

Practical Wisdom, Trusted Advice.

July 2023

(978) 653-4092
www.MonteforteLaw.com



Speak Less to Improve Your Communication *Over 20 Years of Listening Practice*

Listening is more challenging than you think, and I mean *really* listening. It's taken me decades just to get the hang of it! July 18 is World Listening Day, which encourages us to talk less and listen more. As an estate planning attorney, listening is a skill I've been fine-tuning for more than 20 years. While I'm certainly not the world's best listener, just ask my wife, I have come a long way since starting my career.

In my line of work, hearing my clients' stories and backgrounds is crucial to understanding their particular situations and deciphering how I can help. Yet, as a young and spirited attorney, I definitely used to do most of the talking. I couldn't help it! I was eager to share my knowledge and all the information I had at my disposal. As I was trying to get my earnestness across, I learned these people also need to express themselves. It took me some time to realize many people coming to an estate planning attorney can quickly feel overwhelmed by an overload of information. Instead, I needed to listen to what they had to say.

To be the best attorney I could be, hearing about my clients' issues, worries, and priorities was paramount. Then, after they shared, I could offer my opinion and expertise. With over 20 years of practice, I can confidently say my listening skills have greatly improved. Estate planning sessions can seem like therapy sessions; many attorneys can attest to this as our clients undergo many stressful events, and we must listen.

I see many younger attorneys go through the same struggle I once did. Like me, they're so passionate that they talk more than listen. So, I try to be the best mentor I can be and stress the importance of allowing clients to define the problem before we jump in and solve it. As an employer and leader, this skill is also crucial to understand my team's unique challenges and work to overcome them. Any business owner should take time to practice listening to keep their team fulfilled and business running.

We can all agree that listening is also one of the most important aspects of personal relationships. I'm a father of two, and as they grow older, I need to make sure I listen to their viewpoints



and opinions. I need to show them I'll always be there. While my kids would undoubtedly say I'm not the most patient person, I'm learning that patience is the key to being a good listener. My wife and son demonstrate how these two skills correlate because they are incredibly patient people and fantastic and empathetic listeners. Meanwhile, my daughter took more from me and shares the same struggle with patience!

Becoming a good listener doesn't happen overnight. After all these years, I'm still working hard every day to listen, not just to learn information but also to understand the accompanying emotions. Whether at the office or home, I hope you take the time to listen more carefully to those around you. You'll learn much more about people when you speak less and allow them to express themselves!

—Mike Monteforte Jr.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

A Word From Attorney Cynthia

Dear Clients,

My name is Cynthia C. Romero, and I am an attorney at Monteforte Law. I'm sure most of you have already heard about me from our website, but I want to dive a little deeper into why I love what I do.

As an attorney, my passion lies in helping people through difficult times. I witnessed a close friend's unfortunate loss of her husband and helped get through the grief, which inspired me to help others grieving the loss of a loved one. Having the capability to take this difficult task off their hands while they mourn is a reward in and of itself.

The responsibility of settling a loved one's estate can be complex and overwhelming for anyone, which is why I'm committed to providing guidance and support every step of the way with each of my clients. The probate process may not be the most pressing matter on their minds because of their grief, but it needs to be completed in a timely manner. If I can positively impact someone's life while doing something I love, then I know I'm doing something right in this world.

Although death is inevitable, you can avoid the complexities of probate court by constructing a proper estate plan. I highly encourage my clients to take control of how they want their assets to be distributed instead of leaving it up to a judge to determine.

Outside work, I engage in holistic fitness practices such as yoga, Tai chi, and meditation. By enhancing my physical, mental, and energetic health, I can better serve my clients and provide them with the utmost support they deserve.

We all exist in this world, but so few of us live. I firmly believe in enjoying the journey and appreciating every moment, even during the tough times. Don't feel discouraged about a "bad moment," and believe everything happens for a reason. A quote I read recently is now incorporated into my daily thoughts: "20 years from now, you'd give anything to be this exact age, this healthy, and back in this exact moment. Take a second to enjoy it now."



Don't forget to check out my latest blog post about the popular hit show, *House of the Dragon*, at www.MonteforteLaw.com/blog.

-Cynthia C. Romero

Let Your Creativity Flourish!

With a Zine, Anything Is Possible!

We've all heard of journaling, scrapbooking, and creating collages, but have you ever thought about making a zine? A zine (pronounced "zeen") is a self-published and noncommercial book you can create and showcase your talents to the world. Many businesses, such as Aesop and Supreme, have used zines to connect with readers and share their stories. And now, you can do the same!



What makes a zine unique?

Zines are quickly rising in popularity because they can be anything you want! If you want to highlight your artwork, showcase your writing, display your academic research, or let your creativity blossom, then a zine is for you. There are no rules, guidelines, or processes to follow — everything is up to you!

These creations were used initially to highlight minority and underground interests. For example, mainstream magazines may highlight news and other events happening in pop culture and mainstream media. But what about niche topics such as music genres, outsider art, or small-town activists? Zines have filled this gap and provided an outlet to share their voices.

Additionally, most people think the only way to be published is to submit their work to many different publications and hope for acceptance, get an agent, or work for a magazine or newspaper. But that's not the

case anymore! Anyone can create a zine — even if they don't have any experience or training.

How do you create a zine?

Making your own zine is easy! All you need is paper, glue, scissors, pens, and photos from magazines or the internet. First, you want to take your paper (as many pieces as you wish) and fold each in half to make a book. Then, let your creativity take over! You can cut out newspaper or magazine clippings, print designs off the internet, or draw your own creations. Once you finish your zine, you can keep it to yourself or print and sell several copies.

You can publish your zine on social media, reach out to different zine publishers such as Kiosk, Ditto, or Colpa Press, or contact your local, independent bookstore to see if they are willing to showcase your work.

So, in honor of July being International Zine Month, let your creativity flourish and create your own!

TAKE A *BREAK*



GRILLED STEAK SALAD WITH PEACHES

Ingredients

Inspired by *Delish.com*

- 1 lb skirt steak, fat trimmed
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large lemon, juiced
- 6 cups baby arugula
- 2 ripe peaches, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup crumbled blue cheese or feta

Directions

1. In a large resealable plastic bag or baking dish, combine steak, vinegar, garlic, and brown sugar. Marinate 20 minutes at room temperature.
2. Remove steak from marinade, coat with vegetable oil, and season generously with salt and pepper.
3. On a grill or pan set to high heat, cook steak until desired doneness. Rest 5–10 minutes, then thinly slice against the grain.
4. In a small bowl, whisk olive oil and lemon juice to make dressing. Season with salt and pepper.
5. In a large serving bowl, add arugula, peaches, blue cheese or feta, and steak. Drizzle with dressing and gently toss.

SO, YOU'RE DATING SOMEONE NEW

Your Children Should Always Come First!

After you separate from your spouse, you may consider entering the dating world again. However, if you have children, dating can be difficult. It can be challenging to determine the right time for that new special someone in your life to meet your kids. How do you ensure your children know they are still important and you're not replacing the other parent?

Give your child time and space.

While you and your child's other parent are no longer together, it may take your child time to adjust to the changes. They may not fully understand why their parents no longer live under one roof. Your child may feel sadness or anger toward the situation, and accepting that new person in your life may be difficult for them.

Therefore, give your child enough time to come to terms with the situation before introducing a new partner. While this is an exciting time for you, your child should always come first. Therefore, let them adjust to their new "normal" so they're less likely to think you're trying to "replace" their other parent!

Take your new relationship slow.

If you introduce your new partner to your children too soon and the relationship doesn't last, your child can be even more confused about the situation. Experts suggest waiting at least 8–9 months before your partner meets your kids. This time allows you to get to know your new partner and ensure you share similar interests, values, and beliefs.

Discuss the situation with your ex.

Talking to your ex about introducing your new partner to your children may be beneficial. After all, your children are their children, too! You can outline expectations for you and your ex to follow, including how long you should wait to introduce your partner, where the introduction should take place, and how to share concerns you or your ex may have.

After your child meets the new special someone in your life, check in with them frequently. You want to ensure they are comfortable with this change and know they can come to you with questions or concerns. With open communication and trust, you can enjoy your time with your expanded family and watch your relationships blossom.





MONTEFORTE LAW, P.C.

(978) 653-4092

www.MonteforteLaw.com

300 TradeCenter, Suite 5640

Woburn, MA 01801

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** How I'm Becoming a Better Listener
- 2** Counselor's Corner
You Can Become a Published Author!
- 3** Grilled Steak Salad With Peaches
How to Introduce Your Children to Your
New Partner
- 4** Gwyneth Paltrow Won Her Case and
Received ... \$1?

A BATTLE OF HE SAID, SHE SAID

Gwyneth Paltrow vs. Terry Sanderson — When Skiers Collide

When you read about celebrity court cases, you probably think of music contract disputes, messy divorces, and settlements with ridiculously high dollar amounts. But the trial between Gwyneth Paltrow and Terry Sanderson was unlike any other. It regarded a ski slope collision that occurred seven years ago.

On Feb. 26, 2016, Paltrow and Sanderson were at the Deer Valley Resort in Utah. They both enjoyed the slopes until a tragic accident occurred. The collision caused Sanderson to suffer a concussion, a brain injury, and four broken limbs. In January 2019, Sanderson filed a \$3.1 million lawsuit against Paltrow. In return, Paltrow countersued for \$1 plus attorney fees.

Sanderson argued that Paltrow collided with him from behind while she skied on a beginner's slope with an instructor. He also mentioned that his injuries prevented him from coping with life. Paltrow argued

that Sanderson was the one who struck her from behind. When pictures of the collision appeared in court, it showed Paltrow on top of Sanderson — which could only happen if Paltrow was struck from behind.

Additionally, Paltrow's lawyers argued that Sanderson sued Paltrow to "exploit her celebrity and wealth." Evidence strengthens this point because while Sanderson said he couldn't cope with life, documents showed that he had taken multiple international and domestic trips since the accident. Furthermore, in an email between Sanderson and his children, he stated that he would be famous after the accident made the tabloids.

So, how did the case end? After determining that Paltrow was the downhill skier, according to the images shown in court, they turned to the sport's rules. According to the rules, the person further down the mountain (the downhill skier) has the right of way. This

means that the person closest to the top of the mountain must yield.

The jury found Paltrow not liable and awarded her \$1 and legal fees. To Paltrow, this case was not about the money. She felt like her character and integrity had been threatened and she simply wanted to prove the allegations were false.

