



The Gift of Encouragement

YOUR TOOL TO RISE ABOVE ANY CHALLENGE

We all face moments in our lives when a task seems impossible. No matter how much we prepare or tell ourselves we can do it, the task doesn't appear any more feasible. But if someone tells us we can do anything, we feel more confident. That's the power of encouragement. Regardless of the situation or person, encouragement is a driving force behind many of our actions. On September 12, we can lift others when we recognize the National Day of Encouragement.

Before I started my law firm in 2011, I had no idea what path to take next. I contemplated a few different options, but I could do nothing to convince myself one direction was better. At one point, I met up with several former clients for lunch, and we started to discuss my future. Many questioned why I wouldn't just start my own firm. Starting a firm was always in my mind, but it wasn't until my former clients encouraged me that I knew it was the best route for me and my future.

Encouragement from others has helped me countless times, and I always try to encourage others. Even if I cannot motivate them



personally, I try my best to connect people with others who will be a great source of support. This is something I do regularly.

As a parent, I've had to learn how important encouragement is for child development. Kids will always have ups and downs, but it's our job to help them keep their heads up so they can keep moving forward. Fortunately, my kids had a teacher who was a big proponent of the growth mindset. Now, whenever the kids come home from school upset about something, we can sit down with them and go over everything that happened, which allows them to learn from it so they can figure out how to do things better in the future.

My son recently had a soccer tournament, and his team did really well. They made it all the way to the finals but lost in the final game. Of course, the kids were upset, but it was only because they couldn't recognize the amazing accomplishment of getting to the finals. I pulled my son aside and reminded him he was in the goal during the semifinal, where he made two clutch saves during a penalty shootout that helped send the team to the finals. The day was not lost, and they had plenty to be proud of. Encouraging him helped put things in perspective.

I heard some helpful advice earlier this summer about how to encourage others. When you talk to people, don't use the word "should." Don't tell people what they should or should not do. Don't tell them what to do next or that they can't do something. Encourage them to reach for the stars, and if needed, help them plan the next steps. The other encouragement advice I would give is to surround yourself with positive people. You want people in your corner who will stand by you through thick and thin, allowing you to accomplish anything.

With enough encouragement and support, we can accomplish anything. Just make sure to reciprocate the encouragement so others feel as supported as you do!

- Andrew M. Ayers

Silence Is Golden:

A Guide to Understanding the Fifth Amendment



Almost everyone knows what it means to “plead the Fifth.” We hear it often in the news, crime TV series, and all of the best mobster movies. When you plead the Fifth, you’re exercising your right granted by the Fifth Amendment to remain silent and not incriminate yourself. While this is your constitutional right, there are actually times when you are obligated to speak. Before you zip your mouth shut, you’ll need to learn when you should and shouldn’t plead the Fifth.

What do you need to share with authorities?

While you have the right to remain silent, there are a few questions you are legally required to answer. In most states, it’s the law that when a cop pulls you over and asks you to identify yourself, you have to answer. Even if the law doesn’t apply to the state you live in, it’s safe to simply provide your name, address, and date of birth.

Another piece of information required when authorities pull you over is your license and registration. If you were pulled over by officers for a valid reason, you have to hand over your documents to them. Other than these two scenarios, you don’t have to answer any further questions. Anything you say to the authorities can be used against you, and the last thing you need is for a few poorly thought-out answers to land you in court.

When is it best to stay silent?

Because your words can be used against you, it’s in your best interest to stay silent until you are able to speak to your attorney. Once you have them by your side, they can speak for you and ensure that whatever they say protects you from incrimination. This



is part of your Sixth Amendment right: You can remain silent and refuse to give any statements until you receive counsel.

Will pleading the Fifth make you look guilty?

Some people worry that pleading the Fifth will make the police and others who may hear about their case believe that they are guilty and have something to hide. This conception likely comes from the media, which tends to only mention the Fifth Amendment in extreme cases.



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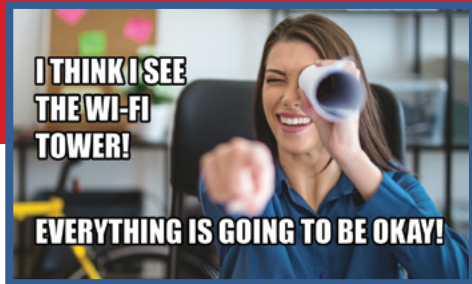
For example, you might remember reading about Michael and Tareq Salahi, a couple who snuck past the United States Secret Service and crashed a state dinner at the White House in late 2009. They famously plead the Fifth more than 30 times during questioning by a House committee. At the time, ABC News wrote an unflattering article on the topic called “White House Crashers Remain Silent.”

Though stories like the Salahi’s may make it seem otherwise, pleading the Fifth is *not* an admission of guilt. While many may think those who invoke this right are guilty, in legal matters, they can’t be assumed guilty just because they refuse to answer.

There have been countless cases where innocent people implicated themselves in an investigation simply because they said the wrong thing or didn’t choose their words wisely enough. No matter how many “Law & Order” episodes you’ve seen, you’re not a legal expert, and you should always err on the side of caution.

The best way to remain innocent is to keep your rambles to yourself and leave it to your attorney to speak on your behalf. Silence is golden!

TAKE A *BREAK*



SPICED PECAN PIE BARS

Inspired by SouthernLiving.com



Ingredients

Crust

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 3 cups chopped pecans

Filling

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup corn syrup

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Use baking spray to grease a 13x9-inch pan before lining with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, blend crust ingredients until a crumble forms. Press mixture into pan. Bake until light golden brown, about 20 minutes (crust will have cracks).
3. In a bowl, whisk all filling ingredients (except pecans) together until smooth. Stir in pecans and pour over crust. Bake until set, around 30 minutes, then let cool completely in pan.

THE UNTOLD STORY OF JOAN OF ARC

A Journey of Bravery and Betrayal

Born around 1412 in Domrémy, a village in northeastern France, Jeanne d'Arc was raised by her farmer father and devout Catholic mother. During this time, England had control over much of northern France, and she witnessed countless families forced out of their homes due to British invasions.

At 13, she began to hear voices she believed were sent from God. These voices told her that she would be the one to remove the British from France, return the crown to Prince Charles of Valois, and save her people from continual war. She took a vow of chastity and trekked across dangerous British territory at the age of 17 to reach the prince's palace in Chinon.

Once she arrived, she spoke of her destiny and how she could guarantee the prince his crown and France's success. She asked for a small army to fight in the conquered Orléans. While their conversation is unknown, Charles insists she said words only a messenger of God would know. With that confirmation, he agreed, and she was off to battle.

Fearless atop a white horse in men's armor and short hair, not only did her army win the battle, but she made a name for herself as the prophesied virgin who would finally save France. Not even an arrow to the neck could stop her mid-battle. She and her army escorted Charles to his coronation, which took place in July 1429, and named him king.

Sadly, in 1430, British forces captured Joan and charged her with witchcraft, heresy, cross-dressing, and more. To create distance between himself and the accused heretic, King Charles made no attempts to rescue her or negotiate her release. She was on her own.

After a year of imprisonment, a 19-year-old Jeanne d'Arc was burned at the stake. Celebrated worldwide for her courage and passion, Joan of Arc is now the patron saint of France, the country she died for.





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HILARIOUS REAL-LIFE CRIMES

They Seem Too Dumb to Be True!

Today, we have tons of podcasts, YouTube videos, TikToks, and documentaries about true crime. It seems like we can't get enough of learning about the person behind heinous crimes and their motives. But what about the crimes you can't help but laugh at because they're almost too funny to be true?

Here are two crimes you won't believe happened because of how silly and, for the lack of a better term, dumb they are!

Don't forget to log out of Facebook!

Nicholas Wig broke into James Wood's house one night and stole his credit cards, cash, watches, and more. However, the 26-year-old thief left his Nike shoes, jeans, and a belt at the scene of the crime ... but that's not all.

When James got home, he was stunned to see his house had been broken into. But after realizing the thief had accessed Facebook on his computer, he decided to post on Nicholas' account that he (Nicholas) had broken into his (James') home. James also shared his phone number in case anyone had any additional information.

Nicholas contacted James over text, and the two agreed to meet in person. The thief thought if he went to James' home and returned

the stolen items, everything would be fine — but that's not how things played out. As soon as James spotted Nicholas walking toward his home, he called the police. When law enforcement arrived, they arrested the thief on the spot.

Monopoly money doesn't work in the real world.

Michael Fuller stopped by Walmart to purchase a vacuum cleaner and microwave for \$476. But instead of paying with real money, he decided to pay using a million-dollar note from the game Monopoly. The gentleman then demanded that he receive \$999,524 from the cashier since he would need cash back for his "purchases." The cashier called the police, and Michael was charged with attempting to obtain property by false pretenses.

Can you believe these hilarious crimes?! Do you know of any we should highlight next time? We would love to hear from you!

