBI's lead international kidnapping negotiator, so you can imagine he knew a thing or two about the topic! As Voss points out, we're negotiating a lot more often than we might realize. Getting our kids to go to bed at bedtime involves negotiating just as much as buying a car or home does.

Another recent book I took a lot of inspiration from was "Time, Money, Freedom: 10 Simple Rules to Redefine What's Possible and Radically

Reshape Your Life" by Jessica Higdon and Ray Higdon. I used to work in the same building as Ray did back when he was an IT guy. We became friends, and he eventually got into real estate investing. Then 2008 hit, the market crashed, and he lost it all. He was really down on his luck, but instead of giving up, he made a change and built a successful marketing and coaching business.

Ray's book is really about being successful, whatever that means to you. It guides readers in one thing in particular, having a vision, and that's helped me a lot. You could also call this a focus. The point is to know what you want, even if you're not 100% sure how to get there. But I will add one note of caution here. Some authors will tell you to create a vision and focus on it, but that's missing a key ingredient. Without this key ingredient, that's just magical thinking. What's the missing piece? Action.

Magical thinking combined with action can be powerful. I've seen this play out in my own life several times. Once, when I tried to get all possible treatments for my son, who I've mentioned many times. When he was first born, my wife and I literally threw all we had at getting treatments. Health care is incredibly expensive and of course, we wanted the best for him, so I needed to increase my earning power to be able to cover these costs. I wasn't sure how to do that at first, but I was so focused and driven by my love for my son and the desire to get him the care he needed. And it worked! I did start making more, and we got some relief as a family.

I think that goes to show you need to believe in your vision, even when you're not sure which path will take you to your destination. But remember: You've also got to act. With a strong focus on your goal, take one step then another. And if your motivation starts to falter, grab a book for some added motivation.

Marc L. Shapiro



Do Something Better in the Garden

3 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HARVEST

There's something beautiful about cultivating your own harvest, but you can grow more than simple backyard vegetables. Help your garden "grow up" by trying something unique this spring.

Grow Fun Foods

We plant gardens for a purpose, so why not make it fun! Plant fresh basil, tomatoes, onions, peppers, oregano, and more to create a garden worthy of your next homemade pizza. All you will need to buy is the crust! Pumpkin plants can offer fresh gourds for any Halloween fanatic, while new species of fruits and vegetables can create an exciting home-cooking experience. Try the silver cucumber for a sweet taste or pineberries for a mix between strawberries and pineapples. You just might find a new flavor you love.



Go With the Flow

Creating a year-round garden that practically takes care of itself means using principles of permaculture, a philosophy of working with, rather than against, nature. Start by analyzing your space and yard. Determine your soil type and layer mulch or cover crops to protect it. Then, begin planting the same way that's found in nature — trees grow at the top, shrubs and bushes are below, and other small plants and vines intermingle within. Choose crops that help each other grow (like corn, beans, and squash), and offer aid to your garden without digging up too much soil or disturbing its natural process. Permaculture gardening requires thoughtful planning, but once your crops are in place, nature will take its course.

Plant for Your Health

Mass production of your favorite fruits and vegetables reduces their key nutrients. Instead, choose fresh, home-grown varieties to yield greater health benefits. This is good news for those living with heart disease, joint disorders, or other chronic conditions. You can grow a garden chock full of nutrient-rich foods! Colorful fruits, root veggies, onions, and beans are great for joint health, while leafy greens can boost heart health. Grow pumpkins so you can harvest the seeds for better brain function, while berries can support your liver.

Before you dig into these new gardening methods, consult with an expert at a nursery or greenhouse to get the best possible results.

MAXIMIZE YOUR PERSONAL INJURY SETTLEMENT With These 3 Steps

If you've been the victim of an accident and have initiated a personal injury case, you're likely wondering what compensation you're entitled to and how to maximize it. Victims suffer a lot and deserve fair compensation so they can recover both physically and financially.

First, it's important to understand what you can receive compensation for. In the state of Florida, accident victims are entitled to receive compensation for three different types of damages: economic, noneconomic, and punitive. To increase your compensation for these damages, follow these three steps:

1. Gather and preserve evidence. Courts will base their decision and compensation on the concrete evidence you present of the accident. If you were involved in a car accident, the most persuasive pieces of evidence you can provide are photos and videos of the accident scene. This will give the court a clear picture of what happened and increase your chances of being properly compensated.

2. Get medical attention ASAP. Even if you don't feel hurt, you should seek medical attention as soon as possible following an accident. Failing to do so leaves the door open for the defense to say you were not injured. Immediately following an accident, your adrenaline is rushing, which can prevent you from feeling injuries and pain that will show after you're more settled. No matter what, see a medical professional after an accident occurs.

3. Hire a skilled personal injury attorney. The attorneys at *The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A.* are experienced in getting clients the compensation they deserve. Obtaining evidence from the scene and a medical professional's report following an accident are a great start, but to really maximize your settlement amount, make sure to hire a skilled attorney who understands your situation and will fight to get you what you deserve.

Find more information on this and other personal injury topics on our blog at AttorneyShapiro.com/blog.



English Ground Beef Pasties

In lieu of corned beef this year, try this spin on authentic English pasties — savory pockets of pastry dough stuffed with seasoned ground beef.



Inspired by AllRecipes.com

Ingredients

- 3/4 lb ground beef
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 sheets store-bought puff pastry dough
- 1 tsp dried parsley
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup beef broth (as needed)

Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 400 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine the beef, onion, and potatoes.
3. Roll out the pastry dough into roughly 10-inch circles or squares.
4. Spoon 1/2 of the beef mixture onto each sheet of dough, then top the mixture with parsley, salt, and pepper.
5. Fold the edges of the dough over the filling, pinching each pasty shut and tucking in both ends.
6. Transfer the pasties to the prepared baking sheet, then cut several small slits in each pasty for ventilation. Bake for 45 minutes.
7. Remove the pasties from the oven and reduce the heat to 350 F. Spoon 1 tsp beef broth into each slit, then bake for an additional 15 minutes.
8. Serve and enjoy!

WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING 'They Truly Have Your Back'

"Highly recommend! Very professional and courteous. They always kept me in the loop and always advised me so well. They underpromised and overdelivered. I'm so grateful for the team, especially Jessica, the paralegal who always responded to my questions and kept me informed. They truly have your back and sincerely care about their clients. I'm glad I found them. I would definitely recommend them if you're in need of their service."

-Yuribel R.



How Are We Doing?

We pride ourselves on communicating with our clients like Yuribel, even during the hard times. Your feedback lets us know how we're doing. Please tell us about your experiences by leaving a review on Google or on our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/AttorneyShapiroLaw](https://www.facebook.com/AttorneyShapiroLaw). Your support empowers us in our mission to help as many people as possible.

Word Search

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- AQUAMARINE
- BASKETBALL
- BUTTERFLY
- CLOVER
- DAFFODIL
- GREEN
- IDES
- LEPRECHAUN
- MADNESS
- SPRING
- TANGERINE
- WOMEN