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June 2021

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'TOO OLD' FOR MARTIAL ARTS?

Tell It to Mr. Miyagi

Martial arts get added to the list of activities we can't do as we age, right? Unless you're doing tai chi or aikido, most people think there's no place in contact sports for aging folks.

Except, as it turns out, there is.

From hip shows like "Cobra Kai" (and its basis, "The Karate Kid") to centuries of tradition, older people and martial arts actually mix quite well — and they can be a great throughline for an active life.

Martial arts took off in the United States back in the 1980s with the "Karate Kid" franchise, which continues today. The original movies showed us Pat Morita, an Okinawan expatriate and karate master who trains Ralph Macchio's character, Daniel LaRusso. Morita's Mr. Miyagi is no spring chicken, but he's able to take LaRusso to new levels of karate expertise — and also beat down bad guy John Kreese in the process, despite Kreese being a much younger man.

Mr. Miyagi is based on a "stock" character, or archetype, from traditional Asian martial arts culture. But there's a grain of truth to it, whether you're looking at real-life martial artists (Henry Plée comes to mind, who practiced well into his 80s) or fighting school founders in medieval Japan — who often viewed karate as integral to their understanding of Zen and other spiritual matters, and thus essential as they got older.

Netflix's "Cobra Kai" carries on the tradition, showing us a much-older LaRusso who takes on the Miyagi role, opposite his longtime "frenemy" Johnny Lawrence. LaRusso and Lawrence have both returned to karate in middle age, and even Kreese reappears, now in his 70s and as formidable as ever. Is that realistic? You bet! According to one study, the average karate practitioner is 55 years old, and the average martial artist is 46. Many in both groups report regular sparring and contact practice.

If you're a martial artist, you may have to make some adjustments as you get older, but you'll never have to give up your discipline entirely. And if you're new to the world of martial arts, it's never too late to start — as long as you find the right teacher and school!



What if Heaven Had Visiting Hours?



I'm a big fan of Ed Sheeran's music and especially his latest song, "Visiting Hours." Give it a listen — you'll be glad you did.

Sheeran's musical wish is that heaven had visiting hours. He speaks to a loved one who died, telling them that "so much has changed since you've been away."

*I wish that heaven
Had visiting hours
So I just could show up
And bring the news
That she's getting older
And I wish that you'd met her
The things that she'll learn from me
I got them all from you*

Sheeran is talking about his infant daughter, Lyra. If I had to "bring the news" to loved ones passed, I would have much to say, but it would mainly be about my three kids growing up and walking their own paths, even though we don't yet know where those paths will lead. Isn't that the fun part? The trek, the adventure. He continues:

*Well, I wish that heaven
Had visiting hours
So I could just swing by
And ask your advice*

We all have advice that we would want to ask our parents, siblings, and other loved ones who have gone before us. What advice would you ask? What would you want to learn that was left unspoken?

*I wish that heaven
Had visiting hours
And I would ask them
If I could take you home
But I know what they'd say
That it's for the best
So I would live life the way you taught me
And make it on my own*

We all understand that death is part of life and that grief is the expression of a lost relationship, a lost connection. While we can't bring our loved ones back and we have to move forward, we don't have to do that on our own. And here's where Sheeran's next words are both poetic and insightful:

*And I will close the door, but I will open up my heart
And everyone I love will know exactly who you are*

The best way to honor a loved one is to pass on their life, love, and history so their imprint on the world will continue. How better to allow someone's legacy to live on than to promise that "everyone I love will know exactly who you are."

Now, back to the first line of the song: "I wish that heaven had visiting hours."

Here, I would tell Ed Sheeran that heaven *does* have visiting hours. Instead of a one-on-one visit, these visits require us to turn inward, ponder, reflect, and meditate about the people we've loved and lost, adventures we've had, stories told, wisdom collected, and celebrations and mistakes shared along the way.

Sometimes it's clear in our minds, and other times, it's just fuzzy memories hanging in the back of our brains until they are triggered by a photograph, song, smell, or special place.

In my estate planning world, we often get caught up talking about the "things" you have accumulated. Then we work harder to keep or upgrade those things. It's an unending loop which I've heard defined in dog terms as "chasing our tails so we can be better at chasing our tails." Advice from the song seems appropriate here:

*Remember that the answer's in the love that we create
So much has changed since you've been away*

I've learned along the way that things end, but the memories and stories left by loved ones stay alive in our hearts forever. What that means is that, yes, heaven *does* have visiting hours. And you can visit anytime, and stay as long as you want.

Glenn Matecun



A Fresh Cup of ... Water in the Morning?

TIPS FOR DRINKING YOUR DAILY LIMIT

The human body needs water. We *are*, in fact, 60% water, so we require replenishment on a daily basis! And first thing in the morning, when you haven't had any water for at least eight hours, it's important to start rehydrating as effectively as possible. So, before you go for that cup of joe, go for a glass of water.

You might even end up skipping the coffee. According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, dehydration may be a part of why we feel groggy and disoriented in the morning in the first place. Mild dehydration has been linked to lower brain function in general, with a wide range of effects on our cognition and performance.

Can all that really happen overnight? Yes and no. By itself, an eight-hour period isn't usually enough to cause mild dehydration. But coupled with the fact that most Americans aren't drinking enough water to begin with, odds are good that when you go to bed, you haven't had your daily intake.

In general, you should be drinking eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day. Morning is the perfect time to start that process. One trick is to fill a water bottle each night (bonus points for ice!) and leave it by your bed. That way, when you wake up thirsty at night, you don't have to go anywhere — and your first few glasses of the day are right there as well.

You may be tempted to reach for other beverages throughout the day to keep hydration up. But the reality is that most of your water intake should *just* be water. If you really need some extra kick to stay hydrated, you can try club soda or sparkling water, which can be purchased cheaply at any grocery store.

It's also important to remember not all water is created equally. Packaged water is an option for people who don't have access to good drinking water at home, as are in-fridge filters, on-sink filters, or jug filters. You want the water to taste as good as possible to increase your odds of drinking enough. So, what are you waiting for? Fill a glass today and change tomorrow for the better.



2 Recent Scams to Look Out For

Scammers never sleep. There are several financial and identity scams going around right now, but there are two scams that have been more popular in recent months. However, when you're armed with information on how scams operate, you can better protect yourself and your family. Here are two newer scams to be aware of.

COVID-19 Vaccination Card Scams

Many people took to social media to share with the world that they had received their vaccination. In sharing the news, however, some people made the mistake of publicly posting a photo of their vaccination card.

These cards, while simple, contain just enough information for scammers to use. All they need is your full legal name and date of birth. They can use this information to pose as you to potentially access bank accounts or to open credit cards in your name.

While no one should be discouraged from sharing the news, keep the personal details private. Share a picture of your arm or a vaccination sticker. You may only

intend for close relatives and friends to see your photos, videos, and other posts, but you never know who might see it.

Zoom Scams

In 2020, many of us had to quickly learn how to use Zoom on our computers, tablets, and smartphones. It's been a great way to communicate with family and friends as well as a way to handle virtual appointments with doctors, banks, and others.

Scammers know how popular Zoom is and have started sending out emails, texts, and messages on social media claiming that your Zoom account has been compromised or suspended. In the message, the scammer generally includes a link to "fix" your account or listen to the message.

The problem is that the link is fake. It's a way for the scammer to get malicious software onto your computer with the end goal of stealing your personal information. If you suspect your Zoom account has been compromised, never click a link in an email, text, or social media message. Go directly to Zoom and update your password information there directly.

The Road Trip Continues!

8 MORE ROADSIDE ODDITIES WORTH A STOP

Last month, we mentioned strange attractions like the Trees of Mystery in Northern California and Wall Drug in South Dakota. This month, we thought we'd round out the list with a few more roadside attractions worth a visit — if you happen to be in the vicinity, anyway!

American Classic Arcade Museum (ACAM)

Arcades have declined in popularity since the 1980s, but ACAM keeps the memory alive. With hundreds of arcade games and pinball machines, this Laconia, New Hampshire, destination is considered the world's largest arcade.

Carhenge

While England may be home to Stonehenge, Nebraska is home to Carhenge. North of Alliance, Nebraska, off of Highway 86, the replica of Stonehenge is a marvel and a tribute to American car culture.

Four Corners

Have you ever wanted to stand in four states at once? Do just that at the monument built at the intersection of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, right off of U.S. Highway 160.

Enchanted Highway

This unofficial highway, situated south of I-94 and Gladstone, North Dakota, features a series of large sculptures. Drive along and see massive pheasants and the world's largest grasshopper!

Thermopolis

Though the name of this Central Wyoming town may sound like a place out of Greek mythology, the distinction is well earned. Thermopolis is home to the world's largest hot springs as well the Wyoming Dinosaur Center.

World's Largest Ball of Twine

Call it a cliché of the American Road Trip, but you can gaze upon the glory of twine in Cawker City, Kansas. It measures over 8 feet wide and 10 feet tall, and it grows every year!

World's Largest Maze

As far as road trips go, you might have to cheat a little to complete this journey. The hedge maze is the main attraction at Dole Plantation on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, along Kamehameha Highway, 30 minutes north of Honolulu.

World's Tallest Thermometer

Standing in Baker, California, at 134 feet tall, this gigantic working thermometer was built as a tribute to the area's ridiculous temperatures.

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Solution on Pg. 4

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.
- **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.
- **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. We are glad to help!

