

TWIN THIEVES OF TODAY

Are You Haunted by Regret and Fear?

Recently there has been much written about the benefits of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of bringing one's attention to whatever is happening in the present moment. I have read a few books on the subject but confess the topic has not held my attention to the degree necessary to become a practitioner. But one thing I did realize while pondering the concept of truly living in the moment is how difficult it is to do well. So many things in our busy lives prevent us from fully appreciating the present moment. Two of the most damaging emotions that make enjoying the present so difficult are regret and fear.

Some people have such deep regret over things they have done or failed to do that they become incapable of enjoying today. For these people, the past hangs over them like a dark rain cloud and they are consumed with negativity. Then there are others who fret constantly over what the future holds. Young people worrying needlessly over what their future careers will hold. Older people consumed with fear and anxiety over whether they will ever be able to retire comfortably or will be forced to work well into old age to survive.

Now I'm not saying that regret and fear are not normal emotions that we all experience at some points in our lives; they most certainly are. What I am arguing against is allowing these twin thieves to rob from us the only thing that's real and guaranteed: the moment we are currently experiencing. As you read this newsletter, is there any guarantee that you'll be around to read next month's (or that I'll be around to write it)? Nope, there isn't. You are in the moment and once you finish reading this newsletter, the time you took to read it is gone forever.

I know what you are thinking "Len, you've lost your mind, you're getting too deep". But what I say is true, the past is done, its only purpose is to educate us on how to better navigate the present and to teach us useful lessons. The future needs to be appropriately planned for so that when it arrives we can enjoy the present to the fullest. But the future is unknown and unpredictable, so once we properly plan for it, it's time to get back to living and enjoying the life you have. Further worry is useless and detrimental to our peace of mind.

In my own life, I recognize that I have a few regrets that have robbed me of peace of mind. Regrets too personal to discuss in a monthly newsletter but suffice it to say that I am aware of moments I wasted thinking about what could've or should've been.



“ Two of the most damaging emotions that make enjoying the present so difficult are regret and fear. ”

Fear is also an emotion that, on occasion, has consumed me and robbed me of peace. Anyone who has children knows the worry that can exist over how the future will unfold for them. Will our kids remain safe at college, while driving, etc.? Will they stay healthy, find good friends, a good life partner, be happy? All worries over things that, for the most part, we have little control over. Yet still we worry.

I will be 55 this month and with age comes some perspective. I've come to grips with my regrets and try hard to extract the lessons my mistakes contain. As for fear, I still worry excessively about my kids' well-being and, to a lesser degree, myself getting old, but I'm getting better. As my kids would say, I'm learning to "chill" more. I leave you with a few lines from a poem by Robert Hastings: "It isn't the burden of today that drive men mad. Rather it is regret over yesterday or fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today."

Enjoy the moments as they come, and be aware of the thieves that haunt us all, if we let them.

-Len Spada

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD

HOW STEPHEN ZOLOTAS FINDS BALANCE

When you're hurt in an accident and need help paying your bills, the media often portrays you like a leech who is trying to take advantage of the system. This is an unfair portrayal, but the idea of rampant, frivolous lawsuits is the result of years of campaigns from multinational, multibillion-dollar insurance companies. We know our clients feel like it's them against the world, which is why our team is made up of attorneys who are ready to go to bat for their clients every day. One such attorney is Stephen Zolotas.

Stephen has been practicing law for over a decade. He graduated law school with the intention of going into maritime law. However, after being assigned many personal injury cases as an intern, Stephen found his passion fighting for the rights of injured men, women, and children in court. He's one of the very best. Stephen is a relentless combatant in the courtroom, but outside his career, he is a stand-up guy and genuine family man.

Stephen and his wife met in college and have been married for 11 years. Together they have two kids, ages 5 and 3. Raising two young kids can be as fun as it is challenging. These challenges have only grown as the couple balances their careers of attorney and nurse practitioner.

"My wife and I have been able to work out our schedule very cleanly," Stephen says. "I typically handle the morning routine with the kids, and she takes the afternoon pickup. I pressure myself to accomplish as much work as possible by 5 p.m. during my day. Whatever I don't finish gets done later that night or first thing the next morning. My work is important, but I remind myself that it's not the only important thing. There needs to be a balance between work and family time."



The careful planning of his schedule has allowed him to spend plenty of time with his clients and his family. Because of their busy schedules during the week, Stephen and his wife embrace the weekend warrior lifestyle. In the summer, they spend plenty of time on the boat or hiking, and in the winter, they enjoy family ski trips.

"I guess you could say that I work hard to make sure that I have time to play hard with my family. It is important to me that my clients know I'm going to work hard and do everything in my power to attain the best possible recovery for them. However, it is equally important for my kids to know their dad is going to be around to play and have fun while they're growing up."

REVIEW OF THE MONTH



"I met Attorney Spada through another valued attorney. He is professional and extremely detail oriented. It requires a certain type of individual to truly understand your situation, and Mr. Spada becomes an expert in every sense possible to advocate for your case. If you become one of his clients, I can assure you that you are in the right hands. He has a great team that supports his efforts. I truly value his knowledge and experience. My gratitude to the entire firm."

– Winn O.

Dogs and Jogs

Massachusetts Protects Dog Bite Victims and Pedestrians

Spring is here, and the weather will soon be warm and inviting. People are spending more time outside enjoying the warmth after another cold New England winter. Here at Spada Law Group, we don't have to check the forecast to know the seasons have changed. We can simply look at the types of cases that are coming into our office. As summer approaches, clients inevitably hire us for more dog bite and pedestrian accident cases. Before the weather gets nice, here's what you need to know about these types of cases in Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Law Protects Dog Bite Victims

Massachusetts has one of the toughest dog bite laws in the country. If a dog harms you in Massachusetts, the dog's owner is liable for any damage the dog causes. It doesn't matter if the dog has never bitten anyone or shown aggression before. However, the owner may not be liable if the victim of the bite was trespassing on the dog owner's property or if the victim was teasing or abusing the dog.

If you have a dog, keep it leashed in public and be sure you have adequate homeowners or renters insurance to protect you should your dog cause an injury. If you get bitten, get as much information as you can about the owner of the dog and talk to a lawyer as soon as possible to understand your legal rights.

Massachusetts Law Protects Pedestrians

There are several laws in Massachusetts meant to protect pedestrians and bicyclists

when they are crossing roads or intersections. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 89, Section 11 says that the pedestrian has the right of way when in a crosswalk and approaching vehicles must slow down and yield their right of way. Additionally, drivers may not pass vehicles stopped to give pedestrians the right of way.

But what if you get hit and you are *not* in a crosswalk? You may still be entitled to compensation. The following is a quote from a Massachusetts judge who presided over a case we recently tried as she was instructing the jury on the law in Massachusetts:

"The rights and duties of a pedestrian and the operator of a motor vehicle in the use of public ways are reciprocal, and each may rely to some extent on the other using proper care. Pedestrians have a duty to exercise due care in their use of public ways. Due care requires that the plaintiff exercise the care and caution that you would naturally expect from a reasonably prudent person under the same or similar circumstances. Further, a pedestrian has a right to cross a street while not in a crosswalk but must do so using due care."

Just because someone crosses a street outside of a crosswalk does *not* automatically prevent them from successfully claiming and recovering damages in a personal injury claim.

If you have a question about either a dog bite or a pedestrian accident, give us a call. Since 1998, Spada Law Group has successfully handled hundreds of such cases.



Local Chef's Corner

Pad Kra Pao Gai (Thai Basil Chicken)

Hungry for something different? Treat yourself to Thailand's most popular street food, Thai basil chicken!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 chicken breast
- 5 cloves garlic
- 4–10 Thai chilies
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp oyster sauce
- 1/2 tsp light soy sauce
- 1 splash dark sweet soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1 handful Thai holy basil leaves

DIRECTIONS

1. Chop chicken breast into bite-size pieces.
2. Peel the garlic and rinse the chilies, then mince them together.
3. Heat your wok on high and add coconut oil. When oil is hot, stir-fry garlic and chilies until fragrant. Toss in chicken and stir continuously until chicken is fully cooked.
4. Add oyster sauce, light soy sauce, dark sweet soy sauce, and sugar. Stir-fry for another 30 seconds.
5. Throw in holy basil. Fold it into the chicken then immediately remove from heat.
6. Serve hot with a side of rice and a fried egg.

Inspired by EatingThaiFood.com



111 Everett Ave., #1F
Chelsea, MA 02150
617.889.5000
SpadaLawGroup.com

Inside This Issue

- 1 Be in the Now
- 2 Who is Stephen Zolotas?
Review of the Month
- 3 Do Dog Bites Increase in the Spring?
Authentic Hot Thai Basil Chicken
- 4 Laughter Yoga's Rise as a Global Health
Movement

LAUGH WITH ME!

A LIGHTHEARTED APPROACH TO DECREASING STRESS

We've all heard that laughter is the best medicine, and it turns out that human physiology supports this claim. When we laugh, our body releases a flood of feel-good chemicals and neurotransmitters. Our blood flow increases, and our production of cortisol, a hormone associated with stress, decreases. Oh, and laughing also burns calories!

The feel-good, endorphin-inducing benefits of laughter are exactly what prompted Dr. Madan Kataria to develop laughter yoga in 1995. Laughter yoga incorporates breathing, stretching, clapping, and of course, laughing.

Kataria developed the initial idea after coming across research into the benefits of laughter on overall health and well-being. He began to put the research into practice by telling jokes to his patients, and after seeing the positive effects, he took his material to a local park. Parkgoers, who were initially skeptical, joined in on the practice, and the first laughter yoga club was born.

The laughter meetup had everyone in high spirits — until the group ran out of jokes. Unsure of what to do next, Kataria found another medical book suggesting the group didn't need jokes to laugh. Fake laughter is just as beneficial as the real thing because the body can't tell the difference between the two.



Collaborating with this wife, Madhuri, Kataria combined common yoga warmups and breathing techniques with facilitated laughter to create the form of laughter yoga that is practiced worldwide today.

If you're interested in trying laughter yoga for yourself, then you're in luck. Laughter yoga clubs exist across the United States and the world. Videos on YouTube can teach the basics, but laughter yoga tends to be most beneficial in a group setting.

Just think about the last time you found yourself in a fit of giggles with a group of friends or during a comedy show. Didn't it feel great? Rather than wait for a silly situation to trigger laughter, use laughter yoga to promote laughter and alleviate stress on any day at any time.