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SPRING BREAK LESSONS

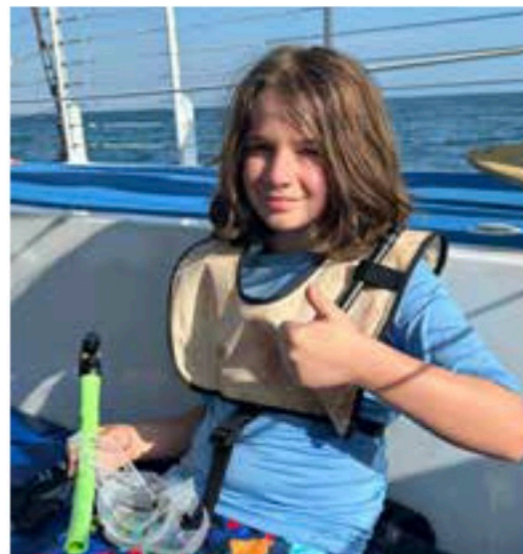
Embracing Adventure and Overcoming Challenges

As a personal injury lawyer with a busy schedule, it's not often that I get the chance to step away from the office and enjoy quality time with my family. However, during our recent spring break trip to Key West, Florida, my wife, our three boys — Owen, Sean, and Finn — and I embarked on a trip that taught us valuable lessons about resilience, positivity, and the importance of family bonding.

One of the highlights of our trip was snorkeling in the Gulf of Mexico. Despite some initial apprehension about trying a new activity, especially with varying swimming abilities among our children, we took the plunge — quite literally. After a 45-minute boat ride and a brief lesson from our instructor, we found ourselves floating in crystal-clear waters, surrounded by an array of vibrant fish and coral life. Even my 10-year-old, who typically struggles with swimming, managed to navigate the waters with ease. I was happy enough getting him away from his typical hobby — video games and YouTube.

However, it wasn't just the snorkeling that left a lasting impression on us; it was also the opportunity to try new foods and experiences together. As we explored different restaurants serving food unfamiliar to our kids, we encountered another challenge: my middle son's tendency toward negativity. Before every activity or meal, he would express doubts and concerns, predicting the experience wouldn't be enjoyable. While I have noticed this tendency in the past, it seemed constant during our trip. Yet, time and time again, our days unfolded with laughter, excitement, and shared joy, proving him wrong and showing us the power of a positive mindset.

Reflecting on my son's predisposition toward negativity, I'm reminded that such attitudes are not uncommon, especially in unfamiliar or challenging situations. However, our trip served as a reminder that with patience, encouragement, and a willingness to embrace our experiences, even the most skeptical among us can find enjoyment and fulfillment. As parents, it's our responsibility to nurture positivity in our children and help them see the potential for joy



and adventure in every moment. I intend to be more vigilant in recognizing these moments with all of my kids as they return to their daily routines.

Beyond the individual lessons learned, our family vacation reinforced the importance of prioritizing time together and creating lasting memories. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in the demands of work and daily responsibilities, neglecting the need for rest and rejuvenation. Yes, taking breaks from the daily grind not only allows us to recharge our batteries but also strengthens our relationships and enriches our lives.

I am grateful for the opportunity to spend time with my family and help our children broaden their perspectives and hopefully foster their personal growth. Whether navigating unfamiliar streets, trying new foods, meeting new people, or learning a new skill, my hope is that each new experience continues to make them more adaptable, resilient, and empathetic individuals.

I'm also grateful to share these lessons with you and encourage you to embrace adventure and new experiences, nurture positivity, and cherish the moments spent with your loved ones.

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-Brian O'Connor



A Legacy of Resilience and Brilliance

MARIE CURIE'S DEDICATION TO SCIENCE

Marie Curie, born in 1867 in Warsaw, Poland, left an undeniable mark on the scientific world. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only person to receive Nobel Prizes in two scientific fields. Her groundbreaking work in physics and chemistry reshaped our understanding of the universe at large and paved the way for future generations of women in science.

Born Marya Skłodowska, she was the daughter of teachers and was curious from a young age. She worked as a governess for her sister as she pursued her doctoral career in Paris. She was determined to channel her curiosity into higher education, though women were not encouraged to attend school, especially in science. But in 1891, she followed her sister and moved to Paris to attend school in Sorbonne, where she met and married Pierre Curie, a fellow scientist who became a lifelong collaborator.

In 1903, she won her first Nobel Prize alongside her husband and Henri Becquerel for their research on radioactivity. The recognition became historic, not just for Curie but for all women. This win challenged the prevailing belief that women

couldn't be real scientists. It was the first of many accomplishments to improve gender equality for the masses.

Madame Curie, unfortunately, lost her collaborator and husband in a road accident in 1906. She took her late husband's position as chair of the physics department at the Sorbonne and continued as a single mother of two daughters. Just five years later, in 1911, Curie secured her second Nobel Prize, this time in chemistry. She discovered radium and polonium, two elements that significantly advanced our understanding of radioactivity, further cementing that women could succeed in science.



Her extensive exposure to radiation throughout her career took a heavy toll on Curie's health. She passed away from leukemia in 1934 after helping allied efforts in the First World War. Her pioneering spirit, dedication to research, unyielding perseverance, and intellect continue to inspire countless scientists today, especially women in STEM. Madame Curie will always be remembered as a symbol of scientific excellence and the relentless pursuit of knowledge for the greater good.

DIALING FOR DOLLARS

Wannabe Bank Robber Calls Ahead, Orders Cash to Go

Any bank robber knows you have to hurry through a heist to escape. A crook in Connecticut tried a novel time-saving technique: calling ahead.

Taking a cue from the take-out food craze, the wannabe bank robber called a bank in Fairfield, Connecticut, and demanded that \$100,000 in large bills be prepared for him with no dye packs in the bag. If the orders were not carried out, the caller told the employee, "there will be a bloodbath."

Fairfield cops, who thought they'd seen it all, were dumbfounded. "You can't make this stuff up," said a spokesman for the Fairfield Police Department. Robbers have tried many routes when attempting to rob a bank, including entering the drive-through lane and terrorizing tellers through the window. But, "I've never had somebody call ahead and say, 'Get the money, we're coming,'" said a detective in the Fairfield case.

In taking advantage of the telephone warning, the police were already at the scene when the robbers arrived. "I would classify these individuals as 'not too bright,'" the police spokesman said.

The employee who answered the robber's call immediately hung up and called 9-1-1. The thief's accomplice, a minor, was already inside

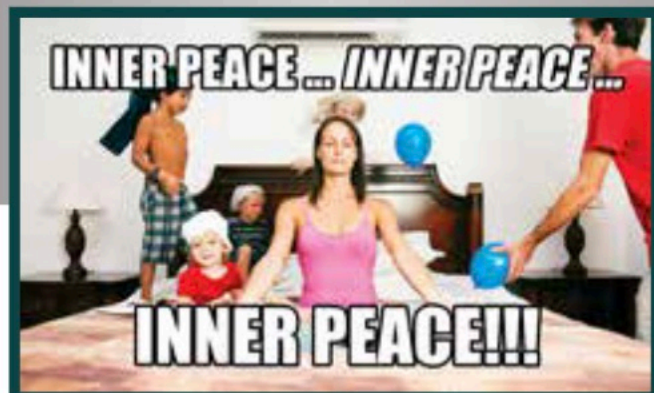
the bank when the managers initiated a lockdown.

The accomplice passed the teller a note and collected about \$900, but police stopped him as he left the bank. The fleeing accomplice was undoubtedly disappointed when the bag exploded in dye after throwing it on the ground. (Bank employees had disregarded the robbers' phone order that no dye packs be tucked in with the cash. You just can't get good service these days.)

The accomplice and the robber who placed the call, who had been sitting in a car nearby, were both arrested at the scene without incident. The adult suspect, Albert Bailey, was on probation for a different bank hold-up several years earlier. Both were charged with first-degree robbery and threatening in the first degree.



TAKE A **BREAK**



Grilled Red Curry Beef Satay With Peanut Sauce

Inspired by StarTribune.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 lb flank steak
 - 1/2 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 - 2 tbsp lime juice
 - 1–3 tbsp Thai red curry paste
 - 1 tbsp fish sauce
- For sauce:*
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 - 1–2 tbsp Thai red curry paste
 - 1 tbsp brown sugar
 - 1 tbsp fish sauce
 - 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
 - 1 tbsp lime juice

DIRECTIONS

1. Freeze flank steak for 30 minutes. Cut crosswise, against the grain, into thin slices.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together coconut milk, lime juice, curry paste, and fish sauce. Add steak and toss to coat. Cover and chill for 8 hours.
3. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine coconut milk, curry paste, brown sugar, and fish sauce. Bring to a gentle boil for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add peanut butter and stir until well blended. Remove from heat and add lime juice.
4. Thread the marinated meat onto 12 long skewers. Grill until beef is medium rare, 1–2 minutes per side.
5. Transfer satay to a platter and serve with peanut sauce.

PARENTING WITH EMPATHY

THE GENTLE PARENTING PHILOSOPHY

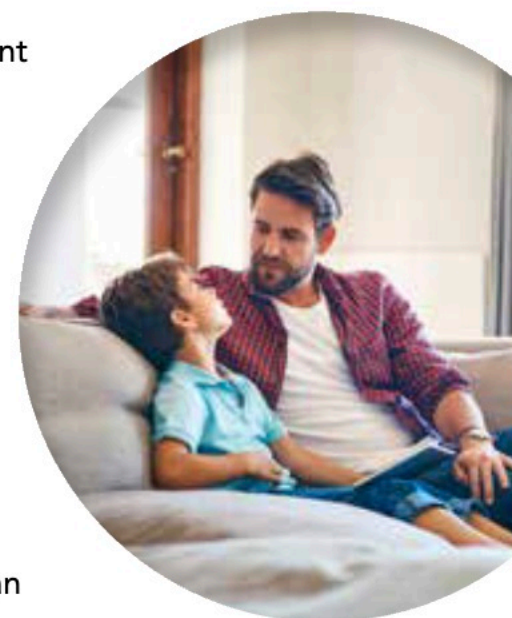
Parenthood is the greatest challenge many people will ever face, and raising children today is tougher than ever before in the technology-laden and constantly shifting state of the world. There are many parenting methods, and the latest viral one, gentle parenting, deserves a closer look. This parenting philosophy focuses on a strong parent-child relationship, offering a compassionate alternative to traditional physical disciplinary methods.

Gentle parenting emphasizes building a deep, intentional understanding of a child's needs and the emotions that stem from them. Rather than punishing a child for acting out, gentle parents encourage their children to voice their concerns so they can get to the root of challenging emotions. They view behavioral challenges as opportunities for connection and growth instead of corrections to be made. Active listening, open communication, and constructive problem-solving foster a positive environment where children feel valued and understood.

This empathy doesn't mean that children can mistreat parents, either. It's still important to set boundaries. Instead of strict rules supported by physical punishment, gentle parenting invites parents to collaborate with their children on decision-making. Involving children in discussions about expectations and consequences will ensure they understand the reasoning behind your rules and what breaking them means. This can encourage children to feel empowered and respected in the discipline process.

At its core, the most important aspect of gentle parenting is rejecting traditional punishments. Gentle parenting is about teaching children appropriate behaviors through positive reinforcement and intentional understanding of emotions — inspiring good behavior by acting as a positive example rather than by fear of punishment.

By prioritizing empathy, open communication, and nonviolent discipline, you can raise children who are able to recognize, inspect, and voice their emotions in a peaceful manner. As parents embrace these principles, they contribute to the development of emotionally secure, confident, and well-adjusted children who will grow into great global citizens.



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Essential Steps to Ensure Your Mental
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SAFEGUARD YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

WITH THESE 3 SIMPLE PRACTICES

The brain is like a command center for our bodies; it processes everything, from memories to emotions. Our happiness, cleverness, and general well-being require us to take good care of that gray matter. If we give it what it needs, it will serve us well. Here are a few tips anyone can incorporate into their routine to give their brain some TLC.

Keep the phone out of bed.

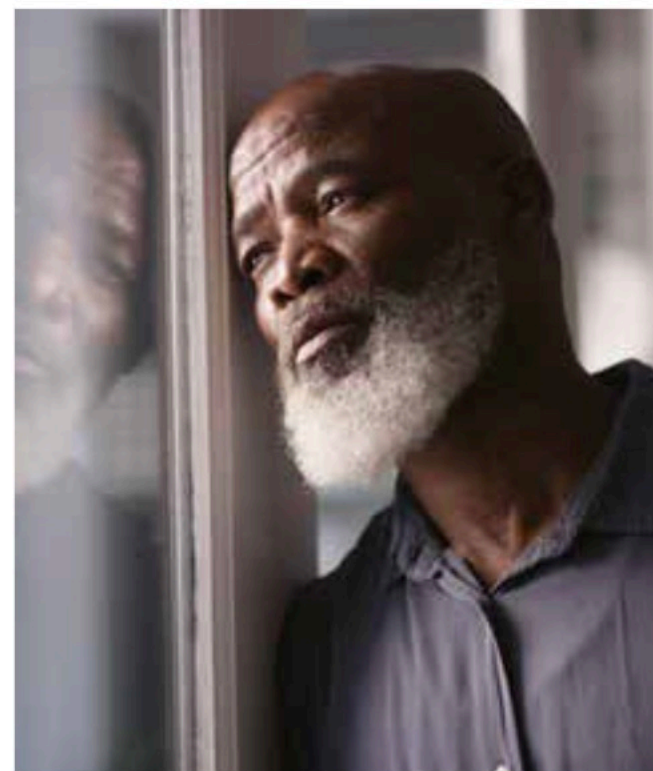
When you transition from asleep to awake in the morning, your brain waves steadily transition from alpha to theta to beta. So, don't reach for your phone when you open your eyes first thing. Doing so interrupts your brain's essential waking process, resulting in a slew of adverse effects throughout the day, including making it harder for you to think creatively, among other things.

Stop negative self-talk.

We're our own worst critics. Doubting and discouraging ourselves is easy, but pushing away negative self-talk is imperative. It leads to stress and overwhelming perfectionism while harming relationships. It undermines positive self-esteem, confidence, and body image. The cyclical nature of negative self-talk makes it hard to get rid of, often requiring therapy, but cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a standard and effective treatment.

Avoid ultra-processed foods.

Ultra-processed foods aren't just bad for your heart; they also harm your brain. Hot dogs, sugary sodas, and TV dinners — just a few culprits — harm emotional and cognitive health. One study found that



people who eat these things are more likely to have depression and anxiety. Another study correlated high ultra-processed food consumption with an intelligence decline, especially with aging. It's unclear why ultra-processed foods are so bad for brains, but the leading theory connects it to gut health. Regardless, abstaining from or reducing your intake of these foods is vital to protecting your mental and physical health.