


# THE SLG ADVISOR

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## Entering 2021 Hopeful

THE SCIENCE BEHIND HOW HOPE PUSHES US FORWARD



**L**et's face it: 2020 sucked, and there's no way around it. We faced down an invisible virus that took so much from so many people in so many different ways.

Many of us have been consumed by a mixture of confusion, worry, and despair since March. Businesses and schools have been shut down on and off for almost a year, leaving many people without a source of income or a stable source of learning. With a vaccine just beginning to be rolled out, people continue to die at an alarming rate. Most of us spent a good portion of 2020 hoping and praying things would get better.

In spite of all of that, as I ponder this past year, I am reminded of the power of hope. For all the hardships 2020 brought, at the beginning of a

new year, it seems like there's a light at the end of this long, dark tunnel. Multiple vaccines are ready to go and although case numbers have spiked these past few months, many experts predict that a return to normalcy could be within reach.

It seems like all that we hoped for may finally be coming true. And even if hope didn't create a vaccine or save the economy, hope is incredibly important for our emotional well-being. In fact, hope is scientifically proven to help us deal with adversity in our lives.

Being hopeful can lead to a lot of good in a person's life, including greater happiness, better academic achievement, and even a decreased risk of death. What's more is that hope does not relate to IQ or income, according to psychologist Dr. Shane Lopez. In an article by the American

Psychological Association, the senior scientist at Gallup remarks that hope is in fact an "equal opportunity resource." But before going into too much detail about that, it's important to understand what hope is — or rather, what researchers understand it to be.

According to the late Dr. Charles Snyder, a psychologist at the University of Kansas and one of the first people to really research hope, there are three main components: goals, pathways, and agency. We create goals for ourselves and make a pathway (or plan) for achieving them, all while relying on our agency — our ability to control our circumstances — to make it all happen. Even when we fail to achieve our goals or our pathways become blocked, another part of being hopeful is acknowledging multiple pathways and sometimes amending our goals.

The specific nature of hope is what separates it from mere optimism.

*Continued on Pg. 2 ...*

*"Hope is more than just a vague feeling — it's a measurable part of what drives us forward when the going gets tough."*

# A Brief Overview of the Current Vaccination Rollout Process

Over the next six months or so, our country will face what's sure to be one of the most complex processes in its history: rolling out COVID-19 vaccines.

As I write this it's mid-December and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has approved two potential vaccines for emergency distribution: the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the Moderna vaccine. Unfortunately, that's only the first step in the journey back to normalcy. Below, I've done my best to summarize the ideal rollout process as well as the logistical hurdles.

## Potential Rollout Process

The first two vaccines have already begun to be administered to front-line health care workers and emergency responders. There are likely enough doses to inoculate 20 million people in the U.S. immediately. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that these first vaccines go to front-line health care workers and nursing home residents; the latter group has accounted for 40% of COVID-19-related deaths.

After that, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends distributing the vaccine to essential workers, people with preexisting health conditions, and people over the age of 65. The vaccine could become available to the general public by spring, and by June, most of the U.S. could be inoculated. This is the ideal rollout scenario.

## Potential Logistical Hurdles

In reality, the U.S. could face a variety of hurdles. First, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are stored at incredibly cold temperatures, which is challenging for certain distribution sites. Second, the Trump administration has largely left decisions about vaccine rollouts up to the states, meaning some parts of the country may receive doses more efficiently than others. The Biden administration, however, might more tightly regulate vaccine rollouts from the federal level as well as provide more federal funding for the process. Finally, while the vaccine will be free for anyone at first, there may be a cost later on, and patients are unlikely to know the cost of the vaccine until they're billed later by their insurance company.

All of this is a very brief bird's-eye view of the entire process. In reality, it's probably even more complicated. That said, I hope you can take solace in the fact that there's apparently a light at the end of this tunnel.

# 6 Reasons Why I Might

As much as I would love to help everyone who calls me, the fact is that I don't take every case offered to me. If your case has ever been rejected by an attorney, you might wonder why. Below are six reasons why I turn some cases away.

**I don't think I can help you (i.e., I think you might be at fault).** You can't recover damages if you're more than 50% at fault for an accident. While I admittedly am not the final word on whether or not you're more than 50% at fault, I have been practicing law for almost 30 years, so I have a pretty good sense for these things.

**The case is too small.** While I would love to help anyone who deserves it, the unfortunate fact is that at the end of the day, I have to pay salaries, a mortgage, tuitions, and all sorts of other bills. If the case isn't likely to yield enough compensation for it to be worth the work, I can't take it.

**We can't collect even if we win.** If the at-fault party has no way of compensating the injured party (no insurance), then there's no



## Review of the Month

*"I found Spada Law Group after dealing with another attorney whom I felt was not doing my case justice or putting in enough effort to get a satisfactory settlement. After my first meeting with Len and Robyn, I knew immediately that they were the perfect fit for me. Indeed, these two have exceeded all my expectations and have gone above and beyond to include me in the settlement process, ensure my satisfaction with the case, and give sound, wise advice to ensure a just and fair result. I would recommend Spada Law Group to anyone in need of personal injury representation or advice, and I owe them more than this simple review can express."*

—Rachel T.



# Don't Not Take A Case

use putting together a case. It's a sad fact, and I hate to turn clients away for this reason, but there's nothing I can do.

## **It's not in my area of expertise.**

I am a personal injury (PI) attorney. I have practiced PI law exclusively since 1998. To practice any other area of law would be a massive disservice to the client and borders on malpractice. However, in this case, I will refer would-be clients to attorneys who I know can take their case.

## **It happened too long ago.**

The statute of limitations on PI cases is three years. That means the case must either settle or be filed in court before the three-year anniversary of the accident. Typically, I won't take cases that are too close to that three-year mark as I won't have the time I need to handle the case properly.

**I can't see myself working with the client.** If you're only interested in exacting revenge, not

receiving just compensation, then I won't work with you. Also, if I catch one of my clients lying, I will not continue to represent them. I can live knowing my clients' bad facts, but clients who lie lose cases, so I won't work with them.

All of that said, you should never let the thought that an attorney might not take your case keep you from scheduling a free consultation. If you think you might have a case, contact us online or call or text us at 617.889.5000 to schedule an in-person or Zoom consultation.



## *... continued from Cover*

While someone who's optimistic might just have a general feeling that good things will happen, hopeful people move forward, even when it doesn't seem like anything is going their way, toward a goal they want to achieve.

Hopefulness comes with measurable benefits, too. According to a study that measured levels of hope, anxiety, and depression in 500 college students, researchers found that students who were more hopeful experienced less depression and anxiety after one and two months. Another study found that more hopeful students had greater academic success. Finally, a review

of 45 different studies surveying more than 11,000 employees found that hope led to a 14% increase in productivity in the workplace. Hope is more than just a vague feeling — it's a measurable part of what drives us forward when the going gets tough.

As we head into 2021 with a year of chaos and worry behind us, what are you hoping will happen for your family, community, and country? Whatever it is, I hope you enter this year with your head held high and good fortune in front of you.

*-Len Spada*

Local Chef's Corner

# Something Strong

To Drink the Cold Away



*If the January cold has you feeling down, a hot toddy is sure to bring you some warmth on even the most frigid of winter days (if you're over 21, that is!).*

## **INGREDIENTS**

- About 1 shot of your preferred brown liquor (brandy, whiskey, rum, etc.)
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1/2 oz lemon juice
- 1 cup hot water

## **DIRECTIONS**

All you need to do is mix these ingredients together in a mug and enjoy! As an option, you could also include a lemon wedge or cinnamon stick as a garnish. It's the perfect drink to enjoy while looking out the window as the snow falls.

*Inspired by WineMag.com*



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# INSIDE

The Science Behind How Hope Pushes Us Forward

A Brief Overview of the Current Vaccination Rollout Process

Why I Don't Take Every Case Offered to Me

Testimonial

This Month's Recipe: A No-Frills Hot Toddy

The First Dog to Win a Nobel Peace Prize

## The First Dog to Win a Nobel Peace Prize



Just this past October, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to what can only be described as one of the world's goodest boys — a dog named Foxtrot, known also to his Instagram followers (of which there are nearly 7,000) as humanitarian\_pup.

While Foxtrot wasn't responsible for improvements to auction theory (like Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson, who won the Nobel Prize for economics) or for a standout career in writing poetry (like Louise Glück, who won the Nobel Prize for literature), this incredible canine shared the Nobel Peace Prize with the World Food Programme

## Foxtrot's Heroics With the World Food Programme

(WFP) for their work in combating world hunger. As the organization's official mascot, Foxtrot shared in the win with the thousands of other WFP workers worldwide.

Foxtrot lives in Bangladesh (one of the most densely populated countries in the world) at a WFP outpost that works to supply one of the world's largest refugee camps. According to an NPR article that spotlighted Foxtrot and the efforts made by his WFP humans, they worked not only to get food to refugees but also to flatten hillsides to make room for shelters for Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar.

Foxtrot himself became part of the effort to combat world hunger during a WFP beach cleanup in his home country. Workers found him as a 4-week-old pup, and after failing to locate his owners, took him in as one

of their own. For the past two years, Foxtrot has helped however he can to further the WFP's efforts to end hunger in Bangladesh. This usually includes accompanying his humans while they work, wearing an adorable custom-made WFP cape, and taking to Instagram to raise awareness about how anyone can join in the WFP's mission.

After learning that he and his humans had won the Nobel Peace Prize, Foxtrot didn't waste the opportunity to share his excitement with his followers. "Woweee," the pup said. "I ... think it would be even more amazing if we didn't need any peace prizes because peace was the status quo in our world."

If Foxtrot and his humans keep up the good work that won them the Nobel Peace Prize, it seems like that status quo could be within reach.