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THE HAPPINESS HACK

WHY SMALL PLANS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

When life feels overwhelming, or you just aren't feeling your best, it can be difficult to find hope or joy. Sometimes, the best medicine is a little self-care in the form of simple activities and treats that you enjoy most. One of the best ways to boost your mood is by planning something to look forward to. Whether it's a favorite movie, a new painting class, or a tasty latte, prioritizing things that bring us happiness can empower us with hope. It's like adding a bright spot in the future, making the tough days more manageable.

What do you love?

Your plan doesn't have to be grand or complicated. Start by identifying activities that make you happy or that interest you. Do you love comedy movies or enjoy going to

concerts? You might sign up for an improv class or buy tickets to see a play. It can be anything that brings a smile to your face.

Plan it.

Once you know the activity, start planning. Our busy lives sometimes lack time for the little things that make us feel good. Treat your happiness like a necessary appointment and get it on your calendar. Spending time with your loved ones and friends also has a wealth of benefits for your mental health, so decide whether you want someone to join you.

By planning to do things that bring you joy, you'll feel more hopeful, balanced, and better equipped to handle whatever life throws your way.



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Buckle Up for the Holidays

TRAVEL SMART THIS SEASON WITH THESE SAFETY TIPS

The holidays are all about sharing time, laughter, and togetherness with our loved ones, but the journey to get to all the celebrations comes with heightened risks. This time of year is one of the busiest on the road, with extra travelers and winter weather creating unique challenges for drivers. Whether it's a quick drive across town or a road trip to another state, have a travel plan and use extra precautions so you arrive safely. Buckle up for a smooth journey this season with these helpful tips to stay safe during holiday travel.

Plan Ahead

One of the best ways to keep everyone safe during your holiday travel is to plan ahead. Before you hit the road, make sure you understand your route, the weather, and any possible delays you might encounter. Look up the weather forecast, as wintery conditions can impact traffic. Take time to map out your route and identify alternative routes if unexpected stressors like heavy traffic, accidents, or delays occur. If you are taking a long trip, plan overnight stops and book them in advance. Build breaks into your plan, as fatigue can lead to serious dangers on the road. This can be a busy time of year for hotels, so securing a room early will ensure you're not behind the wheel on little sleep.

Prep Your Car

Give your car a pre-trip tune-up to ensure it is working correctly and stocked with emergency supplies. If you will be traveling on potentially snowy or icy roads, you need to have the proper tread on your tires and ensure they are inflated correctly. Have your brakes inspected and top off any fluids in your vehicle. The winter weather conditions may limit your visibility, so replacing your windshield wipers is essential. Create an emergency kit in the trunk containing items that will help if you break down or experience another unexpected situation on the road. Include supplies like blankets, food, water, flares, and a first aid kit. You should also check to make sure you have a spare tire, jumper cables, and an ice scraper.

Stay Alert

With additional distractions on the road and long travel hours, you must remain focused while you are behind the wheel. Limit distractions like mobile devices by putting them in the glovebox or setting them aside until you are at a complete stop. You can enlist the help of your passengers, making someone your navigator responsible for adjusting the GPS or taking any important calls. Depending on how long you'll be traveling, choose someone who can take over driving in case you become fatigued or need a break. If you do become drowsy or tired, pull over and rest. Even a short 20-minute break in a safe area can help restore your energy and alertness.

Follow Safe Driving Practices

Traffic laws are in place to keep everyone safe during their travels. Follow all the road rules for safety, like wearing seat belts and adhering to the speed limit. Because there is extra traffic, you should be extra cautious. Always maintain a safe following distance behind the car in front of you, as icy or wet roads can cause cars to slip or make it difficult to stop quickly. Help keep other drivers safe by using your headlights in low visibility or rainy conditions. Check your blind spots before changing lanes, and watch for distracted or dangerous drivers.



The road to your cherished holiday celebrations has additional risks, like winter weather and heavy traffic. With proper planning, a well-maintained vehicle, and a focus on safe driving practices, you can ensure your journey is as safe and warm as your time with loved ones. We all at the Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

Marc L. Shapiro



From Aggravated Assault to Dental Drama

Runaway 'Dentist' Dodges Detection

While TikTok may be a go-to app for funny videos, it's probably not the best way to find a new dentist.

Last year, Texas-based "dentist" Nikki Calloway used TikTok to generate buzz for her business, ISmilez Cosmetic Designz. The campaign attracted new patients, including one who scheduled an appointment after receiving a \$1,350 quote from Calloway to have 16 teeth removed, replaced, and a bridge added. There was only one problem: "Nikki Calloway" wasn't a licensed dentist. In reality, she was Juanetta Solomon, a notorious local felon with a long history of crime. The botched dental surgery left the patient dizzy, bleeding, and with a tooth that fell out shortly afterward — and prompted Solomon to go on the run from the law.

According to authorities, Solomon had operated her "dentistry" office while out on bond for a weapons charge. Her past offenses include assault with a deadly weapon, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, and unlawful carrying of a weapon by a felon — and that was just in 2023 and 2024! In one infamous case, she was accused of shooting at her boyfriend's former girlfriend. Her record also includes a December 2016 conviction for the delivery of a controlled substance.



"Juanetta Solomon is the definition of a career habitual offender," commented Andy Kahan, director of victim services and advocacy at Crime Stoppers of Houston, in a story on Katy Magazine Online. "She's been in prison multiple times in different counties, so it's no surprise she is once again wanted. Her latest offense is extremely brutal, pretending to be a dentist [and] causing undue pain and stress on individuals, so the quicker we get her back in custody, the less anyone has to suffer as a result of her criminal conduct."

Law enforcement was still attempting to capture Solomon at the time of this writing. Her bizarre turn as a "dentist" serves as a chilling reminder that Google and a little research — not social media — are the best tools to determine whether your chosen provider is a professional or someone destined for prison.

GET THE KEYS FOR LESS

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO TIMING YOUR CAR PURCHASE

Buying a new car is an exciting milestone where timing can make a huge difference. Choosing the right moment to make this purchase can help you get the best price and secure the greatest savings. Get ready to hit the road for less with these handy tips to score the best deal on your next vehicle.

End of the Month

At the end of the month, you can often find deals and discounts on cars as salespeople work to meet their monthly quotas. If you are negotiating and a dealer offers you a price considerably better than the market value you've researched, it could be a sign the dealer is trying to meet their sales goal.

End of the Year

One of the best times to purchase a new vehicle is at the end of the calendar year, starting in October. Dealerships often try to

meet their annual sales goals and clear older inventory to make room for new models at this time. December is a perfect time to find low prices. Look for discounts, cashback offers, or special financing options.

Holiday Weekends

Like most other stores, car dealerships often hold large sales on major holidays. You can find the best deals on three-day holiday



weekends like Black Friday, Labor Day, and Memorial Day. Many dealerships have special financing and lease deals over the holidays, and they advertise heavily, making it a great chance to score a lower price on a vehicle.

Model Changeovers

Most new models of cars start to roll into stores in the fall. As dealerships begin selling the latest version of a vehicle, they usually offer discounts on last year's model so they can keep their inventory fresh. Unless the company is doing a major redesign or adding new technology, last year's model will typically not differ much. So, this could be a prime opportunity to get a new car for a lower price, especially if you are flexible on the color.

By strategically timing the purchase of your vehicle, you can save big and drive off the lot with confidence!

ABOVE AND BEYOND *Real Stories of Exceptional Care*

"Who else can call a personal injury attorney at 7 p.m., and they pick up on the first ring? On Nov. 25, at approximately 7 p.m., I was waiting at a red light in the right lane with eight cars in front of me. While stationary, I experienced a heavy impact from behind, which caused my vehicle to be pushed. Moments later, a third vehicle struck the second car, causing a chain reaction involving all three vehicles. As a result of the collision, I was forcibly thrown forward, which caused significant whiplash, back spasms, and my knee becoming trapped between the steering wheel and the seat, as I had my leg up at the time while waiting for the light to change. The impact was extremely traumatic, and I was unable to remain in my vehicle afterward due to the pain and shock. I was assisted by emergency responders and transported by ambulance to have my vitals checked. I was evaluated to ensure I was physically able to drive myself home after the incident. The experience left me shaken, and I continue to deal with the effects of the injuries sustained during the crash. Marc L. Shapiro personally took care of me and helped me through the entire process. Marc was able to get his team on the phone with a chiropractor and everything that was needed to help me right away."

—Susan A. Thomas

"Special people to work with. I would highly recommend this firm. Special shout-outs to attorneys Laurie, Iris, and Kelsey. Top-notch firm."

—Joseph Benson

"I love The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro; they were concise and diligent with their work. They supported me in my time of need, and I'm forever thankful. Thank you, law team."

—Chris Tulley



One-Pot Chicken Noodle Soup

Ingredients

Inspired by TasteOfHome.com

- 2 1/2 lbs skinless, bone-in chicken thighs
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 10 cups chicken broth
- 4 celery ribs, chopped
- 4 medium carrots, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 3 cups uncooked egg noodles (about 8 oz)
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

Directions

1. Season chicken with salt and pepper. In an 8-quart stockpot over medium-high heat, add oil and chicken and cook until golden brown, 3–4 minutes. Remove chicken and set aside.
2. Add onion to drippings; cook over medium-high heat for 4–5 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add broth and bring to a boil. Return chicken to pot. Add celery, carrots, bay leaves, and thyme. Reduce heat and cover; simmer until chicken is tender, 25–30 minutes.
3. Turn off heat. Remove chicken to a plate. Add noodles and let stand, covered, until noodles are tender, 20–22 minutes.
4. Shred chicken meat into bite-size pieces, and return to pot. Stir in parsley and lemon juice, and discard bay leaves.

Word Search



BEGINNINGS	GARNET	PLANNING
BLANKETS	HEALTHY	RESOLUTION
CARNATION	ICICLE	SNOWBOARD
CAPRICORN	PENGUIN	SOUPLY