

THE SLG ADVISOR

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Thankful for My Clients

AND THE LESSONS THEY HAVE TAUGHT ME

Thanksgiving is here and it is the season where we reflect on what we are grateful for. I realized when pondering this question that over my 30-year legal career I am grateful for many life lessons I have learned from my clients. Obviously, for confidentiality reasons, I can't name names, but there are two clients who stand out in my mind as wonderful teachers. These two clients have taught me the true meaning of gratitude, compassion, the beauty and importance of hope and redemption, and the importance of using our life experiences to help others who are struggling. Let me tell you a bit about them.

The first client was a middle-aged man who was struck as a pedestrian crossing a busy street and sustained a very serious brain injury. Prior to his accident, he was a robust man who worked two jobs, had a wonderful wife, and enjoyed many of the simple pleasures of a loving family and steady employment. After his accident, he would never be able to walk again without the assistance of a walker,

would never work again, and required around-the-clock assistance from his wife for most basic activities of daily living. He was physically the shell of the man he used to be. On top of this, his legal case was very difficult, and he knew the chances of success were slim. Yet, he wanted to fight on, and fight we did. We tried his case in front of a jury for an entire week.

Unfortunately, we were not successful, and the jury found that the defendant was not negligent. We knew this was a possible outcome but believed our client deserved a fight to the end. We grew to love this gentleman during the time that we worked with him and we were devastated when the jury returned their verdict. When he noticed that we, the lawyers, were so affected by the verdict, he tried to console us and wanted to make sure we were okay. Here is this man whose life would never be the same, and yet he was concerned about his two lawyers and how we were doing after the case was over. We learned so much from this gentleman. Throughout the pendency of the litigation, he

remained grateful for what he had left of his life. He still had a loving wife who he appreciated, he had a family he loved, and he never lost sight of how blessed he was to still be alive. He always smiled and laughed easily and was such a joy to be around. He taught us that no matter what life throws at us, we get to choose how we react to our circumstances. He chose to remain happy and positive and compassionate. He was truly a wonderful teacher.

Another client who I am deeply grateful for having the opportunity to represent and learn from is Bill (his real name). Bill spent a large portion of his youth caught up in a world of drug addiction, violence, and street life. He's been shot, stabbed, and spent 20-plus years in state prison. He is now in his early 60s, and he is clean, sober, clear-eyed, and passionate about his faith in God and has a burning desire to give back and help those walking the same troubled path he traveled. He is a remarkable man who exhibits no bitterness for the years he wasted and

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Ro's Delicious Stuffed Artichokes



INGREDIENTS

- 2 sticks salted butter
- ½ onion, diced (Vidalias are the best)
- Elephant garlic clove
- 1 cup extra virgin olive (divided)
- Loaf of stale Italian or French bread (no sesame seed), cut up
- 1 whole lemon
- Fresh parsley
- 2 cups of Italian breadcrumbs
- 1 ½ cups of chicken broth
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 6 artichokes

DIRECTIONS

Stuffing Prep:

Make stuffing in a large sauté pan. Put butter, diced onion, and garlic in the pan. Drizzle some olive oil over the mix, then add cut-up, stale bread to the pan. Squeeze a whole lemon over the mixture before adding some fresh parsley and Italian breadcrumbs. Slowly pour some chicken broth into the pan, so you can control the moisture. Now add salt and pepper to taste, and just keep tossing with a spatula until light and fluffy.

Prepping the Artichokes:

Use scissors to cut off the thorny tips of the artichokes. Cut the stem so the artichokes can sit flat in the pan without falling over. Drizzle with lemon, olive oil, and salt.

Now wrap each artichoke in a wet paper towel and then plastic wrap. Place 2–3 artichokes at a time into a microwave and cook on high for up to 6 minutes or until tender. Let cool.

Stuffing the Artichokes:

Now hand-stuff all the leaves of the artichoke with stuffing – including the middle! Put the artichokes in a roasting pan that has water in the bottom (about halfway up the artichoke), then cover with aluminum foil. Set oven to 375 F, place pan in the oven, and let the artichoke steam for 15 minutes. Remove foil and light broil to brown the tops to a nice light-to-medium toast. Serve with a drizzle of lemon and more extra virgin olive oil.

The MBTA's Struggle

When the pandemic first hit, many employees began working remotely throughout Massachusetts. Then, at the height of the pandemic, more than a third of employed Americans began working primarily from home. Since people no longer traveled to their workplaces, the roads became clearer than ever before. That's when the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) saw an even greater decline.

As the end of the second year of the pandemic draws nearer, many employees have returned to the workplace and resumed their daily commutes. This has caused some of Massachusetts' biggest cities to become gridlocked, making driving more difficult than ever. As traffic has increased, so has the number of citations handed out by police officers this year. In fact, 20% of the 440,000 citations handed out through September were for speeding.



Review of the Month



"This was my first time ever needing a lawyer and someone recommended me to them. Let me just tell you they helped change my life. Not only were they responsive and good at what they did, but they were also kind and helpful every time I called or reached out to them. My case manager, Joan, was so incredibly helpful and kind. Every time I asked her a question about something I was confused about, she would thoroughly explain it and help walk me through it. I will definitely be recommending them to family and friends."

–Nicole A.

ngle AN INCREASE IN TRAFFIC AND A DECREASE IN MASS TRANSIT

Even though people are returning to their workplaces, mass transit has still not bounced back. Before the pandemic, in February 2020, 1.2 million trips were taken on the T during an average weekday. In August, an average of 531,000 people rode the T on a daily basis. That's nearly a 56% decrease.



People who have returned to work are more likely to use their personal vehicles rather than ride the T and risk sitting in an enclosed space and chance their health. The Pioneer Institute has been tracking T ridership, and they believe that the transit system is on life-support. The Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation warned that the T would require \$1.25 billion in annual revenue to meet operating and

capital needs. This is on top of the money the agency already received due to federal stimulus money.

Boston's mayoral candidates spent much time debating ways to make the T more popular. Candidate Michelle Wu has even proposed making rides on the T free while her competitor, Anissa Essaibi George, was requesting a "more thoughtful approach."

As the increased traffic continues to wear down the roads, delays may only get worse. It's causing many Bostonians to debate whether they should return to riding mass transit or not.

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has a profound joy for the life that he still has. He has since helped so many people and looks at his past as a necessary education that gave him the unique tools and credentials to help others who may be walking the same dead-end path he once traveled. He taught me that bad beginnings don't need to lead to bad endings. I will never forget my work with this gentleman, and I'm grateful for the lessons he taught me about hope and redemption. He was a client but now I call him my friend.

There are so many other clients who have helped me become a better person over the years. If you are a former client reading this, I want to thank you for being a part of my continuing education in this thing we call life.

-Len Spada



The Deadliest Surgery in History

By the 'Fastest Knife in the West End'



If you needed surgery in the early 1800s, it could be a death sentence. Before anesthesia, patients were awake and lucid the entire time.

One of this era's greatest surgeons, Dr. Robert Liston, was named the "fastest knife in the West End" because he was known for performing surgeries very quickly. One fateful day, Dr. Liston cut through his patient's broken, infected leg with incredible speed – so incredible that he didn't realize he had cut off two of his assistant's fingers, too. The patient and assistant later died of gangrene.

But theirs were not the only deaths that day. In those days, people found amputations morbidly entertaining. When Dr. Liston grabbed one of his knives, he whipped it too closely to one spectator, slicing through his coat. While he didn't actually break the man's skin, the spectator thought he'd been stabbed and died of shock.

Today, it's the only known surgery with a 300% mortality rate.

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Is Your Employer Remotely Watching You?

Ways Employers Can Monitor Remote Employees

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many business owners to transition their employees to work remotely. Before the pandemic, only 6% of employed Americans worked primarily from home. During the bulk of the shutdowns, the number of employed Americans working remotely grew to around 35%. As we draw closer to year two of the pandemic, the numbers still have not even come close to pre-pandemic levels.

Just because these employees are no longer working in the office, it does not mean they are not being monitored by their employers. Many employers have provided their employees with laptops, webcams, keyboards, and more. While these devices are essential to most remote jobs, they may also be used to monitor the employees.

Here are some ways that your boss can legally monitor your work if you're a remote employee.



Your Devices

Some employers provide their employees with computers, monitors, a mouse, and a keyboard, but these devices can all be used to monitor your activity. New monitoring tools are able to gather data from your keyboard and mouse to inform your employer when you've stopped being "active." One monitoring device called Teramind can even gather the sound or visuals from your webcam and microphone if it's in your employment agreement. In these cases, spending time talking to people in your house can even get you in trouble.

Your Email and Other Communication Platforms

People who have a company email that is accessed through Gmail or Outlook don't have sole access. Authorized administrators can access every email you sent and received in your work email. If you use a personal email address on a work computer, some monitoring programs can even get information from those emails. Company Google Drives or Slack chats are also fair game for employers to monitor. In many instances, the owner of the Drive or Slack channel can see into your personal messages and documents.

There is not much an employee can do to prevent their employer from monitoring their work remotely. They are legally protected in their actions and can even let people go due to the data they gather while monitoring. It's best to be safe and smart while using any devices provided by an employer.