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December 2021

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Boost Your Mood With These Tips

Many Americans spend the holidays alone every year, and the pandemic has only made it more difficult for people to see their loved ones, as travel has become more restricted and strenuous.

If you're one of these people who are spending their first holiday season alone this year, here are a few strategies you can try to make the situation a little easier.

Don't hold yourself to the usual standards.

One of the best things about spending the holidays alone is that you can do things your way. You don't have to worry about meeting everyone else's standards. Instead, you only have to make yourself happy. Simply telling yourself that you are not going to have the usual holiday environment can slightly help, but redefining what the holiday means to you can remove a huge weight. Trying new things or looking toward the future are

great ways to reduce the stress of spending the holidays alone. Keeping up with old traditions may remind you of what you're missing out on, so it can greatly help to create your own traditions.

Plan ahead.

If you know in advance that you're going to be spending the holidays alone, planning ahead can prevent negative feelings. While being spontaneous can sometimes keep things fresh, it could leave you with a feeling of hopelessness about what to do next. There's no need for your list to be extensive or highly detailed, but even just planning to watch a movie or cook some of your favorite dishes can give you something to look forward to.

Take care of yourself.

Just because you're not seeing people during the holidays does not mean you should forgo your basic needs. Stick to your regular hygiene habits and do not let them get away from you. The same goes for eating and sleeping. Staying clean, well-fed, and well-rested goes a long way toward improving your happiness.

As with all mental health advice, what works for some does not work for everyone. Do what you think will work best for you and help you keep your thoughts happy.

Christmas is here, and 2021 is drawing to a close. The holiday cheer is certainly in the air, and I am excited to celebrate with my family! This time of year is magical in that it allows for some much-needed family time, reflection, and relaxation. Sometimes, my family celebrates Christmas in Ohio at my brother's house, but he also sometimes makes the trip to Michigan. There have also been times that we decided to meet in between at a restaurant, which is always special, too! I've come to find that it doesn't matter how you celebrate — it's all about keeping the spirit of Christmas alive.

Our kids are all in their 20s now, so much of our planning is dependent upon their plans and whereabouts. My son, Bryan, will be back from Virginia, and Sara and Eric are both living in Michigan, so we plan on seeing a lot of each other. Plans will likely be last minute, but we can't wait to just be together.

One of our traditions is that we get Chinese takeout on Christmas Eve. I'm not sure exactly how we fell into it, but it's something we've done for years — as far back as I can remember, actually. The reason likely is because it used to be the only place open on Christmas Eve. We like to kick back, relax, eat, and play some games.

As a firm, we traditionally sponsor local families. Sometimes veterans, sometimes a family who lost their home in a fire, and other times just families in need that we learn about through local churches or organizations — we do our best to provide Christmas dinner and gifts for the children. The holidays offer a fabulous opportunity to help others and spread kindness.

With the end of the year approaching, I like to relax and skate right into the new year if possible. Sometimes, end-of-year

planning and tax situations need to get squared away for clients, but I still tend to scale back the workload and take a little time to enjoy the ambiance and magic of the season.

In November, we celebrated our law firm's 10-year anniversary. I've been practicing law for over 30 years and am extremely proud to have such a great group to work with every day. Most of the time, work doesn't feel like work. We had a fun team dinner outside the office to relax and celebrate, and we look forward to carrying on our firm for many years to come.

As the days get shorter in winter, it's important to make every day count. From a law standpoint, sometimes we take things too seriously. We need to take the time to laugh and find the humor and fun in life. Laughing, feeling joyous, and staying fresh make everything worthwhile. It is enriching to always learn something new — stepping outside of your comfort zone opens your eyes to so many new opportunities and possibilities. To that end, my plan is to absorb a new book or two before the year ends.

From our firm to you, merry Christmas and happy holidays! We wish you a season of joy, health, and happiness with your family and friends. Bring on the new year!

Glenn Matecun

Counting Our Blessings and Reflecting on 2021





Prohibition for the Movies?

THE LITTLE-KNOWN STORY OF THE HAYS CODE

If you've seen the classic movie "Casablanca," you might be surprised to learn that the original version was more risqué than the one later shown on theater screens. The night Rick and Ilsa shared in Paris was more, ahem, explicitly passionate, but those lines were dropped on the cutting room floor.

Why? Well, it wasn't because of artistic choice. According to Mental Floss, "Joseph I. Breen, the head of the Production Code Administration, personally objected to any reference in Casablanca about Rick and Ilsa having possibly slept together in Paris." What a killjoy!

Breen's objection was backed up by an industry standard of the time called the Hays Code (or officially, the Motion Picture Production Code). This now-forgotten list of rules predated today's movie rating system and governed Hollywood from 1934 to 1968, restricting expression in countless movies and TV shows. It was intended to clean up the violent, drug-filled movie business

much like Prohibition — which preceded it— had been designed to clean up a drunken America.

As the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) puts it, "The code prohibited profanity, suggestive nudity, graphic or realistic violence, sexual persuasions, and rape" — but it also prohibited certain kinds of costumes and dances, censored homosexuality, and banished married movie couples to separate beds! Just a few of the stranger things banned under the Hays Code were justifications of revenge, mockery of the clergy, and showing alcohol "when not required by the plot."

You've likely watched movies and TV shows filmed under the restrictions of the Hays Code without realizing it was to blame for the wacky choices the directors made. For example, Mental Floss reports the code is the reason "I Love Lucy" never showed Lucy and Rick sharing a bed or used the word "pregnant," even when Lucy was expecting!

It's also the reason why Betty Boop temporarily lost her garter belt and why the birth scene in "Gone With the Wind" was filmed in shadows.

In fact, even a "silhouette" birth should have been off-limits, but somehow, the producers sneaked it through. To learn more about the origins and ending of the Hays Code, check out the NPR story "Remembering Hollywood's Hays Code, 40 Years On."



The Secrets to Everyday Habits to Make You Look Younger

With aging comes experience and wisdom, but it doesn't have to show on the surface! There are ways to drastically slow down the clock that don't involve any invasive surgeries, tons of money, or huge lifestyle changes.

Eat an anti-inflammatory diet.

Taking up a diet that works to reduce your body's inflammatory response is beneficial to slowing the aging process. When you eat foods that promote inflammation, telomere lengths are shortened prematurely. Telomeres are a compound structure at the end of a chromosome that protect against cell division, which promotes aging. The goal is to keep them long, and anti-inflammatory foods do just that! Fresh fruits, leafy vegetables, nuts, and olive oil are all great foods to indulge in to reduce inflammation.

Moisturize and cleanse your face on a regular basis.

Keeping your face moisturized and clean is a vital part of a healthy skin care routine. However, avoid using regular soap on your face, as it can contribute to dry skin and make you look older. Opt for a gentle cleanser that doesn't strip moisture and always follow up with a good moisturizer to lock in a youthful glow!

Exercise works wonders.

Physical movement takes the cake! Exercise is proven to drastically slow down aging. To prevent muscle loss and maintain a youthful glow, get moving at least four times a week. Whether you enjoy walks around the block, bike rides through the park, or hitting the gym, combining cardiovascular exercise with resistance training and stretching is the recipe for success in maintaining youth. Not to mention, your health will thank you!

Get your zzz's.

Sleep promotes bodily recharge and repair. They don't call it beauty sleep just for fun! When you're getting quality sleep, the blood flow in your skin increases, allowing collagen to rebuild to repair damage from UV rays and age. To eliminate wrinkles and age spots, don't skimp out on your sleep!

Aging gracefully doesn't have to mean it's obvious on the surface! Take care of your body so it can take care of you and maintain your youthful appearance naturally.

AGING YOUTHFULLY

A Stress-Free Guide to Downsizing

Downsizing is inevitable. Whether you're trying to cut costs, simplify your lifestyle, address medical needs, or move closer to family, there will likely come a time when you need to sort through your belongings to move to a smaller space. But, how do you take on this daunting task without becoming overwhelmed?

Sort through your belongings.

When you're going through your things, deciding what to keep and what to give away or dispose of, only make "yes" and "no" piles. Don't make a pile for "maybes" because those are more than likely to become items you keep, which will contribute to extra clutter.

As you're sorting through your things, separate the necessities from the things that are sentimental. Keep in mind that if it isn't sentimental and you haven't used it in the past year, it should be tossed. Also, eliminate doubles of things — especially in the kitchen.

Create a plan for getting rid of your unwanted items.

Local charities typically accept clothing, furniture, and appliance donations. You can also have a yard sale and try to make some cash off of some items. After all, one person's trash is another's treasure. If you have a ton of things that you don't think will serve a purpose for anyone, you can always consider renting a dumpster to easily throw everything away.

Go paperless.

Believe it or not, paper can really take up tons of space in your home. Sort through old bills, contracts, receipts, paperwork, newspapers, magazines, and taxes and see what can go digital and what you no longer need. Many times, you only need to hold onto documents for a certain number of years, especially for things you no longer own, such as a previous vehicle.

Don't be shy. It's okay to ask for help when downsizing! Recruit the assistance of family and friends to make the transition easy on you. There is no need to stress!



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Solution on Pg. 4

Helpful Resources

- **Is your estate plan up to date?** Ask us about our FREE Estate Planning Check-up. Call our office or email Julie@mtolaw.com
- **Don't miss Glenn's Senior Law Radio,** WHMI FM 93.5 every Sunday at 8 a.m. You can also listen live (or to previous shows) on WHMI.com.
- **Questions about your money?** Do you need help with your financial goals, investment management, or retirement planning? Glenn has partnered with his personal financial advisor, Brad Jerome, to bring expert financial services to our clients. Brad meets with you right in our office — no cost, no obligation, and no pressure. Just an opportunity to discuss your goals with a top-notch financial advisor to see where your path might lead. You can reach Brad directly at 517.301.3070.
- **Let us be your trusted advisor for all your legal matters.** We have grown with the referrals we receive from our clients. We want to return the favor by helping you find a great attorney outside the field of estate planning, elder law, and probate. Our clients often call us in need of an attorney who focuses on personal injury, auto accidents, elder and nursing home abuse, workers' compensation, Social Security disability, and many other areas. To get the best results, you need an experienced attorney to help. If you want a referral, call our office or email Julie@mtolaw.com. We are glad to help!



Sudoku