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# Legal Reflections

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November 2020

## What's Inside?

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- 2 Top 5 Healthy Life Hacks to Have an Awesome Morning  
How a Thanksgiving Dinner Mix-Up Led to the TV Dinner
- 3 Express Gratitude and Find Greater Happiness
- 4 What Makes Spinach a Superfood?

WHY IS SPINACH SO GOOD FOR YOU?

If the reason you know spinach is good for you is because either your mother told you, or you saw Popeye the Sailor down a can before a fight and gain superhuman strength, you might not understand exactly why it's so good for you. Rest assured, your mom wasn't lying (although Popeye might have been stretching the truth). Spinach is actually one of the most nutritious and versatile foods you can add to your diet. Here's why.

### Incredible Nutrient-per-Calorie Count

Three cups of spinach contain about 20 calories. However, those 3 cups also contain almost no fat, 2 grams of protein, 3 grams of carbs, and 2 grams of fiber. On top of that, you get more than 300% of your daily dose of vitamin K, which supports bone growth; 160% of your daily dose of vitamin A; and around 25%–40% of your daily dose of vitamin C, both of which help the immune system function properly.

### Potent Protection Against Disease

The abundant antioxidants in spinach mitigate a staggering number of health problems. For starters,

spinach has kaempferol, an antioxidant that can protect the body against cancer. Additionally, the antioxidant quercetin, also found in spinach, has been shown to have positive effects on brain health, heart disease, and Type 2 diabetes. Other components of spinach can also improve blood pressure and protect eye health.

### Versatile in Meal Preparation

Aside from the more scientific reasons that make spinach a superfood, you can prepare and consume spinach in so many creative ways. You can eat it raw as a part of a salad, throw a few leaves in a smoothie, cook it in stir fry, or bake it into some brownies. If you have a bag of spinach in your fridge, there's no shortage of ways you can get some of those amazing health benefits. Just don't expect to suddenly vanquish all your foes like Popeye did.



## What Are You Thankful For?

*"Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy."*

– Guillaume Apollinaire

I picked up the phone to call my mother the other day, then realized she was gone. It was a sad reminder that Thanksgiving will be different from now on. As I sat back and considered this mess of a year we have had in 2020, I realized that many times we focus on what we don't have instead of the things we are grateful for. So, for Thanksgiving 2020, I decided that it's even more important to think about the things in my life that I am thankful for.

*I am thankful for ...*

- Good health, a roof over my head, and food to eat
- Music, especially songs that bring back old memories
- Mistakes, because you learn from them
- Challenges, because they make successes sweeter
- Always learning, because there is so much I don't know
- Green leaves changing to dazzling red, yellow, and orange
- Books, because there are millions I have yet to read
- Coffee ... and then more coffee
- Fresh baked bread or pizza ... or both
- Pumpkin pie with whipped cream
- Libraries, because they are a boundless collection of knowledge and imagination
- Sunshine that warms my face
- Sand between my toes and waves crashing on the beach at Lake Michigan, because it reminds me of my brothers and me climbing the big sand hill in Muskegon and wonderful times with my aunt and grandparents
- The smell of campfires and burning leaves
- A boat ride, because it reminds me of our family's old dry-rotted Chris Craft and awakens memories that I wouldn't trade for the biggest yacht in the world
- A long hike in the red rocks of Arizona
- Sunrises and sunsets anywhere, but especially over the water

- Hard rain on the roof, because it reminds me of sitting on the porch during thunderstorms telling silly stories to my kids
- Old photos that make me laugh ... and old photos that make me cry
- Stars in the sky, because they make me ponder how small we really are
- Freedom, which we sometimes take for granted — not anymore
- My work, which most times doesn't feel like work at all because our office is fun and filled with great people
- My clients, who are genuinely good people and who have taught me plenty about life
- Other local professionals who work with us and our clients to make our clients' lives better

*I am most thankful for ...*

- Loyal friends, who I would trust with my life
- My three children, who are growing up and finding their own way. I couldn't be more proud.
- My son-in-law, who is a great guy and a perfect fit for my daughter
- My wonderful wife, who after 32 years is my best friend and seems to know what I'm thinking even before I do. I am blessed to be able to spend this amazing journey by her side.
- My older brother, Denny (yes, I will remind him that he is definitely older), who is caring, bright, successful and has a terrific family of his own
- My little brother, Rusty (I can still hear him saying: *"Little? I'm taller than you!"*), who we lost in an accident at age 18, way too young, and a solemn reminder that life is short so we need to *really live* while we have the chance
- My father's cellphone message which we saved after he passed away, and which I still listen to when I want to hear his voice — I only wish he could hear me saying *"Hi Dad"* every time he answers.
- My mother, who left behind countless memories that will be etched into my mind and my heart forever

In making my list, I was reminded of Robert Brault's quote: *"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize that they were the big things."*

Here's wishing you and your family health and happiness this Thanksgiving, and asking you:

*What are you thankful for?*

– Glenn Matecun

# Top 5 Healthy Life Hacks to Have an Awesome Morning



Getting your day started with coffee isn't always enough. Sometimes, you need to give yourself an extra boost, especially when you have little energy or trouble focusing. For an awesome start to your day, here are five tips to get you going right off the bat.

## Wake up 5 minutes early.

What's the power of five minutes? It can be more than you think. Spend this time doing simple breathing exercises or a quick meditation so you can get focused for the rest of the day. If that's not your style, you can prepare a quick to-do list for your day ahead. Either way, it's always nice to have a little extra time for yourself without losing too much sleep.

## Start with green tea, then coffee.

A cup of coffee at 7 a.m. can leave you burned out by 10 a.m. Try swapping it with green tea for a more gentle wake-up call. After that, you can brew your favorite coffee to keep you going strong. This practice also might help you consume less caffeine overall!

## Take a quick morning walk — and have your meetings on the go.

Morning meetings can make us want to fall asleep again. Don't spend all of them sitting down if you don't have to! Not only will morning walks help you wake up, but they can also add some extra physical activity to your day.

## Write in your journal.

Who says you have to journal at the end of the day when you're tired and ready to sleep? You can journal in the morning about what happened yesterday and the things you're looking forward to that day. Journaling can remind you of your daily goals and motivate you to stick to your commitments.

## Pack your lunch (or snacks!).

Staying on track with your goals starts with having the energy to do them. Plan a healthy balance of fats, vegetables, carbohydrates, and proteins. This can be as simple as assembling dips, carrots, wraps, and salads each morning.

It's time to try these tactics to superboost your day!



## HOW A THANKSGIVING DINNER MIX-UP LED TO THE TV DINNER

Would you believe that Thanksgiving dinner — a meal dedicated to home cooking, family time, and, well, being thankful — was directly responsible for the invention of the TV dinner, the ultimate manifestation of the solitary, processed meal? If you are a little suspicious of that fact, you're not alone. But, the connection is real. Those little frozen dinners on trays were the result of a Turkey Day mix-up of epic proportions.

The year was 1953. That fall, the frozen food company C.A. Swanson & Sons drastically overestimated how many Americans would want a turkey as the centerpiece of their Thanksgiving spread, leaving them with about 260 tons of extra turkey packed into 10 refrigerated railroad cars. They needed a way to sell this surplus quickly because they had to keep running the train cars back and forth between the East Coast and the Midwest to generate the electricity needed to keep the turkey from spoiling.

The company sent out a bulletin asking if any of their employees had a solution to the problem. Swanson

salesman Gerry Thomas had a winning idea. He suggested they package up the remaining turkey with a few sides as frozen dinners that would be ready to eat after being thawed. The twist? They would be served in compartmentalized aluminum trays, much like airplane meals, which were the inspiration for Thomas' idea. Additionally, they would be marketed as "TV dinners," with their packaging designed to look like a television set.

By 1954, roughly half of American households had TVs. Over the next 10 years, that figure jumped to 92%. As the TV rose in prominence in American living rooms, the TV dinner's popularity increased exponentially. Swanson sold nearly 10 million of them during the first year of production. By 1959, Americans spent half a billion dollars gobbling up TV dinners.

Several other phenomena have been linked to the advent of the TV dinner, such as the erosion of the traditional family dinner and a preference for TV entertainment over family conversation during mealtime. It's hard to believe it all happened because of one Thanksgiving Day with too much turkey!

## AN ATTITUDE FOR GRATITUDE

### Boost Your Happiness With One Simple Habit

Gratitude is a remarkably powerful emotion. When we share our gratitude for others, it makes them feel good and appreciated. Plus, when we tell others we care about them and are grateful for them, we feel good, too!



The holiday season is often referred to as the season of gratitude. While we should share our gratitude with others throughout the year, the holidays serve as a great reminder to let people know they are in our thoughts. But more than that, sharing gratitude and reflecting on what you are thankful for can actually help you live a happier life.

A greater understanding of gratitude can be found in the book "59 Seconds: Think a Little, Change a Lot" by Richard Wiseman. In "59 Seconds," Wiseman cites a study that looked at three groups of people who, over a period of time, wrote in journals. The first group wrote about what they were grateful for, the second wrote about what annoyed them, and the third just recounted what happened over the week.

The results of the experiment spoke for themselves. The participants who wrote about what they were grateful for were noticeably happier, more optimistic, and even mentally healthier than members of the other groups. They focused on positive emotions, which helped them feel more positive overall. Meanwhile, those who focused on the negative felt worse overall at the end of the study. They were not in a good state of mind.

If you want to feel more positive, try this at home. At least once a week (or even once a day), write down a list of 3–5 things you are grateful for in your life. Make it a habit by keeping a journal and pen right next to your bed or your favorite chair. Then, every evening, jot down a few bullet points.

What can you include on this list? Write down the name of a person who positively impacted your day, reflect on a joyous event in your life, or note a few things that went well that day. You can even appreciate that simple but delicious cup of coffee you had this morning. List anything that brought a little brightness into your day. Give it a try, and you might be surprised by how much happier — and more grateful — you feel!

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## Helpful Resources

- **Is your estate plan up to date?** Ask us about our **FREE** estate planning checklist. Call our office or email [Julie@MTOLaw.com](mailto:Julie@MTOLaw.com).

- **Don't miss our upcoming estate planning and elder law workshops** — our website has our entire educational calendar for the year.

- **Learn about estate planning and elder law topics in plain English.** Check out our Elder Care Whiteboard Videos at [MichiganEstatePlans.com](http://MichiganEstatePlans.com).

- **Let us be your trusted advisor for all your legal matters.** Our clients' referrals have helped us grow. We want to return the favor by helping you find a great attorney outside the fields of estate planning, elder law, and probate. Instead of taking your chances on Google or the phone book, let us put you in touch with an experienced attorney who can help you. Our clients often call us in need of an attorney who focuses on family law, personal injury, auto accidents, elder and nursing home abuse, workers' comp, 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](mailto:Julie@MTOLaw.com). We are glad to help!

