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VIRGINIA BEACH, VA  
23462

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**Have you or a loved one become seriously ill from exposure to COVID-19 on the job? We are currently accepting COVID-19 cases of workers employed in certain occupations where currently proposed laws in both Virginia and North Carolina would classify COVID-19 illness as an occupational disease.**



# NEWSLETTER

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## WHAT GETS YOU THROUGH HARD TIMES?

### Joe Reflects on the Role of Faith

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about the fact that we're one year into this pandemic, and I've been noticing the ways it's affecting me and others. I'll be honest with you: Some days are really hard! I see that a lot of people around me feel scared; their worlds were turned upside down, and the things some people live for — like concerts or gathering with friends — haven't been available for quite some time now.

Even though there is more good news about the pandemic recently, there are also scary reports of new strains and issues with vaccine distribution. We aren't out of the woods yet. Though it can be difficult, I try not to get mired in this. That doesn't mean I totally ignore what's going on, but it does mean I turn to a few fundamental ideas to keep my mind and thoughts centered. I find that if I don't do that, it's all too easy for negativity to take hold.

If you're a longtime reader, you'll have heard a little of what I'm about to say before, and you've noticed some of this come up in my monthly "Soul Snacks." But I'm bringing it up again now because it truly does fortify me in difficult times. It's like getting back to basics, which is really apt right now because the pandemic has made many of us do just that.

These three back-to-basic ideas are outlined in a book called "The Universal Garden of Emuna" by Rabbi Shalom Arush. (Fun fact: My youngest daughter is named Emuna. It means "deep faith in God.")

The first principle is that everything comes from a higher power. The second principle is everything the higher power does is for our benefit. The final principle is everything that higher power does is for a specific purpose.

Let me explain a little more.

I'm a lifelong student of these principles, and while I don't profess to know everything, I have learned a lot about the nuance of these three things. The first one is just as it says, though this could look a lot of different ways. I don't expect everyone to believe in the same higher power I believe in. But the other two principles spring from this, so if you don't believe this one, it's not really possible to get on board with the other two. And that's fine if you don't. But believing in a higher power certainly helps me make sense of the world and the difficult things that sometimes happen.

The second one can get confusing for people. Do you mean to say that this pandemic is for our benefit?! Well, yeah. Here's the thing to remember: You may not always see that benefit right away. And while I believe everything that happens ultimately benefits us, that doesn't mean there isn't pain or heartache in the short term. With pain comes growth.

It's only natural to want to avoid pain, but I think sometimes the most challenging things that happen to us happen to get our attention. I hope you don't take this to mean



that I take any of the negative outcomes of this pandemic lightly. I certainly don't. But from a personal perspective, remembering that there are lessons to be learned and asking myself, "What benefit will this ultimately have for me?" really helps me when times get tough. Sometimes I don't see or understand the benefit until years later, so patience is key.

Finally, everything happens for a purpose. That is to say, God is trying to send us a message. We're still in the thick of the pandemic right now, and we'll have a lot of more insight with hindsight, but I do think one message of this pandemic might be that we all needed to take a step back from our material existence and get back in touch with ourselves and our families.

**Continued on Page 2 ...**

## Do Something Better in the Garden

### 3 Ways to Improve Your Harvest

There's something beautiful about cultivating your own harvest, but you can grow more than simple backyard vegetables. Help your garden "grow up" by trying something unique this spring.

#### Grow Fun Foods

We plant gardens for a purpose, so why not make it fun! Plant fresh basil, tomatoes, onions, peppers, oregano, and more to create a garden worthy of your next homemade pizza. All you will need to buy is the crust! Pumpkin plants can offer fresh gourds for any Halloween fanatic, while new species of fruits and vegetables can create an exciting home-cooking experience. Try the silver cucumber for a sweet taste or pineberries for a mix between strawberries and pineapples. You just might find a new flavor you love.



#### Go With the Flow

Creating a year-round garden that practically takes care of itself means using principles of permaculture, a philosophy of working with, rather than against, nature. Start by analyzing your space and yard. Determine your soil type and layer mulch or cover crops

to protect it. Then, begin planting the same way that's found in nature — trees grow at the top, shrubs and bushes are below, and other small plants and vines intermingle within. Choose crops that help each other grow (like corn, beans, and squash), and offer aid to your garden without digging up too much soil or disturbing its natural process. Permaculture gardening requires thoughtful planning, but once your crops are in place, nature will take its course.

#### Plant for Your Health

Mass production of your favorite fruits and vegetables reduces their key nutrients. Instead, choose fresh, home-grown varieties to yield greater health benefits. This is good news for those living with heart disease, joint disorders, or other chronic conditions. You can grow a garden chock full of nutrient-rich foods! Colorful fruits, root veggies, onions, and beans are great for joint health, while leafy greens can boost heart health. Grow pumpkins so you can harvest the seeds for better brain function, while berries can support your liver.

*Before you dig into these new gardening methods, consult with an expert at a nursery or greenhouse to get the best possible results.*

**If you belong to a union or other labor-related group and want to schedule my presentation at your group's speaking arrangement, you can do so by calling 888-667-8295. The presentation is free of charge, offers important information for taking appropriate action in Virginia workers' compensation cases, and everyone in attendance gets a free copy of my book, "10 Traps and Lies That Can Ruin Your Virginia Workers' Compensation Case." Education is the best way to protect yourself from making a mistake. Call now, before it's too late.**

# IMPROVE PATIENCE AND REDUCE STRESS



In this fast-paced world, it can be easy to grow impatient. Things as small as waiting for a slow website to load or waiting in a long line for coffee can sometimes leave people feeling frustrated and anxious. Practicing patience helps reduce stress and helps you realize it's okay if something takes a few extra minutes. If you find yourself feeling impatient, here are a few helpful tips.

## Breathe Deeply

When you feel stressed, your breathing gets shallow, which amplifies anxiety. Practicing deep breathing can help reduce stress and frustration by relaxing your body and mind. This is as simple as taking a few quiet moments to inhale through the nose, drawing your breath into the belly and lungs. Count to four to help you focus as you inhale. Then exhale slowly through your mouth. After a few repetitions, you will find that your mind and body feel calmer.

## Switch Focus

When agitated, it's common for our thoughts to center on the irritant. Though it may feel difficult to do when you're stressed out,

switching your focus will help you calm down and be more patient. For instance, if you find yourself growing more and more frustrated by hitting red lights as you drive, try focusing on green instead. Looking for passing cars, signs, trees, or anything that is green will help break that hyper-focus and shift it from negative to positive. Soon, those red lights will be less bothersome.

## Meditate

A great way to increase your patience is by meditating, a combination of the first two tips — focus and breathing. Meditation helps people constructively manage thoughts by allowing them to practice observing their thoughts from a neutral perspective. Regular meditation can reduce stress and improve patience throughout the day. Even just 5-10 minutes of daily practice can have a tremendous impact over time.

## Practice Acceptance

While the above tips can help you improve your patience, sometimes you must simply accept that some things can't be rushed. There will be times when we cannot control the outcome: A red light will change to green when it changes and no sooner. Learning to accept that can help people let go of their frustration, become more understanding of their situation, and greatly improve their patience.

# Laugh More, Age Less

## Why Laughter Is Good for You

As we age, we're told to wear sunscreen, eat more vegetables, take vitamins, and even walk more — all in hope that our internal clocks will slow down and we will age better. But something as simple as laughter could actually be one of the easiest ways to slow the ticking clock of aging.

Scientists have long known that laughter can be therapeutic and help us live longer. It has been shown to reduce wear and tear on our bodies and improve our relationships. A Norwegian study found that those who prioritized humor were more likely to live past 70 than those who didn't laugh often.

At a biological level, laughter can reduce tension in your muscles and activate a powerful stress-relief response from your brain by releasing dopamine. Just one chuckle may even improve your breathing and heart function! In fact, laughing can work wonders for the heart. One study showed that laughter therapy helped reduce the blood pressure and cholesterol levels of its participants. Their blood circulation improved, too. Studies have also found that regular laughter can help strengthen your immune system, and it has long-term benefits for those with respiratory conditions.

In addition to your body, laughter is also good for your social life. (And we don't mean that people will want to spend time with you if



you have all the good jokes!) Throughout history, laughter has been an evolutionary sign of understanding. When there are language barriers, laughing together can create camaraderie and a tighter bond between people of different cultures. The dopamine release that comes with laughter aids in stress relief and creates powerful memories that can improve your mood and strengthen friendships.

Of course, laughter has its downfalls, too. Laughing at someone else's expense is detrimental to their health and can harm your relationships. So, stick to light jokes and actively seek shows, cartoons, or people who make you laugh. You'll feel good, and your body will be pretty happy, too.

# Our Clients Say It Best

"I am so happy I chose Joe Miller and his awesome team to support me. They go above and beyond to ensure that you are getting the treatment you deserve in your time of need. In the end, I am one million percent satisfied with the service. Thanks again and a special shout out to Brittany, his paralegal. She is patient, understanding and gets the job done. He did a great job choosing her as his partner. Thanks again Joe Miller for representing me!"

## -Camie Cee



## ... continued from Cover

When life goes on day to day without disruption, as it most often does, we tend to reflect less and take more things for granted. This pandemic has shown us all just how much we take for granted. Going to school, gathering with loved ones, having a stable job — all these have been uprooted. And it's also helped so many people realize that at the end of the day, the most important thing to them is their family and their health. Those two simple things can really bring a lot of joy and gratitude when we truly stop to appreciate them.

If you'd like to learn more about this, I invite you to visit [YouTube.com/user/JoeMillerLaw/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/JoeMillerLaw/videos) and look for the "Soul Snacks" videos. Or take a look at me wearing tie-dye and jamming to the Grateful Dead. I hope at least one will make you feel a little bit better when times are tough.

*-Joseph Miller*

## Joe's Monthly 'SOUL SNACKS'

**"The only person  
you are destined to  
become is the person  
you decide to be."**

**-Daniel Agalar**



## Sheet Pan Chicken Dinner

### Ingredients

- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 large head of broccoli, cut into florets

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. On a large baking sheet, combine chicken, sweet potatoes, salt, and pepper. Drizzle with oil and toss to coat.
3. Bake for 15 minutes. In the meantime, make the sauce by combining the soy sauce, lemon juice, honey, and cayenne pepper.
4. Remove pan from oven and use a spatula to flip the chicken and potatoes, then add broccoli florets.
5. Drizzle sauce evenly over top and return to the oven to bake for an additional 15 minutes or until chicken has an internal temperature of 165 F and vegetables are fork-tender.