

PERSONAL INJURY POST

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A TIME TO REFLECT ON 2020

Entering New Year Hopeful Though Many Still Suffering

As we close the door on what was inarguably a most miserable year, I feel that now is an important time for reflection. For many, the beginning of a new year is a time for resolutions and hopeful plans for the coming months. It is a time of new beginnings. However, I personally believe that this New Year is not a time to look forward, but rather a time to look back. Look back at those who were lost or who have been left behind. The difficulties brought by the pandemic were countless, and they will not magically disappear when the clock strikes midnight on Dec. 31. The economy will still be hurting, unemployment/underemployment levels will still be high, our health care system will be bracing for the surge of COVID-19 cases spread during the holidays, and we will still be governed by officials who have woefully mismanaged the worst public health crisis in over 100 years.

If the tone of this passage is abrasive, I apologize. It is because this is an issue that is very personal to me. Like anyone reading this, I have been directly impacted by COVID-19. I have lost friends and family to it, I have watched friends and family survive it but not fully recover, and while I have personally avoided catching it, I have lost count of

the amount times I have had long swabs jammed up my nose to test for it due to exposure. What is worse, as I write this, is that the elected officials who are responsible for meeting the needs of the people they represent are currently bickering over a desperately needed stimulus bill. A bill that will undoubtedly have most of its money siphoned off by the wealthiest corporations in the country, just as they did back in April with the first stimulus, while those who most desperately need assistance will have to make do with a few hundred dollars.

Once again, I apologize for what I am sure is not a pleasant read. But if there is one thing I have learned in my time in the legal field, it is that corporate greed hurts people. If corporations always did the right thing, my job would not exist. If a person is injured or killed by a defective product, by a negligent truck driver, or at a dangerous construction site, and the people at the top took responsibility and gave fair compensation, then this firm would not be necessary. Unfortunately, that is not the world we live in. What actually happens is that the insurance companies of these various corporations will fight for months on end to avoid taking responsibility for their negligence, and to pay you and your family as

little compensation as possible. It is the name of the game, so to speak, and in a time of great need and suffering around the country, it can be maddening.

I would, however, like to end this with some words of optimism. When I think about the new year, I am hopeful, as I see a sense of determination and vigor among my colleagues in the legal field. I know I can speak for everyone when I say that we at Garcia & Ochoa were blessed to make it through the year without anywhere near the negative impact other industries have suffered due to the pandemic. As a result, we at Garcia & Ochoa enter 2021 ready to fight harder than ever for our clients and our community. If you have suffered any hardships during the past year, please know that my heart is with you, and I hope that 2021 is better to all of us.

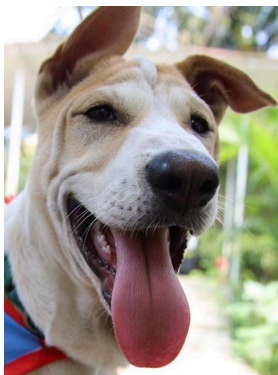
Here's one final note: The pandemic has brought greater food insecurity than this country has seen in decades. As of this writing, roughly 1 in 4 people in the Rio Grande Valley are facing food insecurity. If you can, please donate to your local food bank. As little as \$5 will provide 25 meals to those in need.

— Romeo Rendon



THE FIRST DOG TO WIN A NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Foxtrot's Heroics With the World Food Programme



Just this past October, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to what can only be described as one of the world's goodest boys — a dog named Foxtrot, known also to his Instagram followers (of which there are nearly 7,000) as humanitarian_pup.

While Foxtrot wasn't responsible for improvements to auction theory (like Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson, who won the Nobel Prize for economics) or for a standout career in writing poetry (like Louise Glück, who won the Nobel Prize

for literature), this incredible canine shared the Nobel Peace Prize with the World Food Programme (WFP) for their work in combating world hunger. As the organization's official mascot, Foxtrot shared in the win with the thousands of other WFP workers worldwide.

Foxtrot lives in Bangladesh (one of the most densely populated countries in the world) at a WFP outpost that works to supply one of the world's largest refugee camps. According to an NPR article that spotlighted Foxtrot and the efforts made by his WFP humans, they worked not only to get food to refugees but also to flatten hillsides to make room for shelters for Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar.

Foxtrot himself became part of the effort to combat world hunger during a WFP beach cleanup in his home country. Workers found him as a 4-week-old pup, and after failing to locate his owners, took him in as one of their own. For the past two years, Foxtrot has helped however he can to further the WFP's efforts to end hunger in Bangladesh. This usually includes accompanying his humans while they work, wearing an adorable custom-made WFP cape, and taking to Instagram to raise awareness about how anyone can join in the WFP's mission.

After learning that he and his humans had won the Nobel Peace Prize, Foxtrot didn't waste the opportunity to share his excitement with his followers. "Woweee," the pup said. "I ... think it would be even more amazing if we didn't need any peace prizes because peace was the status quo in our world."

If Foxtrot and his humans keep up the good work that won them the Nobel Peace Prize, it seems like that status quo could be within reach.

ACCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT

Have you ever been struck by another vehicle while you were inside your own parked vehicle? This is a terrifying situation that can leave you feeling helpless. We hope no one has to experience this. It is natural to stay alert while you are behind the wheel, but no one expects to be struck while parked. When these accidents do occur, and they result in serious injuries, our team at Garcia & Ochoa is here to help.

Case Facts: In the parking area of a public business, our client was involved in a vehicular accident. Our client had properly parked his 2007 Mack truck tractor with a HEIL pneumatic frac sand trailer attachment in the parking area for the evening. After a long day on the road, he was preparing to fall asleep for the night and start the next day bright and early. Then, another driver of a truck tractor pulled into the lot towing a box trailer. This driver attempted to park in a non-designated space inside of the parking lot and, in attempting to maneuver his vehicle, struck our defendant's trailer.

The collision not only impacted our client's truck and trailer but also knocked our client from the tractor's cabin onto the floor. The fall left our client with severe debilitating injuries and decreased physical capabilities.

5 HELPFUL TIPS TO STAY SAFE AT WORK



The holidays are over, and workers are returning to work. While we all may be feeling a little post-holiday sluggishness, it's important to remember to be safe. Our team at Garcia & Ochoa wants to make sure that everyone stays safe as they head back to work. Here are a few tips to help you avoid workplace accidents.

Talk to Your Superiors

One of the most important things you can do is talk to your supervisor about any safety concerns you see. This can include anything that violates workplace safety, including respiratory issues,



The Outcome: When our client reached out to us, we knew we had to take action. Our team considered the actions of the second driver and believed they were due not just to the driver's negligence but also to the company that had hired him. The company should have handled the driver's training and, in turn, understood the capabilities of their driver. It was with this understanding that we proceeded with this case as we fought to ensure our client received proper compensation for the wrong done to him. Our team won, and we ensured that our client was covered for his current and future medical bills.

Garcia & Ochoa is here to help if you or a loved one has sustained severe injuries in an accident. Call our office at (956) 587-5833 to set up an appointment with one of our attorneys today.

lack of fall protection, and machine guarding. You should also talk to your supervisor if you believe certain tasks will expose you to high risks of danger.

Remain Alert

It can become tempting to zone out during work, but it is essential to stay alert at all times, especially if heavy and dangerous equipment is used. To help with this, make sure you are sleeping 7–9 hours each night and that you take breaks, as well as eat and drink water regularly throughout the day.

Follow the Dress Code

If your place of work requires a dress code, be sure to follow it — it's there for a reason. Construction workers, for example, are required to wear protective gear and appropriate safety uniforms to ensure they remain safe while working at a site.

Participate in Emergency Drills

Knowing what to do in an emergency helps you prepare for it, even if it comes unexpectedly. Get familiar with your company's emergency drills and fire evacuation plans. If you and your coworkers have not discussed emergency drills or if it's been a while, talk to your supervisor about doing drills to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Avoid Taking Unnecessary Risks

Never do anything that will put your or anyone else's health and safety at risk. If there is an emergency, such as a fire, do not rush into danger. Call emergency services and allow them to handle the situation — they have been trained to handle these situations and will come prepared.



Inspired by GoodHousekeeping.com

INGREDIENTS

- 8 chicken thighs or drumsticks, lightly salted
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 onion, finely sliced
- 2 celery sticks, thickly sliced
- 2 carrots, thickly sliced
- 1 leek, thickly sliced
- 1 lb potatoes, peeled and cut in large chunks
- 2 garlic cloves, sliced
- 14 oz chicken stock
- 1 sprig rosemary
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large frying pan, heat oil and fry salted chicken on high until brown.
2. Transfer chicken to the slow cooker. Add flour and stir.
3. In the frying pan on high heat, fry the onion, celery, carrots, leeks, and potatoes until lightly browned. Add garlic and fry for 30 seconds.
4. Transfer vegetables to the slow cooker and add the stock, rosemary, and lemon zest.
5. Cook on high for 2.5–3 hours or until chicken is tender.
6. Check seasoning and add lemon juice to taste. Top with parsley before serving.



BE INSPIRED

Don't wait for things to get easier, simpler, or better. Life will always be complicated. Learn to be happy right now. Otherwise, you'll run out of time.

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How to Find Your Flow in 2021

Is Deep Focus the Secret to Success?

Have you ever started working on an important project and looked up at the clock after what felt like minutes only to find that hours had passed? If you have, you've probably experienced "flow state," aka the Holy Grail of concentration and achievement.

What is a flow state?

Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes a flow state as a "focus that, once it becomes intense, leads to a sense of ecstasy, a sense of clarity: you know exactly what you want to do from one moment to the other; you get immediate feedback." That sounds complex, but you can also think of flow as being "in the zone." And it might be the key to achieving your New Year's goals. That's because a flow state almost always coincides with tackling a difficult task, and when you're in a flow state, even the most challenging things feel relatively easy.

Why are high achievers obsessed with flow?

Flow state doesn't only happen for people with desk jobs. You can get it while running, playing chess, dancing, or climbing a mountain, and it's considered the Holy Grail because it has a host of benefits. According to the meditation app Headspace, those perks include heightened focus (goodbye, distractions!), a sense

of clarity, feelings of happiness and pleasure, and the impression that all obstacles ahead of you have disappeared. That makes accomplishing your goals feel like less of a struggle. It's no wonder high-achieving hobbyists, workers, and creatives crave the feeling!

How can you get in a flow?

Usually, a flow state isn't planned — it just happens. In a BBC article, author Steven Kotler describes flow as "a happy accident." But he also notes that we can make ourselves "more accident-prone." To set yourself up for a flow state, find a quiet place to work and choose an activity that's difficult but meaningful for you. Ideally, it should be something you've already put work into perfecting. If you've never tried painting before, you probably won't find flow on your first attempt, but an experienced painter could achieve it while mastering a new technique.

Some people claim that being in a flow state is a form of meditation and that learning how to meditate can help you reach it. To that end, apps like Headspace and Evenflow (for iPhones only) are great places to start! Before you know it, you'll be finding the flow like a pro.

