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'TIS THE SEASON

The Gifts of Reflection and Giving

The holidays are here, bringing a time of togetherness, love, traditions, and the exchange of gifts. During the holiday season, we are reminded to do something to help or benefit others. Especially after another tough year, paying it forward gives others little blessings. Whether it's a smile, a small act of kindness, holding the door for someone who has their hands full, paying for dinner for a busy friend, providing groceries for a struggling family, or inviting those who may be alone for the holidays to sit at your table, paying it forward is one of the holiday's greatest virtues.

One of my favorite ways to pay it forward is to support local small businesses. In the midst of the pandemic, these are the businesses that have been hit the hardest, and by shopping with them to check off some items on your holiday list, you are also benefiting them! Even if you just send flowers from the local florist to a loved one who could use a pick-me-up or snag some goodies from the local bakery for your office peers, your support is a holiday gift in more ways than one.

We all look forward to gifts around the holidays, but the reality is that you actually get more when you give. Having the ability to touch someone's life, put a smile on their face, and warm their hearts is what makes the holiday season so special.

As 2021 draws to a close, reflecting on the past year is important. Sometimes, I am guilty of not highlighting and/or recognizing my accomplishments. Oftentimes, we get so caught up in focusing on the

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end goal — our large wins — that we forget to take time to celebrate the small feats that make our big accomplishments possible. Along the way, we are often so quick to set new goals to keep us moving forward that we don't appreciate where we came from.

Whether big or small, it is important to recognize all of your accomplishments. Whether it's winning trials, developing exercise routines, or finally getting around to repairing the leaky sink, taking pride in meeting your goals is important. It's a great exercise!

By journaling throughout the year, you can better hold yourself accountable and produce measurable results. Revisiting your goals to build upon them or create newer ones is also easier if you have them written down.

In 2021, I began to celebrate my goals. I'm proud to say that I've made my physical health a priority and developed an exercise routine. I invested in a Peloton bike, which not only helps physically but also provides an escape to keep my stress at a manageable amount. I also made it a point to take my daughter to the beach to watch the sunrise. It's a relaxing and special time for bonding.

It doesn't matter how you choose to celebrate meeting your goals, but it is important that you do! This holiday season, I hope you celebrate in happiness with your loved ones and make time for taking in the beauty of the season.

Happy holidays!

Josh Whisler

Smoothies Aren't Just for Summer Anymore!

5 HOLIDAY INGREDIENTS TO TOSS INTO YOUR BLENDER

The drinks of choice for winter are usually warm and cozy — apple cider, hot chocolate, and wassail all have their place on the table. But no rule says you have to drink something hot when it's snowy outside. In fact, a cold beverage might keep you warmer!

A study from the Thermal Ergonomics Lab at the University of Ottawa found that when you drink something hot, it can cause you to sweat more and, as a result, *will actually cool you off* more than a cold drink! Crazy, right?



Of course, you could probably reverse the heat loss by bundling up in a sweater so your sweat doesn't evaporate. But if you're in your warm, cozy home, why not go for a cold drink like a smoothie? You can even add some holiday cheer to your healthy(ish) treat with one of these five seasonal ingredients.

1. Peppermint — For a protein-rich smoothie that tastes like a candy cane, blitz together almond milk, yogurt, almond butter, mint leaves, ground cinnamon, and a few drops of peppermint extract.

2. Cinnamon — If you love chocolate chip cinnamon rolls, you need to try the smoothie version! Frozen bananas, coconut milk, vanilla yogurt, cacao powder (which is packed with antioxidants), vanilla extract, and cinnamon are the secrets to a healthy version of your favorite Christmas breakfast.

3. Cranberries — Cranberries are both festive and packed with vitamins and antioxidants that may help fight heart disease and cancer. To cash in on those benefits, whip up a smoothie with frozen cranberries, pear slices, goji berries, orange juice, coconut milk, and flax seeds.

4. Ginger — What screams Christmas more than gingerbread? You can make a delicious smoothie version of the cookie with rolled oats, chia seeds, yogurt, nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, ground cloves, vanilla extract, and molasses to reap the anti-inflammatory and nausea-fighting benefits of ginger.

5. Eggnog — Eggnog is far from a healthy drink, but it's a holiday favorite! To enjoy it in a new way, blend it up with a scoop of vanilla protein powder and ice after your workout.

Workers' Compensation and Mental Health

Workers' compensation, by definition, encompasses any kind of illness or injury that is directly caused by performing your job duties. So, does workers' compensation extend to mental health?

Chances are you've felt overwhelmed, overworked, and stressed out from your job at some point, and this stress possibly led you to seek professional help. This professional help for your mental health issues can be covered by workers' compensation, just as it works for physical illnesses. The difficulty lies in proving that the workplace led to the mental health issue. With physical injuries, this is easier because there is usually tangible proof. With mental health, it can be a little trickier.

While individuals often feel stressed out and anxious due to their job, rarely does it interfere with performing their work duties. If we are able to provide proof that their workplace environment has led to mental health stressors that were so critical they were unable to complete their work as expected, then we may have an argument for using benefits to cover the condition.

It is important to keep in mind that even if your workers' compensation claim is denied by the employer, the employer is not required to provide a reason for the denial, and it is up to you to prove that your illness should be covered by the workers' compensation benefits.



Usually, with mental health, there is not a single occurrence that led to the resulting mental health condition, as the illness typically builds over time. If statements from a mental health professional can confirm a link between your place of work and health condition, and if you can gather further evidence — such as emails or a few specific situations that led to your mental stress — we at The Whisler Law Firm have years of experience assisting with a variety of workers' compensation cases and are prepared to assist in gathering documents and evidence to attempt to prove causation. Call us today!



WHY PLAN YOUR ESTATE?

If you have assets, you have an estate.

Cash, cars, property, and other assets are all part of your estate, and if you want those assets to seamlessly and properly be passed down to loved ones of your choice when you pass away, then it is crucial to have a formal estate plan.

An estate plan includes a will, a power of attorney, a medical power of attorney, a living will, and a trust. It serves to act as a safety net to minimize any disbursement wait times, preserve asset values, and make sure that your legacy is carried out exactly how you want it. It gives you the opportunity to choose your beneficiaries and who you would like to do the "distribution" for you.

Even if you don't have a large home, don't have other real estate, or only have small assets, planning is important. You've worked hard for everything that you have, and you surely want to see to it that your things get handed down to your loved ones as you choose.

With estate planning, you are even able to name your children's guardian in the event that you pass away prematurely. You don't want a judge deciding this very important decision for you. Your estate plan will also ensure that your child is not a financial burden on the guardian that you choose for them.

Once you pass away, you're unable to speak for yourself. If not for yourself, plan your estate properly for your loved ones. They'll be glad that you did. Here at The Whisler Law Firm, we are ready to help to guide you through the estate planning process. Call us today to get started!

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Questions?

Call 833-529-5677

"We cannot solve problems with
the kind of thinking we employed
when we came up with them."

—Albert Einstein

DIY HOLIDAY EGGNOG

Inspired by TastesBetterFromScratch.com

INGREDIENTS

- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- Cinnamon and whipped cream, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until light and creamy. Set aside.
2. In a saucepan over medium heat, stir together the cream, milk, nutmeg, and salt. Bring to a simmer.
3. Add a spoonful of the milk mixture to the egg mixture. Whisk vigorously and repeat, one spoonful at a time.
4. When most of the milk is whisked in, add the egg mixture to the saucepan.
5. Whisk until the liquid thickens slightly or reaches 160 F. Remove from heat and add vanilla extract.
6. Pour the eggnog into a glass container and cover. Refrigerate.
7. When the eggnog has thickened, pour it into glasses, garnish, and enjoy!

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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CREATING A HOLIDAY MASTERPIECE

HOW TO DECORATE YOUR GINGERBREAD HOUSE LIKE A PRO

One of the most popular holiday traditions has become making and decorating gingerbread houses. The tradition began in Germany in the early 1800s and originated from Grimm's "Hansel and Gretel." Some shy away from the idea of making their own gingerbread house, but have no fear — if the Germans did it in the early 1800s, so can you!

To simplify things, many gingerbread houses come with baked pieces and a full decorating kit. This helps you have more time for the best part: the actual decorating! Each kit usually comes with fun candy and icing, so you can make something really kick-butt for the holidays!

Icing will be your best friend. Think of it as the yummy glue that holds everything together while also acting as a colorful trim for your gingerbread house. However, because it'll keep the house from falling, be sure to use a lot!

Spice drops also make for a great trim and "roofing," just use icing to hold them in place.

Alternate between colors or use a variety to make your house really pop.

M&Ms are certainly a must-have for anyone decorating their gingerbread house. Not only are they delicious, but they also make for cute little accents all over the house and yard.

Mini cookies of your choice may also make a deliciously good-looking roof. Try layering them up for a dimensional look! And, for extra pizzazz, strategically place mini candy canes throughout the yard and on either side of the front doors and windows.

If you want to get really detailed, try using actual candy bars as fire logs in the fireplace. Just be sure to store your gingerbread house in a cool area so nothing will melt!

Whether you prefer a simple gingerbread house or a flashy one, any and ALL candy can be used! Get decorating and be sure to have a bite of candy along the way!

