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Celebrating Nicole Rego's 3rd Anniversary!

Hiring Nicole was the Best Decision I've Made

We recently celebrated Nicole's third anniversary here at Monteforte Law! It's funny because, on one hand, it feels like three years have flown by. But, on the other hand, it feels like it's been forever. Honestly, I don't remember how I did any of this without her.

When I hired Nicole, she had just graduated college and was in a program for her master's. I was so busy with work and writing all our social media content myself that I needed extra help. So, I put a job advertisement on LinkedIn for a part-time social media marketer.

Nicole was the second person to apply, and we immediately got along when she came in for her interview! I can't even remember one question I asked her during the interview because we were laughing and cracking jokes, and I knew I had to have her on my team.

After hiring her, Nicole came in immediately and started working. She had a second job while working part-time for me, and at the time, I had two other part-time employees. But I realized I had someone great, and I wanted her to work for me full-time.

I offered her a full-time position right around COVID and the quarantine craziness. I thought I was even crazier for hiring full-time, but I knew I couldn't lose her because of the incredible potential she had. So, Nicole came on, and after a year, we promoted her to chief marketing officer (CMO) and she took over all the marketing for the firm.

We had grown really close, and most say you're not supposed to be close with your employees, but I made the exception. She is so close to my family and even came to my daughter's high school graduation party! She brings in her 6-year-old daughter, Leah, whom my family adores, and my kids have even babysat.



Nicole has always been my sounding board at work — when I complain, I go to her, and I'll run it by her when I have an idea. She'll give me the encouragement I need to see it through, and when I'm acting a bit crazy, she'll give me a reality check and bring me back down to Earth.

She was the CMO for a while, but she was doing so much more than that. She was managing all

the systems, and I involved her with important decisions, so I knew she needed a better title to reflect that. I gave her a few ideas and let her choose, and we came up with chief strategy officer!

Nicole is my second in command, but I mean, she's probably the real boss here. She isn't afraid to challenge or stand up to me respectfully, and I'm okay with it because I consider her to be on equal footing with me. Once in a while, we'll disagree on something, and I have to warn everyone that it's totally normal because we'll be fine afterward.

But I tell people that I made the best business decision I could have ever made for the firm three years ago by hiring her. She's just an outstanding employee and a phenomenal person, and I'm so thankful to have her at the firm.

—Mike Monteforte Jr.

Providing Rides and Saving Lives

Meet an Uber Driver Turned Hometown Hero

We all like to imagine we would do whatever it takes to help others if we witnessed a tragedy, such as a house fire or car accident. We see it all the time when watching our favorite shows and movies, but these random heroic acts rarely happen in real life. When they do, they're awe-inspiring. One New York City man was faced with one of these harrowing situations and showed tremendous courage when he helped save lives, all while on the clock.

Fritz Sam works as an Uber driver in New York City. He had just picked up a passenger and was taking her to LaGuardia Airport when he noticed a hectic scene in a Brooklyn neighborhood. He soon saw flames and dark smoke emerging from a second-story window of an apartment building. He asked his passenger if he could pull over to offer help.

He approached a group of bystanders, yelling for people to get out of the residence. As people fled the building, Sam asked if everyone was out. Someone said there were still people inside. Without hesitation, Sam ran through



the building and found a woman who was hesitant about leaving. He convinced her to go and brought her to safety, and then he returned to help another man get out of the building.

Once he saw firefighters on the scene, Sam returned to his vehicle and proceeded to drop his passenger off at the airport. She still made her flight, even with their impromptu stop.

In a statement to TODAY, Uber said, "We're incredibly grateful to have such a heroic and thoughtful member of our community in Fritz. He went above and beyond to keep his neighbors in New York safe — and still managed to get his rider to the airport on time."

When talking to TODAY, Sam stated, "You'd be surprised what little things we do that can be impactful. Because, trust me, those little things are going to make a big difference for somebody." It's safe to say that very few people consider Sam's actions a "little thing." He acted heroically and is an inspiration to many.

Celebrity Lawsuit Calls TikTok 'Breeding Ground for Scams'

Are the Ads You See Real or Fake?

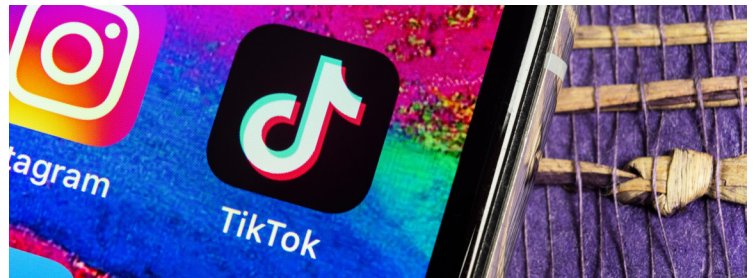
Imagine you're scrolling through your social media feed when an ad pops up starring one of your favorite celebrities. Maybe it's quarterback Tom Brady talking about his favorite brand of beer or actress Julia Roberts showing off her new shoes.

You're intrigued enough to buy the product. But when it arrives, your jaw drops. This isn't the hottest new luxury item! It's just a cheap knockoff of Budweiser or Jimmy Choo. How would you feel about your celebrity "friend?"

According to Page Six, this exact situation happened to fans of "Real Housewives of New York City" actress and Skinnygirl founder Bethenny Frankel. A scam artist stole clips of her promoting a designer product and edited them, making it appear as if she were selling knockoff cardigans.

Frankel posted her own video decrying the scammer, only to watch TikTok remove it for "abusive content." In a last-ditch attempt to protect her reputation, she sued the platform for failing to protect her reputation and allowing users to post fake ads, calling it "a breeding ground for scams."

If you use TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook, Frankel's story should serve as a warning: The ads you see sliding by on your smartphone screen may not be legitimate. To protect yourself from scammers, take these three steps.



- 1. Go to the source for celebrity endorsements.** Visit the celebrity's official social media page and/or website. Any products they're advertising should be visible there.
- 2. Avoid in-app purchases.** It's easy to buy products on Instagram with a single click — but should you? To avoid scams, leave the app and visit the company's official website to ensure you're purchasing the real thing.
- 3. Look for signs of photoshopping, editing, and manipulation.** Does the celebrity's face look tacked onto another person's body, or does their phrasing sound broken and clipped together? Is the celebrity sponsoring the ad, or is the brand just using their name (perhaps misspelled) for cachet? Look for these signs before you buy.

Ultimately, when buying online, just remember to think before you click. Skepticism is a TikTok user's best friend.

TAKE A *BREAK*



AIR FRYER ROASTED SALMON WITH SAUTÉED BALSAMIC SPINACH

Inspired by TasteOfHome.com



Ingredients

- 3 tsp olive oil, divided
- 4 salmon fillets (6 oz each)
- 1 1/2 tsp reduced-sodium seafood seasoning
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1 garlic clove, sliced
- Dash of crushed red pepper flakes
- 10 cups fresh baby spinach (about 10 oz)
- 6 small tomatoes, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar

Directions

1. Preheat air fryer to 450 F. Rub 1 tsp oil over both sides of salmon, then sprinkle with seafood seasoning and pepper. In a greased air fryer basket, place salmon.
2. Cook about 10–12 minutes until fish flakes easily.
3. In a 6-qt stockpot, place remaining oil, garlic, and pepper flakes. Heat over medium-low heat for 3-4 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Add spinach and cook until wilted. Stir in tomatoes; heat through.
4. In a small saucepan, bring vinegar to a boil. Cook until vinegar is reduced by half, then remove from heat.
5. Arrange spinach on serving dish. Place salmon over spinach mixture and drizzle with balsamic glaze.



In 2021, 1 in 7 Americans participated in "Dry January" — a month without alcohol. The concept of Dry January is new, but since its conception in England in 2012, it has taken hold worldwide. If you're one of the millions of people pouring out your booze after a holiday of overindulging, use these five tips to stay on track until Jan. 31 and beyond.

1. **Download the 'Try Dry' app.** Yes, there *is* an app for that! "Try Dry" is the official Dry January app, created by Alcohol Change UK. Users can map their Dry January successes on a calendar, watch their "dry streak" climb, and calculate the money and calories they've saved by avoiding alcohol. The app is available for both Apple and Android devices.
2. **Look for a kava bar near you.** These outposts sell nonalcoholic drinks made from the root of kava plants that helps imbibers relax without the negative side effects of booze. If you're worried about missing out on socializing with friends, a kava bar could be a good alternative to your local watering hole. Kava bars are trending nationwide right now, so check Google to see if one is open in your city.
3. **Master the mocktail.** Kava isn't your only nonalcoholic beverage alternative. If you find yourself missing fancy cocktails, check websites like **FoodNetwork.com**, **BonAppetit.com**, and **TownandCountryMag.com** for delicious mocktail recipes like Bobby Flay's Chocolate Martini Mocktail, which is a booze-free mudslide. Then, invite your friends over to raise a glass. Throw in board games and food, and they won't even miss the alcohol.
4. **Scare yourself with the data.** Plenty of studies out there warn about the negative side effects of drinking alcohol, including a recent study from The Lancet that found drinking reduces your lifespan. When you feel your resolve slipping, turn to the facts for reassurance you're on the right path.
5. **Partner with a friend.** If you want to make a batch of mocktails or bemoan skipping your after-dinner gin and tonic, it helps to have a friend by your side! Find someone to join your Dry January crusade so you can keep each other on the right path.



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Reduce Climate Anxiety With 'How to Save a Planet'

If you're stuck in a cycle of worrying about the planet after a rough year of floods, fires, and hurricanes, we don't blame you. Most of us have seen that 2022 was full of climate craziness, and constantly dealing with these disasters can leave us feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Knowing where to start when tackling the issues our planet faces can be challenging, and this uncertainty leaves many people feeling more depressed than determined.

But that is all about to change with the help of "How to Save a Planet," a Spotify original podcast that shares good news on eco-friendly trends. Join Alex Blumberg and "a crew of climate nerds" (their words, not ours) as they strive to bring you the positives of our planet, along with real changes you can make in your life that will help move our climate in the right direction.

To show you what we mean, we'll share some things "How to Save a Planet" says you can do to be a climate warrior.

Make a Venn diagram to find your climate change superpower! On a piece of paper, draw three circles that overlap in the middle. Each circle will have its own title, and they are "What brings you joy?" "What work needs doing?" and "What are you good at?" Find similarities between all three, and

write them in the middle. That piece between all three circles is what you can do for the climate.

You might want to try a fashion detox. This challenge asks participants to avoid buying any new clothes for 10 weeks and to use that time to reflect on sustainability. The goal is to take a moment and understand the impact of clothing on the planet.

Get in touch with your local meteorologist. If you watch the local news and the meteorologist talks about climate change, send them an email or message on social media to let them know you noticed it, appreciate it, and want them to keep it up.

"How to Save a Planet" has many more tips where those came from, and after listening, you won't feel helpless — you'll be motivated to make a change. So head on over to Spotify, press play, and get started.

