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## Mr. Whisler Goes to Washington

### Fourth of July Gets Me Thinking

Every Fourth of July, I find myself thinking about our government. Not a lot of people know this about me, but I was actually once a legislative intern to a member of the United States Congress. I worked in Washington, D.C., including in the Capitol building, for Mark Kirk of Illinois. And, like most of the people who have been interns, I count it as one of the more formative experiences of my life.

Until that time, I'd had an interest in government and international affairs, but learning about it all from afar was nothing compared to seeing the nitty-gritty of how our democracy works, day in and day out, for an extended period of time.

One of the first things I learned? It really matters whom you work for. Whether they're in the Senate or House, each member of Congress has a large staff. Some of those teams are pretty happy, but some are — in general — pretty miserable. There's no accounting for party or office; all I know is that Mr. Kirk was not one of those politicians with unhappy staff.

In fact, I was fortunate to work for a member of Congress who not only treated his staff with respect but also got to know them as individuals as much as possible, whether they were long-term hires or legislative interns like me. When you consider how many people a politician has to get to know in general, that feat is even more impressive.

He wanted to actually know about us, too: Where were we from? What were our goals in life? What drew us to Congress in the first place? My congressman kept those details in mind, and when a piece of work or project lined up with them, he'd put us right on it.

And there was plenty of work to go around. That was the second thing I learned about our government: Most of the things that Congress does are actually accomplished by legislative interns and other staff members. The interns are at the bottom of the heap, which means I could have spent my time there chained to a desk — and plenty of interns were. But the congressman I worked for didn't believe in that. We did a lot of paperwork, but he made sure we also got as diverse an experience as possible. My work was varied, and even as an intern, I felt I was having an impact because of my boss. He'd even get us in to listen to hearings, which I considered a real privilege.



The congressman was a great man to work for. Honestly, that's been my takeaway as I get older and lead a team of my own. It was great to see how things worked — or sometimes didn't — in Washington, D.C. But the greatest lesson I really learned was how to be a good boss.

And he was an interesting man, as well, and a loyal patriot. He'd been in Congress since 2000 and went on to the Senate in 2010, but before any of that, he was a member of Naval Intelligence, including as an active-duty service member during the late 1990s in Yugoslavia. He continued to serve in a military capacity throughout his time in Congress.

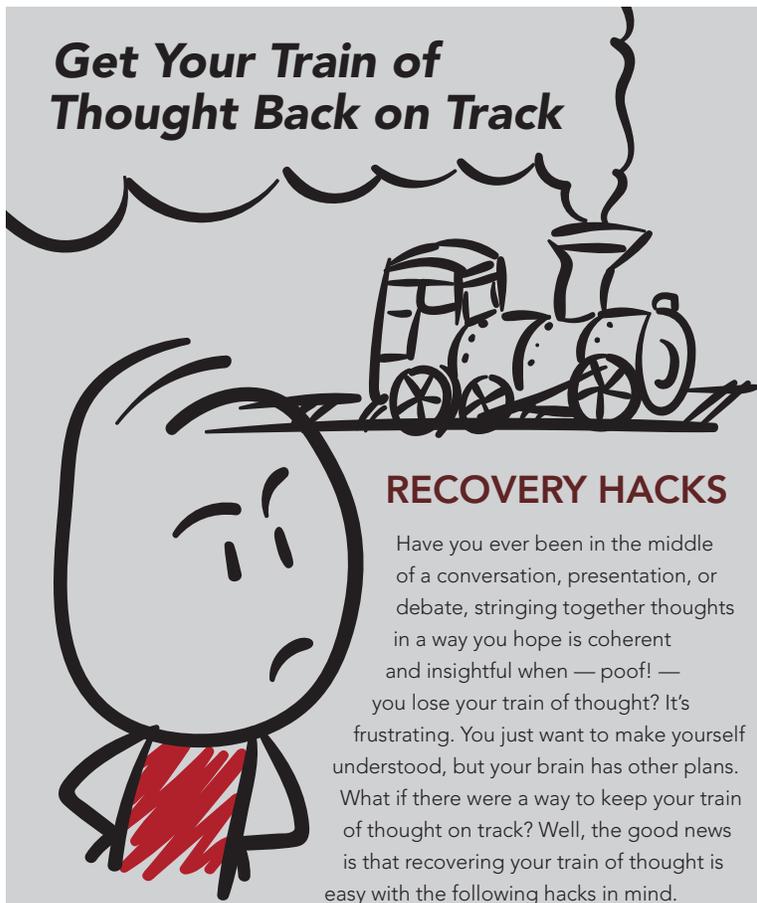
I find a lot of similarities between the kind of work he did and the work I do now. Both are too big for one individual — we may head the enterprise, but it takes a lot of people to get the job done. Recognizing those people is the first step toward leading a team. Anybody can be the boss, but actual leadership looks quite different.

That's one of the tenets of the Whisler Law Firm Foundation, which I began so we could give back to the community we're a part of. Whether it's supporting veterans like Mark Kirk with the Wounded Warrior Project, or helping local food charities here in our local communities, we see all of America as our community. Certainly, Mr. Kirk did.

Do you know everyone on your team? Do you know their individual goals? What's keeping them invested in the enterprise? Those are the questions I strive to answer with my team, because those are the questions I saw my own boss answering long ago.

*-Josh Whisler*

## Get Your Train of Thought Back on Track



### RECOVERY HACKS

Have you ever been in the middle of a conversation, presentation, or debate, stringing together thoughts in a way you hope is coherent and insightful when — poof! — you lose your train of thought? It's frustrating. You just want to make yourself understood, but your brain has other plans. What if there were a way to keep your train of thought on track? Well, the good news is that recovering your train of thought is easy with the following hacks in mind.

#### Repeat, repeat, repeat yourself.

Paraphrasing your last few thoughts out loud can help you remember where you were going. Think of it as retracing your steps: You go back to the last words you remember saying, and more often than not, you'll find your direction again.

#### Take a short pause.

Pausing briefly is a great way to make recovering your train of thought seem natural. This hack works really well if you're answering a question and you need time to think, and you also don't want to be bogged down by a chorus of "ums" escaping from your mouth.

#### Write it all down.

This hack works well when you know beforehand that you'll be speaking with someone or in front of people. Even if you never refer to your notes while speaking, simply writing down a road map for your train of thought can help you recover from a detour and speak more confidently.

#### Remember your overall point.

The easiest way to drive your train of thought into the weeds is to forget your overall point — or not to have an overriding point at all. Always have a short, overarching point you can use to recenter yourself and get back on track.

With these hacks, your brain will have to work a lot harder to make you lose your train of thought! Now you'll be more prepared to tackle any subject matter, no matter how deep or technical, that comes your way.

# FLOODED? YOUR HOME INSURER WON'T PAY UP

We live in a beautiful place with gorgeous beaches and great weather — well, most of the time, anyway. Sometimes, though, all that water is a little too close ... and the weather isn't so great. When that happens, a lot of people take comfort in knowing they've been paying their homeowner's insurance policy diligently every month for the past decade or more.

However, although they don't advertise the fact, your insurer isn't going to pay out for flood damage.

You might think this is normal "dodge our responsibility" insurance company behavior. It's certainly true that a lot of companies will try to get out of paying their clients the very money they promised they'd pay if something bad were to ever happen, but in this case, it's more complicated than just trying to pin them down to something they said they would do. **Property insurance policies do not cover flood damage.**

So, what can you do?

The important thing to remember is that just because one kind of policy won't help doesn't mean there isn't one that will — and in this case, there is. It's available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. You may have heard some bad press surrounding these plans — such as the government using them to strong-arm folks into moving — but the truth is, all plans have their ups and downs. If you want flood insurance, this is one option, and we'd love to help you get it.

If you have questions or concerns about your insurance policies, your home's safety, or the impact these things have on your finances, don't hesitate to get in touch. You can reach us at 833-529-5677, and you can always learn more about this and other insurance topics at [WhislerLawFirm.com](http://WhislerLawFirm.com).



# WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT:

## *Supporting the Troops Who Support America*

Whether you're working in Congress as a legislative aide or trying to help a neighbor out of a tight spot, there are a lot of ways to serve your community, which is, of course, the smallest building block of the nation. It's important all the time, but especially around Independence Day, when we should all be asking ourselves JFK's famous question: What can I do for my country?

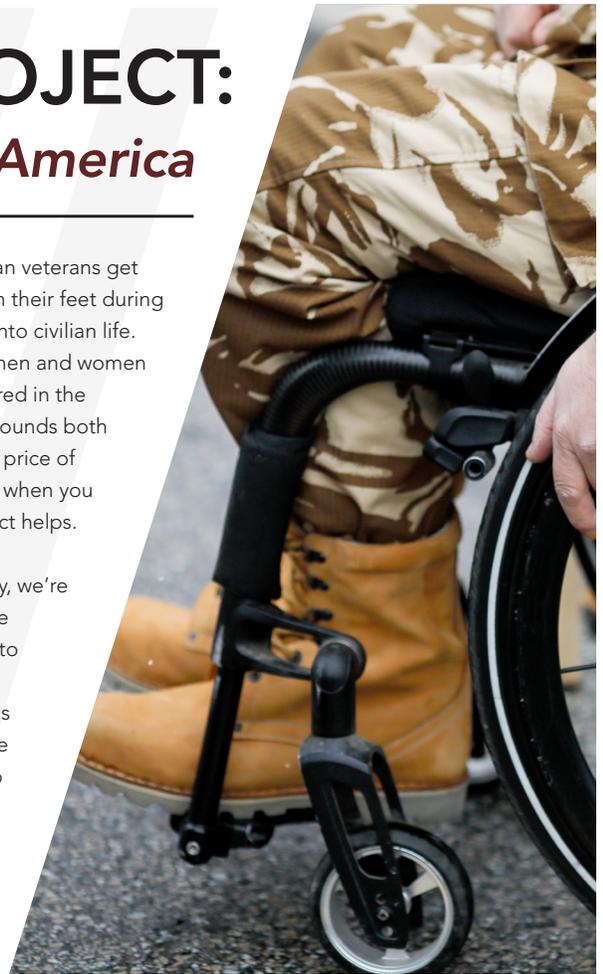
There are thousands of Americans who have answered that question by joining our armed forces to continue our legacy of defending our own freedoms as well as the freedoms of others around the globe through intelligence, support, or the service of arms. Fewer than 1 in 10 American adults will serve in our military during their lifetime, and that number is shrinking.

It takes courage, conviction, and tremendous loyalty to serve your country in this way. One of the ways our firm supports our country is through supporting various causes and organizations, each of them dedicated to being an asset to their community. That could mean programs like Feeding America and Feeding South Florida or the MJ Scarlett Foundation.

But one of our proudest, most humbling services has been our work with the Wounded Warrior Project.

This nonprofit helps American veterans get back into society and stay on their feet during the transition process back into civilian life. As the name suggests, the men and women it focuses on have been injured in the line of duty, and they bear wounds both physical and emotional. The price of Independence Day is visible when you look at the people the project helps.

In honor of the Fourth of July, we're pleased to give back in some way. And while we also love to celebrate, this work is more fulfilling and meaningful. This year, we encourage everyone to find a way, big or small, to contribute to our American community. And we thank our veterans for everything they have done for those of us back home.



## Plant-Based Blueberry Muffins

*Inspired by MyDarlingVegan.com*

*It's blueberry season! Whip up this simple muffin recipe to celebrate in style.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup soy milk
- 1 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups flour
- 2 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tbsp sugar
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 cups fresh blueberries

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Grease a muffin tin and set aside.
2. In a bowl, combine soy milk and apple cider vinegar. Set aside.
3. In another bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.
4. In a third bowl, combine sugar, oil, vanilla extract, and lemon zest. Add milk mixture and stir, then add flour mixture. Stir to combine until well-incorporated but not smooth. Fold in the blueberries.
5. Spoon batter into muffin tin, filling each well 3/4 full. Bake 20–25 minutes, cool, and enjoy!

## DID YOU KNOW?

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**"The summer night is like a  
perfection of thought."**

**– Wallace Stevens**



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*We're so grateful for all the feedback on our newsletter! If you have anything you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you.*

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# FUN FACTS ABOUT THE FOURTH OF JULY

## You Can Share With Your Kids

What do your kids know about the Fourth of July? Do they know it's a day when you have a barbecue, spend time with friends and neighbors, and watch a fireworks show? These hallmarks of the holiday certainly do make it fun and memorable, but they don't really exemplify why we celebrate the Fourth of July, the anniversary of when the United States declared its independence from Britain.

So, along with the sparklers and hot dogs, here are a few fun facts about Independence Day you can share with your kids to help them understand the significance of the holiday.

**The Fourth of July marks our country's independence because it's when the Continental Congress ratified the Declaration of Independence.** This fact might seem like a no-brainer, but it contextualizes the holiday for kids. It's a great jumping-off point to talk about why the United States wanted to be its own country, what the Continental Congress was, what the Declaration of Independence said, and what it means to "ratify" something.

**Two future presidents signed the Declaration of Independence: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.** They both died exactly 50 years later, on July 4, 1826. This fact is an interesting coincidence sure to fascinate both kids and adults. It's also a great way to introduce kids to some of the Founding Fathers and share how they helped shape the United States today.

**In 1776, the year the United States was founded, only 2.5 million people lived here.** Today, the U.S. population is 331 million. Lots of people have been born in the United States since it was founded, and millions more came here from other places, hoping to find a better life. Many succeeded, too. Many people want to call this country home!

**On the Fourth of July, around 155 million hot dogs are eaten in the United States.** Okay, so this fact might not have anything to do with American history, but it's still pretty funny! If anything, the fact that we have so many hot dogs to eat on that day is evidence of the prosperity so many people enjoy in the United States of America.