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A DRIVER'S GUIDE TO SAFE HOLIDAY TRAVELS

Winter Road Trip Essentials You Didn't Know You Needed

On Sept. 24, 2019, more than 2.5 million people passed through TSA checkpoints at airports across America. On the same date this year, those terminals saw just 826,316 travelers — a nearly 70% drop. Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Americans have been thinking twice about air travel, and this holiday, millions of would-be fliers will set out on road trips instead.

Road tripping is a great way to avoid contact with a lot of people, but it is important to guard against potential dangers, especially in winter weather. Fortunately, you can take several steps to keep your family safe. Getting your car checked before you go, for example, can save you a lot of hassle on the road. Depending upon where you will be traveling, investing in a set of snow tires might be a prudent step. It's also smart to take precautions such as letting a friend or family member know your route, predicted arrival time, and where you plan to stop for gas along the way.

Apart from that, one of the best things you can do is pack an emergency kit. AAA sells premade kits through outlets like Amazon, and you can find a basic kit with things like jumper cables, ponchos, rope, batteries, pliers, zip ties, and a first-aid kit at pretty much any

Walmart or sporting goods store. You could even save a life by adding a few more essentials to your kit, like a blanket, snacks, and an extra cellphone charger.

If you do go to Amazon, search, "seat belt cutter and window breaker," and consider adding one to your order.

To take your kit to the next level for winter driving, three more little-known items can make a big difference: a shovel, a bag of sand or cat litter, and an extra bottle of windshield wiper fluid. If you get stuck in a snowbank, the shovel will help you dig your way out without risking frostbitten fingers. The sand or cat litter will boost your traction if you sprinkle it around your wheels in an icy spot, and the extra wiper fluid will make all the difference if you run out during a snowstorm.

Hopefully, the need for these various items will never arise. However, when it comes to your safety, as well as the safety of your passengers, better to have and not need than need and not have. Happy Travels!



7 Times Down, 8 Times Up

My Reflections on 2020

2020. I believe that collectively, simply hearing references to 2020 will — for the rest of our lives — evoke a stronger reaction than references to most other years we live through.

We all remember transitional years in our personal lives, such as a birth, a death, a wedding, and so forth. Most of us can relate to the way certain shocking events leave an imprint, or perhaps a scar, on our memories. For example, consider the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the space shuttle Challenger disaster, and the attacks of 9/11. Most people alive during those calamities remember where they were, what they were doing, and the feelings they had upon hearing the news.

2020 is different from those events. The difficulties of this year did not present themselves in a mere moment. Instead, 2020 has changed and continues to change the world and our lives over many months. Still, I think 2020 will, like those terrible incidents, be permanently imprinted upon our psyches.

Recently, upon entering a store and fumbling to put on a mask, a friend asked me in exasperation, "When will this all be over?" referring to the effects 2020 has had on our lives.

"It will never be over," I said. "It will just change."

2020 is like other years though, in that, as the year ends, many people reflect on the year's events and speculate about the next 12 months. 2020 has brought tragedy to

some, mere inconvenience to others, and some level of disruption for almost all of humanity, with the individual level of harm suffered somewhere between those two extremes.

While the events of 2020 have been global in scope, I can't help but see the events of this year through the lens of how our law firm's clients deal with the consequences of their accidents. All our clients are seriously injured, some are catastrophically injured. I have seen time and again that every injury victim traverses their post-accident life in their own unique way. Seeing this unfold for so many clients has given me quite an education in how people deal with life-changing events.

I have observed that the people most connected with their "why" were often the ones who were most able to summon greater strength and soldier on through their physical and emotional pain and, ultimately, build a better life. The "why," or reason to thrive, varied from person to person: to be there for their family; because they had a religious or spiritual goal; or because they were dedicated and wanted to return to their work, school, social, community, recreational, or athletic activity. These people were in touch with why they wanted to recover and kept it ever-present in their minds.

As 2020 comes to an end, my wish for you is that you make a greater connection with your personal "why," whatever it is, and that you draw strength from it. My wish for a world that must recover is the same as my wish for our injured clients.



My hope is that when people hear 2020 mentioned in the years to come, at least part of what they think and feel is expressed in this maxim: "Seven times down, eight times up." Just as our clients' accidents have changed their lives, 2020 was the year that has changed all our lives and tested us profoundly.

As we reflect, I hope we can truthfully realize it was the year we found we were far stronger and much more resilient than we ever knew.

Happy New Year to you and your loved ones!



-Ed Friedman

BE A BETTER LISTENER FOR SOMEONE

Who Needs to 'Get It All Out'



The Holiday Season is "supposed" to be a time of joy and celebration. For many though, it is a difficult time. An important way to express your care someone is to be a good listener. They may even experience it as a gift for the holidays. Below are some thoughts on this important skill.

It's not always easy to share feelings of frustration, anger, sadness, or other strong emotions — but it can be healthy to share them in a constructive, supportive environment. Sometimes, it helps to vent and get it all out. Venting gives us an opportunity to release these emotions, which often leads to mental clarity.

However, when someone comes to you to vent and share their heavy emotional burden, listening can be just as challenging as sharing. You want to be supportive, but you don't want to interfere. Strong feelings and tough situations may be involved. What can you do to be the listener they really need?

It starts with your body language. Open yourself to their emotional needs. Gregorio Billikopf, an interpersonal relationship expert at the University of California, Berkeley says if you begin the conversation standing, invite the person to have a seat with you.

Another thing you can do as a listener is position yourself below their eye line. This puts the person venting in a more active "storyteller" position and you in a better "listener" position. While in this position, maintain eye contact. It's okay to look down or away occasionally but try to keep steady eye contact.

Billikopf also notes that, as a listener, it's important to avoid interjecting. Don't offer input, suggestions, or guidance to the person venting until after the person has had the chance to get it all out. "During this venting process, there is still too much pressure for a person to consider other perspectives," Billikopf says.

While you don't want to interject, you do want to be an active listener. This means you don't want to be completely silent. This is where "reflective listening" comes in. Occasionally repeat what the speaker says — but don't use their exact phrasing. Reword slightly in a sympathetic manner. Listening cues like "mm" or "hm" and nods are always welcome.

One last thing to keep in mind: You do not need to offer a solution to the person's problem or concerns. They may just be venting to get their negative emotions out, not looking for answers or explanations. If they *are* looking for answers or guidance, wait for them to ask. In the meantime, lend your ear and let them know you're there for them going forward.

Case Spotlight: The Defendant Injured Our Client and Then Left the United States



Imagine that someone behaving in a careless manner, perhaps negligently driving a car, permitting property to fall into dangerous disrepair, or performing work recklessly on a construction site, causes you to suffer a life-changing injury. Soon thereafter, you learn they have traveled to another country, thousands of miles away. How will you hold them financially responsible for the harm they caused you?

This sort of question involves the legal concept and practical considerations of jurisdiction. Jurisdiction deals with a government agency — for our purposes, the court system — exercising power over people and legal entities (such as partnerships, corporations, other government agencies, etc.) by adjudicating disputes involving those parties and issuing binding orders that compel those parties to do things like pay money or appear in court.

This past month our firm successfully settled a case where jurisdictional issues played a significant role. Our client had suffered permanent injuries requiring surgical treatment after being in a car accident caused by someone visiting from France and driving a rental car in New York. After the accident, the at-fault party returned to France. Even though the rental car company had insurance, the court insisted that we make "personal service," that is, deliver with legal formality the papers setting forth our client's complaint, on the defendant in France in order to proceed with our client's case. Attorney John Papadopoulos of our firm had to navigate extensive motion practice (numerous detailed requests to the court) pertaining to these service-related issues, including the rules concerning The Hague Convention (an international service treaty) and working with a process service company in France to actually physically deliver the hard copy legal document to the defendant.

As a result of John's relentless efforts, the defendant was served, the court was able to order the action to proceed, and the insurance company for the rental car ultimately agreed to an appropriate settlement for our client, bringing the case to a resolution. We are grateful that we were able to use the long arm of the law to reach the justice and monetary compensation our client was entitled to.

AVOID THESE 5 COMMON HOLIDAY INJURIES!

The holiday season is incredibly exciting for families, and one might imagine the only danger would be eating too much. There are some hazards to be aware of, however!

No. 1: Be extra cautious on the road.

Yes, more drinks are passed around during the holidays, but we also have more errands to run and parties to get to, which can be stressful! Try not to rush and be vigilant as to others rushing to gatherings or to get their shopping done.

No. 2: Check for exposed wires.

If you have Christmas lights you've been using for several years, there is a chance the protective rubber around the wires is thinning. The U.S. Fire Administration reports that holiday fires kill more than 400 Americans each year. To combat this, make sure your lights do not pose any threat to set your tree aflame.

No. 3: Avoid trips, slips, and falls!

Holiday decorations can be serious business for many families, but make sure your work area is clear and your ladder is stable, too! It is prudent to have an assistant to hold your ladder and to help in any other way that will keep you both safe.



No. 4: Don't strain your back.

Carrying boxes that are way too heavy is a common cause of injury during the holidays. Don't make this year the year you seriously injure your back carrying that huge set of cookware you'd like to give a family member! Get help or buy a transportable dolly.

No. 5: Party responsibly.

2020 might be worth forgetting, but don't forget to get an Uber, taxi, or designated driver to take you home after a night of drinking! DUIs and car accident injuries can be life-changing, and we can probably all agree that 2020 has been life-changing enough.

We hope these tips help you stay much safer this holiday season, so you'll be ready for a great 2021! Merry festivities!

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SOLUTION

Festive Apple Cider



Inspired by BoulderLocavore.com

If you're cutting back on calories, skip the eggnog and buttered rum this year and fill up your mug with this delicious mulled cider!

Ingredients

- 1 lemon
- 1 gallon pure apple cider
- 1 large orange, thinly sliced crosswise
- 2 tsp whole cloves
- 2 tsp allspice berries
- 1 inch fresh ginger, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp honey
- 3 cinnamon sticks

Directions

1. Using a paring knife, shave the lemon peel off in curls. Reserve the curls and save the lemon for use in a different recipe.
2. In a large slow cooker, combine the lemon peel with all other ingredients. Cook on low for 3-4 hours.
3. If desired, use a sieve to strain the spices. Serve and enjoy!