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Finding Normal Again

CAUTIOUSLY ANTICIPATING A SUMMER OF NORMAL BASEBALL GAMES AND TRAVEL

In my house, summertime is about two things: baseball and traveling — and sometimes a combination of the two.

Longtime readers may remember that I made a promise to myself a long time ago that I wouldn't wait until I was older to make memories with my family. We have made a commitment to travel as often as possible, and sometimes, those coincide with Mikey's tournaments and Gabby's competitions or performances. Other times, we're boarding cruises for global adventures. We have so many great memories — and photos — of these adventures.



Unfortunately, last year was the anomaly.

We had a lot of fun events planned for the summer of 2020. The most exciting of these was a trip to Italy! Mikey was invited to play in an international tournament that month, and we had decided to make a whole family

vacation out of it. Unfortunately, that was one of the first events to get canceled as the pandemic began. Mikey has since aged out of qualifying for that tournament, and we're all really bummed for him.

Over the course of this past year, we have had six family trips canceled. I've traveled to Washington, D.C., a few times for work, and I did take Mikey to a tournament in Florida, but until recently, we haven't traveled as a family for more than a year. I think that was the longest my children had not been on an airplane since they were little kids.

Meet Our New Attorney!

For the first time, we have another attorney working alongside our founding attorney, Mike Monteforte! We are thrilled to welcome attorney Amanda Wood, who will be taking on the same legal responsibilities as Mike. Since joining the firm in late March, Amanda has jumped fully into our work, and we have no doubt that she will continue to serve with the compassion our firm is known for.

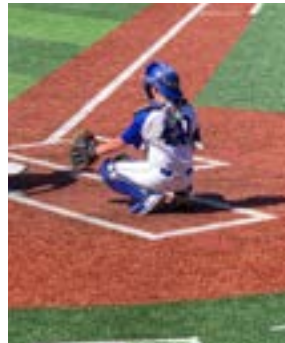


Welcome to the team, Amanda!



Our family missed traveling in 2020, but we aren't going to let that happen this year! As vaccination campaigns continue, we are slowly becoming more comfortable traveling as a family.

Just this past spring, we all traveled to Florida for another one of Mikey's baseball tournaments. We were all a little nervous because of Florida's cavalier approach to the pandemic, but Gabby was particularly worried. So, we did the best we could. When someone who wasn't wearing a mask sat close to us at the ballpark, we would move to a new spot. We were adamant about wearing our masks in public and at restaurants when we weren't seated, and we visited the beach, where it was easy for us to find distance from others and enjoy some sunshine.



It may not have been Italy or the tropical islands we have visited in the past, but sitting in a Florida restaurant or along the beach with my family, knowing we were on a vacation together, was reminiscent of previous trips. I don't

think we realized just how much we all needed that experience until we went! By the end of the trip, Gabby said she was relieved that we were able to stay safe and still have fun. That's all that matters.

As we return to a more normal baseball season, we're anticipating more opportunities for travel, but we are also cautious. Mikey has a baseball tournament in Louisiana in August that we are hoping we can attend, Gabby has been invited to dance at Disney World again this fall, and we've booked our next cruise for New Year's Eve — a tradition of ours that we had to forgo last year. It's difficult to get excited for these trips when we know just how easy it is for them to be canceled, but when you can do something normal again, it's an indescribable feeling.

Here's to hoping my family's traditions and the activities you enjoy can return this year!

—Mike Monteforte

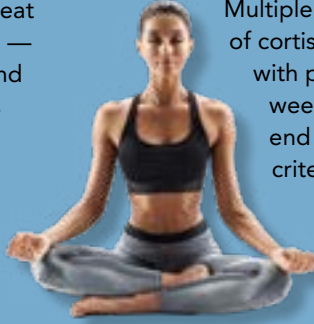
The Super Benefits of Yoga

June 21 is International Yoga Day, which makes it a great time of year to talk about the unique benefits of yoga — the “superfood” of fitness. As a mixture of exercise and mindfulness, yoga is not only challenging but also has myriad health benefits.

Many people assume yoga is mainly useful for increasing your flexibility. However, it’s also excellent for further developing your strength, mobility, and balance. These can be key benefits for living a healthier lifestyle, whether you’re an athlete or concerned about aging.

Kaitlyn Hochart, a yoga instructor from San Diego, California, writes on Healthline, “During yoga, your body goes through a full range and variety of motion that can counteract aches and pains associated with tension or poor postural habits.” Yoga can help you become more aware of these habits, “[allowing] you to fix these imbalances and improve overall athleticism.”

Many forms of exercise are useful against depression and cardiovascular disease, but in yoga’s case, you don’t have to break a sweat to start benefiting from its stress-relieving properties. “The breathing exercises you practice during yoga can help lower your heart rate and shift your nervous system into a more relaxed state. It also promotes better sleep and increased focus,” Hochart writes.



Multiple studies agree: Yoga can significantly decrease the secretion of cortisol, the primary stress hormone. In one study, 64 women with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) participated in a 10-week program, performing yoga at least once a week. By the end of the 10 weeks, 52% of participants no longer met the criteria for PTSD at all.

As with starting any new hobby or regular exercise, it may help to set clear goals for yourself. By doing yoga regularly, there are several physical improvements you can look forward to, such as:

- Improved range of motion or ease of movement
- A reduction in pain, discomfort, or other symptoms
- An increase in physical strength and endurance
- Less weight fluctuation
- Changes in the way your clothes fit
- Better-quality sleeping habits and increased or stabilized energy levels

One of the best qualities of yoga is that you can be of any age or fitness level. So, pull up a YouTube video, find a soft surface, and give it a try!

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However, more restrictions have come up. In *Miller v. California* (1973), the U.S. Supreme Court found that the First Amendment’s freedom of speech doesn’t apply to obscenity.

How does the court define obscenity? There are three things they’ll take into account:

1. Will the average person (applying contemporary “community standards”) find the work appealing to the overly sexual interests?
2. Does the work depict or describe, in an offensive way, sexual conduct or excretory functions as defined by state law?
3. Does the work, when taken as a whole, lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value?

Certain types of hate speech are legal, so long as they don’t incite violence and cannot be categorized as obscenity as described above. But what about more ordinary political opinions? Can those be legally censored?

The First Amendment’s Boundary

Corporate censorship and censorship by private entities are legal because the First Amendment only applies to government censorship. That’s why when Twitter bans an account or Facebook

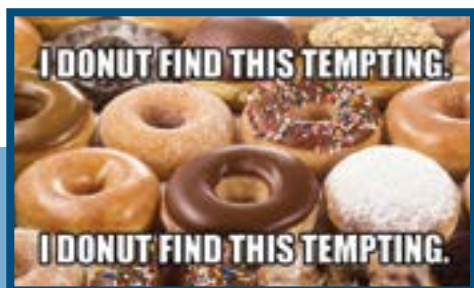


deletes a post, these actions don’t count as violations of free speech. Could that change?

According to legal experts, the big question now is how to treat large social media platforms. Clay Calvert, professor of law at the Levin College of Law, asks, “Should we treat them differently and regulate them more closely? Have we reached that stage where we need to antitrust litigation, perhaps, and say they have such powerful platforms, they’re like near-monopolies that we should do some trust-busting and break them up?”

Would it be a good idea for the First Amendment to apply to private entities? We’ll leave that to the future debates that are sure to come.

TAKE A BREAK



GRILLED CHICKEN SHAWARMA

Inspired by FeastingAtHome.com

A spice-filled marinade and time do all the work in this recipe that features Middle Eastern flavors.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp allspice
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 8 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground black pepper

Directions

1. To create marinade, whisk all spices with the garlic and olive oil in a medium bowl.
2. Add chicken to the bowl, coat well with marinade, cover, and let sit in the fridge for at least 20 minutes — or up to 48 hours. Strain off excess marinade before cooking.
3. Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Grill thighs for 10–12 minutes on each side, or until a meat thermometer reads 165 F.
4. Serve with rice, vegetables, or pita bread with tzatziki.

ARE GROCERY SUBSCRIPTION BOXES WORTH IT?

June is National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month, so let's explore one popular way to get more fresh produce into our lives: subscription-based delivery services like Full Circle and Imperfect Food. Are these services actually worth it? Do they save money and provide what they promise? Here's what the research turned up.

Can they save you time?

The Verdict: Yes, without a doubt. Subscription-based grocery delivery services appeal to consumers because they save time. With somebody else doing your grocery shopping, you don't have to think about when you're making a trip to the grocery store this week. Someone else is doing it for you!

Plus, some services even offer meal kits if you can't decide what to make. There's no argument here — these services definitely save you time.

Can they save you money?

The Verdict: Sometimes, since it depends on your existing shopping habits. If you find yourself making impulsive purchases while strolling down the aisles at the grocery store, then a set (but customizable) weekly list of delivered groceries might be a great way to stick to your budget. Unfortunately, not many grocery subscription-box delivery services offer nonfood items like toilet paper or cleaning products, so you may still have to make a trip to the store every once in a while.

Is the food quality great?

The Verdict: Yes, but it depends on your area. You have a higher chance of getting better grocery items if you buy from an organic grocery box service, like Imperfect Foods or Farm Fresh to You, since these companies work closely with your local farms.

Keep in mind that some services, like Imperfect Foods, are designed to deliver fresh foods that are a little "imperfect" in size, shape, or color to help prevent food waste — but, as a benefit, it's more affordable! However, we've found some services, like Full Circle, will prepackage their boxes from warehouses that may not be local to you, so do a little research before picking one.

All in all, we've been pleasantly surprised to find that these boxes aren't such a bad idea. Consider looking into it if you're tired of the weekly grocery store time crunch!





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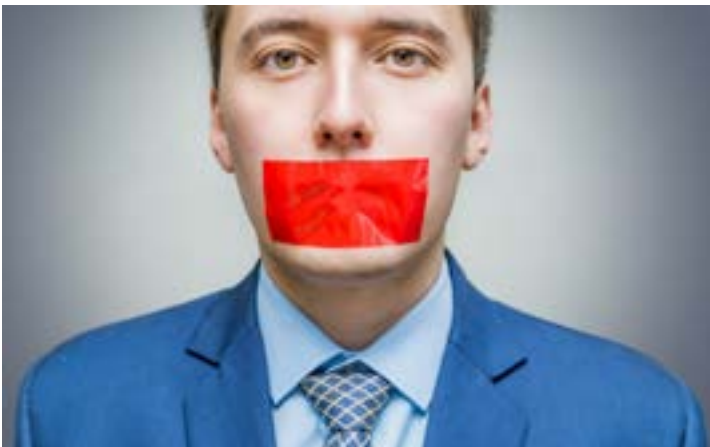
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Legally Speaking, What Is Censorship? A Brief Dive Into the First Amendment

The First Amendment has been the centerpiece of a contentious debate about what can legally be posted (and deleted) on social media like Twitter and Facebook. But before we can define "censorship," we need to know what is defined as "free speech." What exactly does the First Amendment say about free speech? What are the boundaries for what people can and cannot do?



The Freedom to Speak — Without Obscenity or Inciting Violence

The First Amendment covers the freedom of speech, press, and religion. It's arguably one of the most fundamental amendments to American democracy, but its interpretations can vary significantly. This is how the full First Amendment reads:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Why is it that the Ku Klux Klan and Westboro Baptist Church have gotten into legal trouble for expressing their opinions? Their groups often promote acts of violence against another group, which violates the "peaceably" qualifier to the people's right to assemble.

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