



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

www.MottleyLawFirm.com | (804) 823-2011

www.MottleyLawFirm.com | (804) 823-2011

The Mottley Law Firm

- 1 How Can Kevin Help You This Year?
- 2 How Habit Tracking and Daily Resolutions Could Transform Your Life
5 Strange New Year's Traditions From Around the World
- 3 Meet Our New Paralegal!
Korean Beef Rice Bowls
- 4 Give Yourself the Boost of Getting Outside

LET THAT FRESH AIR FUEL YOU

Hunkering down and waiting for the dark and chilly winter season to pass sounds pretty nice. But the reality is, if we deprive ourselves of time outside, we do ourselves a big disservice both mentally and physically. Staying indoors all day affects your energy and mood, which makes it hard to get anything done, so here are four easy tips to make it easier to get a little fresh air.

1. Make it a priority. Getting outside means making the conscious effort to do so. If you want to reap its benefits, you have to decide to make it a priority in your day-to-day schedule. If you make the act important to you, you have more motivation to actually do it.
2. Use mornings effectively. Waking up and getting the day started can be hard. But studies have shown that natural light helps decrease your melatonin

production, which means you feel ready to face the day sooner. So, set yourself a second alarm to head outside and take a quick walk around the block just after waking. Don't even wash your face or grab coffee. Just get out there.

3. Take your work outside. If you're working from home, take some work outdoors. Phone and virtual meetings are a great outdoor option, especially if you'll just be an active listener and aren't required to do any work simultaneously. Attach a note to your meeting reminders to get yourself set up outside five minutes before you start.
4. Create a schedule. It might feel strange to set reminders throughout the day to step outside, but you easily



get wrapped up in activities and overlook breaks, and these reminders are exactly what you need. Start with 10-minute blocks three times a day. If you stick to them, soon you won't need a schedule to get outside anymore.

Winter weather may be cold, but even when you're bundled up under a jacket and scarf, just 5-10 minutes outside can do wonders for your mood and energy for hours.

HOW CAN I HELP YOU THIS YEAR?

4 THINGS MY FIRM CAN TAKE OFF YOUR SHOULDERS IN 2021

Happy new year! It's officially 2021: the time for resolutions, popping champagne, and (hopefully) putting the coronavirus behind us. I'm sure you have a lot of big plans for this year, and I'm equally sure that they don't involve an accident or a legal fight. Why would they? We all plan for the best, not the worst! But sometimes the worst happens, and I think it's wise to be prepared when it does.

In the spirit of facing 2021 like an Eagle Scout, know that if the worst *does* happen, my team and I are here to help. Think of us as the utility knife in your 2021 backpack. We don't have the answers to every legal problem, but we do handle four types of legal cases, and I have friends who tackle the rest.

Here's a quick refresher on the four buckets our cases usually fall into.

1. BRAIN AND OTHER CATASTROPHIC INJURIES

Representing individuals who have suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI) or another serious injury due to some other person's or company's negligence makes up a substantial portion of our practice. Over the past several years, my team and our colleagues have produced over \$12.5 million in settlements and verdicts for our clients in TBI cases. We are actively taking referrals and co-counsel arrangements in this area.

2. ESTATE DISPUTES

We also handle any dispute involving an estate. These cases take a variety of forms. We've stepped in before when a trust was mishandled, a power of attorney was abused, or a will was questionable. In these cases, our initial job is to assess the situation and provide advice. Most of the time, no legal action has to be taken. But in some cases, it is necessary to pursue legal action in court to address the situation. We get a lot of calls from people who need help with drafting their estate plan documents. We don't do that sort of work, but we have many trusted estate planning attorneys in our network, and we refer people to them frequently.

3. BUSINESS DISPUTES

About 20% of our practice involves business disputes. This is a very general topic that covers a lot of different scenarios, from ordinary breaches of contract to more complicated tortious interference and



business conspiracy cases. Most of these cases are billed by the hour. But on occasion, if the fit is right, we'll take one of these cases on a contingency fee arrangement, meaning that we don't get paid unless we win or obtain a settlement.

4. APPEALS

Our associate, Ben Kyber, is actively taking referrals and co-counsel arrangements in appeals to the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Virginia Court of Appeals. This work is a real passion of Ben's, and his appellate-brief writing and issue-spotting skills are top-notch. I'm proud to have him on the team, and he'd love to help you in this area.

As I said, those are our specialties, but if you, a friend, or a family member ends up in a different kind of legal bind, I'd still love to be your first phone call. I have a huge funnel of contacts and referral sources throughout the legal industry, and I'm happy to put them all to work for you. My network stretches to every part of Virginia and from sea to shining sea. In fact, a good deal of my time is spent referring people to the right lawyer for their situations — and I'm happy to do it.

Ultimately, I hope that you never need to make that phone call. I want your 2021 to go smoothly, without hiccups or surprises. But if you need me, I'm always here and ready to help.

Kevin Mottley

HOW HABIT TRACKING AND DAILY RESOLUTIONS COULD TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE



Yearly resolutions are so last year ... if they're your only resolutions, that is.

Having long-term goals isn't a bad thing, but do you have a daily plan to reach them? The huge boost of motivation in January isn't always enough to sustain you all year long. That's why there are major benefits to starting new healthy habits, whether you increase your weekly exercise time, eat healthier foods, or work on getting better or more sleep.

Luckily, sticking with these habits might be as easy as making daily resolutions to complement your yearly goals.

BJ Fogg, a Stanford University professor and author of "Tiny Habits: The Small Changes That Change Everything," notes that tiny habits can make a new habit easy to implement into your daily ritual. For example, taking a short daily walk could lead to an exercise habit, or keeping an apple in your bag every day could encourage healthier snacking.

It's important that you stick with it because habits take a long time to create. One study published by the European Journal of Social Psychology asked people about a simple habit they wanted to form, like drinking water at lunch or taking a walk before dinner. They found that the average amount of time it took before the action became automatic was 66 days! Don't be too hard on yourself if you miss a day, but know that sticking to a new habit is serious work, so starting small might help you out.

Another important aspect of forming new daily habits is rewarding yourself. Bad habits, like smoking, have an inherent reward. However, healthy habits can have rewards too! Try consuming a bit of dark chocolate after a workout or treating yourself to a fresh beverage or relaxing to a podcast after tackling an important task. Find ways to reward yourself, and you'll be more likely to stick to your new habit.

Certain daily resolutions don't have to be related to exercise or diet to majorly improve your life. For example, having a gratitude journal might boost your long-term happiness by 10% and improve your blood pressure. Don't hesitate to improve your quality of life! Just start small, and you'll be amazed by how far you'll go.

WOULD YOU THROW YOUR FURNITURE OUT THE WINDOW FOR GOOD LUCK?



Look around the room you're sitting in. Which appliance or piece of furniture do you use the least? Now, how would you feel about throwing it out the window? According to Reader's Digest, this isn't just a hypothetical scenario — in South Africa, it's a real tradition for ringing in a lucky new year.

"Though this is not a widely adopted practice throughout the land, certain areas believe the physical act of tossing unused goods from their window sends a signal to the universe that you have let go of past grievances and are hopeful for the future," the magazine reports, adding that in some places, microwaves fall like confetti.

That might seem hard to believe, but from an outside perspective, *our* national tradition of gathering in crowds and screaming at a glittering object that descends from the sky might appear odd, too. And that's without mentioning the kissing at midnight!

South Africa and the U.S. aren't the only countries with wacky strategies for winning good fortune on Jan. 1. Here are just a few things people in other countries did this month (or will do soon) for luck in the new year, courtesy of Reader's Digest and U.S. News & World Report.

- **Spain:** In the last 12 seconds of 2020, thousands of Spaniards scrambled to eat a dozen grapes before the clock ran out. Apparently, the more you eat, the luckier you'll be.
- **Denmark:** On New Year's Eve in Denmark, Danes visited their friends not to celebrate, but to smash dishes against their doors. This tradition is meant to "ward off bad spirits and welcome happier vibes into the chaos."
- **Afghanistan:** The Persian new year, Nowruz, is celebrated in March, but it's just as full of lucky traditions. Afghans will wear green, cook green things, and try to do good deeds on the first day of the year to start it right.
- **Thailand:** Thai people also celebrate the new year in the spring, starting with the Songkran Festival in April. To mark the occasion, festival attendees toss buckets of water on each other to wash away bad luck.

Which tradition will you try next year? If you're bored with ball drops and Champagne, the world is your oyster.

MEET OUR NEW HIRE!

PARALEGAL DANIELLE ANGELL JOINS THE TEAM

What do physical therapists and lawyers have in common? To me, the answer is pretty obvious: We both want to help people. That's why I wasn't too surprised to learn that our new paralegal, Danielle Angell, originally wanted to be a PT.

"I started in physical therapy classes during my first year at Virginia Commonwealth University, but that changed very quickly," Danielle says, joking that biology and math aren't her strengths. "Within a month, I had changed my majors to Philosophy of Law and Political Science. That's what I'm really interested in. I actually read Supreme Court cases for fun!"

That's exactly the kind of paralegal I want on my team. Danielle's love for the law jumped out at me during the interview process, as did her experience working as a legal assistant at a large personal injury firm. When she started asking detailed questions about how we handle our cases, I knew she would be a good fit. It turns out that she felt the same way.



"I liked that The Mottley Law Firm was a really small firm. After coming from a big firm, I felt like I could learn a lot more here, and it would be more beneficial to me in the long run because I do plan to go to law school at some point in my life," Danielle says.

Now, a few months into the job, she takes care of all of the big and small tasks involved in preparing our cases for trial.

"I do a lot of reading medical records and creating timelines of the injuries that a client received, from the accident all the way through treatment," she explains. "I go through the important things that stand out to me so that I can see what the client is going through and make sure we take care of everything that needs to be taken care of."

I'm thrilled to have Danielle on the team, and I know her eye for detail will serve her well. If you happen to talk with her this month, be sure to ask about her Husky mix, Dallas. When she isn't working, she spends most of her time taking him on walks and car rides.

SUDOKU

				5	1		
			9		4		2
4		3				9	7
			2	4		6	
					5		
	4		3		6		2
		6		3	1		4
				6	7		
3	8		5		4		6

SOLUTION

3	8	1	5	2	4	7	6	9
2	9	4	8	6	7	3	1	5
5	7	6	9	3	1	2	4	8
8	4	7	3	5	6	9	2	1
6	3	2	1	7	9	5	8	4
9	1	5	2	4	8	6	7	3
4	5	3	6	1	2	8	9	7
1	6	8	7	9	3	4	5	2
7	2	9	4	8	5	1	3	6



KOREAN BEEF RICE BOWLS

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tsp light brown sugar
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 lb lean ground beef
- 1/4 cup yellow onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
- 2 tbsp gochujang sauce, or more if desired
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 small cucumber, sliced
- 1/2 tsp sesame seeds, plus more for topping
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, combine soy sauce, 2 tbsp water, brown sugar, sesame oil, and red pepper flakes.
2. Spray a deep, nonstick skillet with cooking oil and place over high heat. Add the ground beef and cook until browned. Break up the meat with a wooden spoon as it cooks.
3. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger to the meat and cook for 1 minute.
4. Pour sauce over the beef, then cover and simmer on low heat for 10 minutes.
5. Divide rice evenly into four serving bowls. Top each with scant 2/3 cup beef, cucumber slices, sesame seeds, scallions, and gochujang, to taste.

Inspired by [SkinnyTaste.com](https://www.skinnytaste.com)