

MARCH 24

Take Steps to Move Past Fear

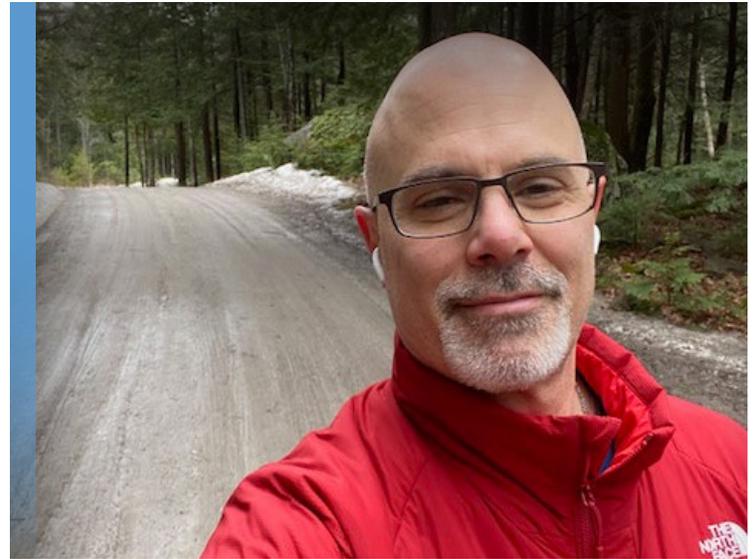
We often hear about how life can change in a moment's notice. As an injury attorney, I know this very well. I have spoken with clients who were leading great lives before their accidents turned everything upside down. Logically, I knew this was a possibility in my own life, but I never expected it to come in the form of a pandemic.

This month, I'm going to give you a peek behind the curtain. I work on my newsletters weeks in advance, so they reach you on time every month. By the time you read this, it will be early May. At the time of writing, it's March 24. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the country in full force, and I'm expecting Massachusetts to get a stay-at-home order any day now. I don't know what the world will look like in May, but I know that right now, things feel quite dire.

If I did not have a business, my children to worry about, or any responsibilities, I would pack up my stuff and start hiking the Appalachian Trail. You learn a lot about yourself when you go through a time of difficulty, and I have learned that the only thing that brings me peace in very rough times is walking in the woods. I recently started to take all my calls while on walks. There were days when I would walk 8 miles before 2 p.m. Spending four months on the trail, hiking from New Hampshire to Georgia, sounds very appealing right about now but that is not in the cards.

This is a time of great uncertainty for everyone. I've watched my children's faces look to me for comfort, and I don't know how to provide that comfort. The situation is scary. When you're a business leader or a father, it can be really hard to admit when you're scared. I feel like I have to put on a tough face, but I know my kids can see right through it. Instead, I need to let my kids know that I'm scared, too, but that I'm going to keep fighting through it. We all are.

I am taking steps to move past this fear and uncertainty and find ways to come out of this situation in a better place than I was before. The firm is physically closed now per order of the Governor. We're not seeing many new cases, nor are we able to move along with our current cases at the same speed that we are used to. Do I just sit around not working? Of course not! I must take this opportunity to do



things that will make us a better law firm and make me a better leader. I'm focusing on areas that I've always wanted to work on, but never found the time to dedicate to.

One of these areas is putting together a better systems manual for how we operate our business. This may sound foolhardy to some people. "You might not even have a business when this is all over," they say. Well, if I don't have a business, I'll throw away the paper and do something else. But if I do have a business — and I plan on still having a business — it will be better than before. I also want to improve our marketing. We have an educational marketing strategy, but we never find enough time to write all the blogs or get into the studio and make new videos. Now I have nothing but time. When all of this is over, I'd like to have a greater library of material to educate clients and the general public about various areas of the law. When this is all over, I don't want to struggle to find my footing again. I want to hit the ground running.

This is what I want to do, but initially in this whole saga, fear is paralyzing. It's very tempting to just stay in the woods. I hope that when you are reading this that things are recovering and that we find ourselves in a better place than we were before. Today, on March 24, things are scary, but we can't walk in the woods forever. We have to move forward and do what needs to be done. God Bless and stay positive.

-Len Spada

ANOTHER WORD FOR MARKETING

MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH MIKEYLA FIGUEROA

Law firms have a reputation for being quite foreboding. People come to law firms when they find themselves in scary, serious situations, so the people who work in these firms must be serious and scary themselves. That may be true for some firms, but it's not the way we do things at Spada Law Group. While we take every case seriously, there's nothing corporate about us. Our clients are already nervous about their situation; we don't want them to be intimidated when they come see us. This is the mission of our marketing assistant, Mikeyla Figueroa.

These days, marketing is another word for "maintaining relationships." Mikeyla is dedicated to helping us stay connected with our current clients as well as making sure we're available to new folks who may need our expertise. Most people who get into marketing spend years preparing to enter the field. Mikeyla Figueroa got into marketing completely by accident.

"I'd been working at a spa for five years, and I was looking for a better opportunity," Mikeyla explained. "My son was 2 years old at the time, and things were getting tight. I was only working part time, and I needed a change. My father helped me get in touch with Len Spada, and I learned that the firm was looking for someone to come on temporarily while another staff member went on maternity. I was happy to accept."

Mikeyla was only supposed to stay on for three months. After a few weeks, we realized we couldn't let her go. We asked her to stay on to help with a marketing project geared toward physical therapists. She did an amazing job. Two years later, Mikeyla is still doing amazing work as our marketing assistant.



"I love the work I do," Mikeyla says. "It's a challenge. It's not just one thing every day. There's always something new to do, different projects to work on. For example, video editing. It's been the most challenging project, but also the most fun. Plus, the people are great. I love getting to communicate regularly with our clients. It's a great job."

In addition to being an excellent marketer, Mikeyla is also an amazing mom. When she's not at work, her time is all about her son.

"My free time is full of kid stuff," Mikeyla admits. "'PJ Masks' is very popular at our house. And when we're able to get out of the house, which we haven't been able to do for a while, our favorite destinations are the park or Roller World. Places where my son can play and have fun. He's only going to be a kid for a little while, and I want to enjoy this time while it lasts."

REVIEW OF THE MONTH



"Thank you Spada Law Group for making this process easy and for having amazing customer service. I also wanted to take the time to thank you for the birthday gift card I received in the mail. I sure do love my Dunkin' Donuts coffee."

–Amy N.

On the Road Again

Top 10 Causes of Motorcycle Accidents in Boston

After a long winter and weeks of staying at home in the name of social distancing, we're all looking for a reason to spend more time in the sun. If you're a motorcyclist, then you're likely eager to jump onto your bike for a welcome ride. If you do own a motorcycle, then keep in mind that Boston is the second most dangerous city in Massachusetts to ride your motorcycle. Here are the 10 biggest threats to motorcyclists in Boston.

- **Car doors:** Bicyclists and motorcyclists alike can suffer severe injuries when people open their car doors without checking to see if someone is coming up behind them. Remain extra vigilant when riding around parked vehicles.
- **Lane changes:** Small motorcycles can hide in the blind spot of other vehicles, which makes changing lanes dangerous.
- **Speeding:** Follow the speed limit at all times.
- **Riding under the influence of drugs or alcohol:** In 2017, 43% of motorcyclists who died in single-vehicle crashes were under the influence of alcohol.
- **Sudden stops:** Following too closely to another vehicle or stopping abruptly can result in rear-end collisions. These accidents can result in serious injury or death to a motorcyclist.
- **Inexperience:** In 2017, 29% of motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were riding without a valid motorcycle license. Practice and get properly licensed before taking your bike on the road.
- **Road hazards:** Boston roads can be rough. Crumbling pavement, potholes, debris, and a lack of necessary signals and signs all increase a motorcycle rider's chances of losing control.
- **Motorcycle defects:** After a long winter, have your bike inspected to check that all your mechanical systems are working properly.
- **Lane splitting:** The practice of lane splitting, driving between two lanes, is not just dangerous — it's also illegal in the state of Massachusetts.
- **Left turn accidents:** Right of way errors when making a left turn commonly results in injury and death to motorcyclists.

If you plan on riding your motorcycle this summer, stay vigilant, stay safe, and follow the rules of the road. And don't forget your helmet! It's the law.



Local Chef's Corner

Chilled Chickpea Salad

Enjoy the refreshing taste of summer with a crisp, filling salad.

INGREDIENTS

Salad

- 1 avocado
- 1/2 fresh lemon
- 1 can (19 ounces) chickpeas, drained
- 1/4 cup sliced red onion
- 2 cups grape tomatoes, sliced
- 2 cups cucumber, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley
- 3/4 cup green bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup black olives

Dressing

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut avocado into cubes, place in bowl, and squeeze juice from lemon over the avocado. Stir to combine.
2. Add remaining salad ingredients and toss.
3. In a separate bowl, combine dressing ingredients. Pour dressing over salad and gently toss to combine.
4. Chill salad in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour before serving.

Inspired by SpendWithPennies.com

111 Everett Ave., #1F
Chelsea, MA 02150
617.889.5000
SpadaLawGroup.com

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THE STORY OF GRANDPA MASON

HOW A FERAL CAT CAME TO CARE FOR ORPHANED KITTENS

When cats are orphaned as kittens, they don't get the chance to develop all the skills needed to become successful cats. Just like human children, kittens need older role models too. The most famous cat role model had a rough start in life but became an inspiration for kittens and humans alike. His name was Grandpa Mason, and during the last years of his life, he stepped up and gave love, care, and guidance to the orphaned kittens that lived with him.

The Canadian animal rescue group TinyKittens rescued Grandpa Mason in 2016 from a property that was scheduled to be bulldozed. The poor feral tabby was suffering from many health problems, including severe dental issues, a badly injured paw, and advanced kidney disease. Since TinyKittens is a no-kill rescue organization, euthanization was out of the question.

Given his health conditions, veterinarians predicted the battle-scarred Grandpa Mason didn't have long to live, so TinyKittens' founder, Shelly Roche, took him in and provided him with a comfortable place to sleep, plenty of food, and time to relax in the last months of his life. Grandpa Mason had a hard time adjusting to domestic life and would often shy away from being petted. In an interview with The Dodo, Roche described him as "an elderly gentleman [who] lived his whole life a certain way, and then, all of a sudden, [was] forced to live completely differently."



After Grandpa Mason grew accustomed to his home, Roche took in several foster kittens, and those new roommates completely altered Grandpa Mason's behavior. Roche expected him to hiss, swat, or growl at the kittens when they invaded his space, but he didn't. Instead, he allowed them to crawl all over him and appeared to enjoy it when they licked his ear. Suddenly a playful, affectionate, and gentle personality came out of Grandpa Mason as he played with, bathed, taught, and cared for the orphaned kittens that Roche welcomed into her home. Potentially due to the kittens' influence, Grandpa Mason surpassed his prognosis by more than two years.

During the last few years of his life, Grandpa Mason passed on important lessons and good manners to the kittens he looked after and adored, as a true grandfather should. He passed last September, but he spent his last night in his ultimate happy place: snuggling in his bed surrounded by kittens.