



3 Lessons From 3 Incredible Kids And a Bonus Lesson for New Parents

We've all been living with the effects of the pandemic for about a year now. While it's been hard on different people in different ways, one group we don't always acknowledge as much as we should for their resilience in dealing with it is our kids. March 18 is Absolutely Incredible Kid Day, so it's the perfect time to reflect on the incredible little ones (or not-so-little ones!) in your life.

Being a parent has changed my life in many meaningful ways, but for this month's article, I've boiled the lessons of parenthood down to just three (plus a bonus for new moms and dads).

1. Don't sweat the small stuff ... really.

Once kids enter your household, it's pretty much a guarantee that things are going to get broken and feelings are going to be hurt. We had a cat before my daughter came along in 2010, so we were used to things getting broken, at least somewhat, but the cat never made anyone cry from being left out or not sharing!

With three kids in the house, these small occurrences happen regularly, but the fact is that when something breaks, it can be repaired or replaced. If feelings are hurt, we can say sorry and patch things up.

2. Protect family time by not over-scheduling.

I have to admit that this lesson has become clear to me most especially in the last year while dealing with COVID-19-related closures and cancellations, including school, sports, and other extracurriculars. Before the pandemic, our family's weekends were absolutely packed. It was one activity after another. But in the last year, I've seen that our kids don't have to participate in everything!

Not only does having fewer activities on the calendar make for much calmer weekends for our family, but it also means we've been able to zero in on which activities benefit each of our kids the most. For our daughter, that's gymnastics and dance, and for the boys, it's soccer and basketball. Slower weekends at home also mean I can take an hour each Sunday morning to plan my week. This really helps me prioritize family time.

3. Little things are often the most memorable.

It's tempting to think that it takes something like a big trip to Disneyland to create great lasting memories, but I've found that's not the case. We have a Sunday morning ritual at our house of making waffles. All three of my kids love it, and now, every week, there's a race to the waffle maker to see who gets to help me. It's



such a simple thing in the end, but I cherish it and know we will have fond memories of it for years to come.

I learn from my kids every day. When my daughter was born, I almost immediately made a huge change in my work life so I could find more balance and time with her. Less than a year after her birth, I opened my own firm. She's as observant as a newspaper reporter would be, so we think of her as our little anthropologist. And she's a great big sister to the boys.

Our older son is a true middle child. He's great at sports and has an incredible mind for problem-solving. I wouldn't be surprised if he becomes an engineer one day. And last but not least, our youngest son is the family comedian. Sometimes I wonder if he's secretly studying late-night shows; his comedic timing is that good! When we're eating dinner together, he often has us cracking up over his one-liners.

I don't think I'll ever stop learning from each of them or their sibling dynamics. It truly is incredible.

Before I wrap up, here's the bonus I have for new parents: Designate a shirt or two as your drool duds. It's been several years since I regularly burped a baby on my shoulder, but when you have newborns around, it's crucial to have some clothing that can be spit up on or drooled upon freely ... because that's going to be happening constantly!

Take some time this month to reflect on any special young people in your life and be sure to tell them just what it is that makes them incredible.

- Andrew M. Ayers

An Easy Way to Drink More Water AND AVOID DEHYDRATION



Dehydration is a big problem. Many people don't drink enough water each day — some reports show that 75% of adults in the United States don't drink enough water, and over a quarter are dehydrated. Though those statistics aren't widely agreed upon, it's obvious that most people need more fluids.

Even if it feels like you're drinking a lot of water, remember that water leaves your body every time you sweat, go to the bathroom, and even breathe. Not keeping up with proper water intake can lead to dehydration. Even mild dehydration can cause health problems and impact your brain, heart, skin, and other organs, which can lead to headaches, confusion, fatigue, and gastrointestinal distress.

We all know the solution to dehydration is to drink more water, but exactly how much water do we need each day? The amount will differ depending on the person, but one simple way to approximate your necessary daily intake is by dividing your body weight in half and drinking that much water (in fluid ounces) each day. For example, if you weigh 175 pounds, you'd need to drink 87.5 fluid ounces — over half a gallon — of water per day.

That might seem like a lot of liquid, but you can easily drink it without trying too hard. All you have to do is be proactive: Start keeping water any place you frequent during the day. Keep a bottle in your car, at your desk, by your favorite chair, near your workout equipment, etc. Having water easily available in the places you spend the most time each day helps increase your chances of actually drinking it.

An alternative approach is to purchase a giant jug that can hold all the water you need to drink in a day. Seeing it all in one place might be intimidating at first, but this method makes things very simple. Keep the jug close, and your water intake will likely increase without too much additional effort. And if you're just not motivated to drink plain water, you can always add sugar-free flavoring or lemon to make it more enticing.

3 Ways to Help Your Legal Case Move Faster (And 3 Ways to Mess It Up)

Every legal case proceeds at its own pace. The Myra Clark Gaines litigation — a fight over an inheritance that began in 1834 — famously lasted 55 years. Even simple car accident cases often take more than a year to resolve. Frustration during the legal process is normal, but if you're feeling it, there are a few things you can do to help your lawyers move things along:

- Respond to communication quickly.
- Share all of the details about your case.
- Keep your emotions in check.

This might seem like common sense, but you'd be surprised by how quickly ignoring these three items can send your case off the rails.

Be Quick to Click

When your attorney emails or calls you, it's vital to answer as soon as you can. Some steps of the legal process are time-

sensitive, and if you ignore your attorney or wait hours or days before responding to them, you could miss a crucial window. Your lawyer might even walk away from your case, like the attorney in the 2002 *Garden v. Garden* case who withdrew when his client stopped responding. That said, it's vital not to overcommunicate with your lawyer either. Always respond when they reach out, but don't flood their inbox with emails or load their voicemail with messages. Clogging their information channels will just slow down their work, and it might end up costing you. Your attorney's billable hours may include time taken to respond to emails.

Don't Hide the Details

Some facts of your case could be embarrassing or hard to talk about, but the best way to keep things moving is to share everything with your lawyer upfront. This will save time because your lawyer won't have

to continue prodding you for information, and it could also save your case! Your lawyer won't be able to defend you well unless they have all of the relevant information. Plus, if opposing counsel discovers something you've been hiding, your case may fall apart.

Tamp Down Your Temper

Court cases can get emotional, especially if something like child custody is at stake. Even so, if you have to appear in court it's vital you keep your emotions in check and listen to your attorney's advice about what to say and do. If you lose your temper or disrupt the court process, the judge could hold you in contempt of court — potentially triggering a fine or even jail time. This will certainly derail your case's timeline. For proof, consider a defendant in a burglary case, Manson Bryant, who was sentenced to 22 years in prison. When he heard the verdict, Bryant started shouting at the judge — who added six more years to his sentence on the spot.

TAKE A BREAK



Inspired by EatingWell.com

Ingredients

- 1 lb prepared whole-wheat pizza dough, divided into 6 equal portions
- 12 oz asparagus spears, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup shredded smoked mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup scallions, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp walnuts, toasted and chopped
- 1 sprig of fresh mint leaves, torn
- Zest of 1 orange

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 500 F and ensure there are two racks in your oven.
2. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper, stretch each piece of dough into a 7-by-3-inch oval and arrange evenly on the pan.
3. On a second baking sheet, toss asparagus with oil and 1/4 tsp salt.
4. Place dough on top rack and asparagus on bottom and bake for 3 minutes.
5. Remove both trays from the oven, sprinkle cheese over the dough, then top with asparagus and scallions.
6. Return pizzettes to oven and bake until the crusts' edges are golden, about 8–10 minutes.
7. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with walnuts, mint, and orange zest before serving.

A LITTLE DISTRACTION

THIS ONE SMALL THING IS KILLING YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

Distractions in your workplace destroy your productivity, regardless of where you actually work. But here's the kicker: Some distractions don't always register as distractions because they're often minor, like a knock at the door or a conversation you can hear from two cubicles over. However, even when a distraction doesn't feel like a distraction, it still kills your productivity.

But one distraction in particular can absolutely ruin productivity. It isn't as obvious as an unexpected phone call or a meeting that could have been an email. It's a small, normal part of our everyday lives: the notification.

We get notifications on our phones, tablets, laptops, desktops, and even our smartwatches. Notifications are everywhere, and we're conditioned to accept them.

Take email, for example. You're likely in the habit of checking email periodically — or whenever you get a notification. It can feel natural to quickly check your email and then get back to what you were doing. Except that never happens.

When an email, text, or other random notification distracts you, it *completely* diverts attention away from what you were doing. If it's spam, you may delete the email. Or, if you need to respond, it might take a few minutes or more. You may spend anywhere between 20 seconds to 20 minutes on any given email.

However, this isn't where time is lost. If you're responding to a customer email, for instance, that *is* part of your productivity. The time is lost when you attempt to get back to what you were doing before checking your notifications.

A University of California, Irvine study found that it takes an average of 23 minutes to get back to your task after every distraction, not just email. Over the course of a day, that adds up to a significant amount of wasted time.



How do you overcome this? Your best bet is to turn off notifications. Most devices let you customize your notifications so you can turn them off during working hours. Here's another quick tip: Set aside time during the day to check emails, texts, and other messages. You will significantly reduce the amount of time spent trying to refocus on the important tasks at hand.



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Over Meatball Merch

The Meatball Shop Sued Snooki! (And Another 'Jersey Shore' Star, Too)

Reality TV stars Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi and Deena Cortese are gearing up for a court battle. But this isn't a showdown with another celebrity: It's a fight to the death over merchandise with ... a New York City-based meatball restaurant!

This case sounds laughable, but there's some real "meat" to dig into. The controversy started when the celebrity duo — known as "The Meatballs" since their time together on "Jersey Shore" — launched a clothing brand/online store called The Meatball Shop late last year.

The brand sells meatball-themed T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats with slogans like "Team Meatball Forever" and "Meatball Squad." Over the holidays, they even offered a sweater with a checklist reading, "Pour wine, wrap gifts, decorate, be a meatball." All of this merchandise plays off the pair's "Jersey Shore" nickname, which Polizzi and Cortese earned because, as Food & Wine puts it, "The party girls are both very tan, curvy, and short."

Even with this claim to the moniker, the legality of the celebrities' clothing line has some competition from, well, places that sell

actual meatballs.

According to Page Six, the New York City-based restaurant The Meatball Shop sued Polizzi and Cortese in December of 2020,

claiming their clothing infringes on its trademark. As of writing this, a judge is considering The Meatball Shop's request to shut Polizzi and Cortese's operation down.

To add even more meat to the argument, it was the owners of The Meatball Shop restaurant (Daniel Holzman and Michael Chernow) who first taught Polizzi and Cortese to make edible meatballs in 2017. The lesson was documented in a photo shoot with "In Touch." Does it get more ironic than that?

If you want to keep up with the drama, check [PageSix.com](#), and if this article made you crave meatballs, don't worry — we've got you covered. Visit [Epicurious.com](#) and search "classic beef meatballs" for a recipe that will knock your socks off.

