



## A Dad's Rules for the Real World

### TEACHING KIDS TO CHOOSE WORK WISELY

The fourth Thursday in April is Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, a time to encourage children to learn about the world of work. Now that my three kids have reached ages when having a career and making money are starting to interest them, I've been finding ways to talk with them about making wise decisions in that arena.

My oldest will be turning 16 soon, and she's thinking about becoming a librarian. Books have always been a valued part of our family life. My mother was a librarian, and our daughter has a talent for organization that would serve her well. She's also thinking about summer work and has decided so far what she *doesn't* want: a fast-food job.

To give her a taste of office work, I recently held my own Take Your Daughter to Work Day. Sitting across the desk from me at my office, she created a spreadsheet to organize my inventory of 234 books from past book giveaways and books I keep on hand for clients. She also organized my desk drawers, and did such a good job that I bought some desk-drawer dividers so she could finish the job.

When you start conversations with your kids about the world of work, you never know where they're going to go. Every now and then, you end up in deep water. It's interesting how kids have their own stories about why their parents do what they do. During a recent conversation in the car, my 13-year-old son commented that my business took off financially after his younger brother was born; he had concluded that the two events must have been related. I told him no, that having more kids didn't necessarily *cause* me to make more money.

I enjoyed giving him the straight story, that the birth of his sister actually brought important values front and center for me. Back then, I worked for a solo practitioner who imposed strict workplace rules on me, but not on others in the office. I had an agreement with the firm that I could leave the office in time to pick up my daughter at daycare. But whenever I did so, I would hear obnoxious comments about my "leaving early." As tensions mounted, I decided that working there for the rest of my career would be a terrible choice.



The decision I made then, to start my own business, has had a major impact on our family. And I was surprised by the support I received from others. Shortly before our first son was born, I had a court appearance coming up, and I told the judge I needed an adjournment because my wife was due to give birth. The attorney on the other side was kicking and screaming, "This has to happen now! We can't adjourn now!" The judge really laid into him, saying, "I'm not going to make Mr. Ayers miss spending time with his newborn!" As the judge set a date convenient for me, I realized not everybody was like my old boss. As a result, I could spend more time with my kids as newborns.

As I told my son, my previous workplace just didn't align with my most important priorities. Starting your own business is challenging, but it gives you the flexibility to set your own rules and manage your time as you see fit.

Whatever paths my kids choose, I hope they take away one important principle: They need to figure out their priorities and design their lives around them, rather than having to live by somebody else's rules. If they stick to that principle, I hope they'll have a chance to enjoy some of the same freedoms that have been so important to me.

- Andrew M. Ayers

# PROBLEM-SOLVING AT 200,000 MILES

## TEAMWORK LESSONS FROM APOLLO 13

When Apollo 13 launched in April 1970, everyone expected it to be a routine lunar mission. Instead, an oxygen tank explosion transformed it into one of the most dramatic survival stories in history. Faced with life-threatening failure hundreds of thousands of miles from Earth, astronauts and engineers demonstrated how teamwork under pressure can turn near-disaster into success.

### Staying Calm When Everything Goes Wrong

One of the most powerful lessons from Apollo 13 is the importance of remaining calm. When the explosion occurred, panic would have been understandable, but it never took over. Instead, astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert, and Fred Haise, along with Mission Control in Houston, focused on understanding the situation. This emotional control allowed them to think clearly and make rational decisions despite overwhelming stakes.

### Defining the Real Problem

Under pressure, teams often rush to solutions before fully understanding the issue. Apollo 13 avoided that trap. Engineers worked methodically to identify which systems had failed and which were still usable. The mission's focus shifted from landing on the moon to safely bringing the crew home, demonstrating that successful teamwork requires adaptability and a willingness to adjust to changing circumstances.

### Problem-Solving With Limited Resources

The most famous example of teamwork during Apollo 13 was the improvised carbon dioxide filter. Rising CO2 levels threatened the astronauts' lives, and the lunar module's filters were incompatible with those in the command module. Engineers on Earth designed a solution using only materials already on board and clearly communicated how to assemble it. This moment highlights how collaboration and creativity thrive when people share knowledge and trust one another.



### Communicating as a Lifeline

Clear communication was essential throughout the mission. Instructions had to be precise, repeatable, and easy to follow. Miscommunication could have been fatal. The success of Apollo 13 shows that under pressure, effective teams prioritize clarity over speed and ensure everyone understands their role.

### Building Teamwork Without Ego

No single person "saved" Apollo 13. Thousands of engineers, technicians, and astronauts worked together, checking egos at the door. Their shared commitment to a single goal, bringing the crew home alive, demonstrates that true teamwork depends on trust, humility, and cooperation.

In the end, Apollo 13 earned the title "a successful failure," reminding us that teamwork under pressure doesn't involve avoiding problems; we must rise to meet them!

# 'THAT'S NOT A REAL PERSON'

## Judges Halt AI-Generated Lawyer in New York Appeals Court

In a moment that felt plucked straight from a sci-fi courtroom drama, a New York appeals court was taken by surprise when an artificial intelligence (AI)-generated avatar tried to argue a legal case. The judges weren't amused. What was meant to be a clever workaround quickly turned into an uncomfortable intersection of future tech and age-old court protocol.

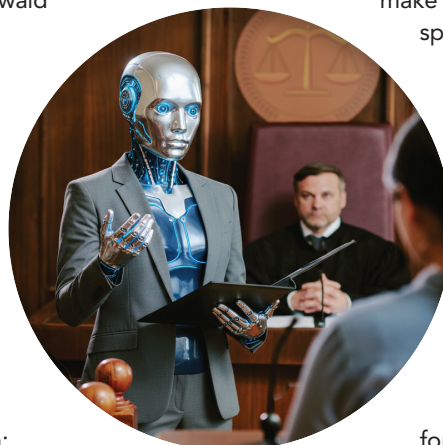
On March 26, 2025, 74-year-old plaintiff Jerome Dewald showed up at the New York State Supreme Court Appellate Division for an employment dispute hearing. Instead of speaking for himself or having a lawyer at his side, Dewald played a prerecorded video, not of him, but of a lifelike digital avatar that began delivering his legal argument with polished confidence. The avatar, which looked like a well-dressed young man, began addressing the panel: "May it please the court ..." before proceedings came to a halt.

The justices were visibly taken aback. Justice Sallie Manzanet-Daniels paused the presentation almost immediately and asked a shocking question: "Is that counsel for the case?" Dewald's matter-of-fact

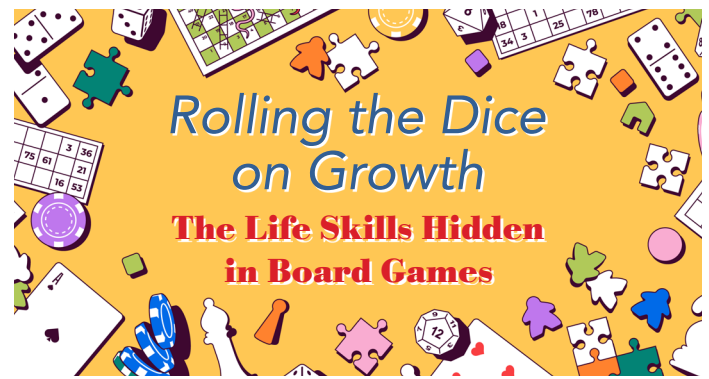
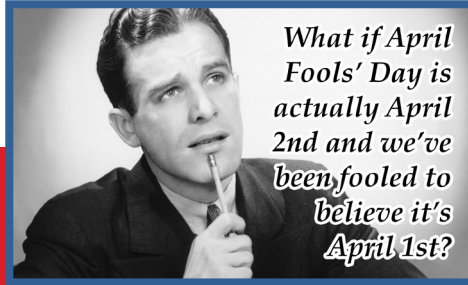
reply, "I generated that. That's not a real person," prompted an immediate rebuke. The judge ordered the video stopped and made it clear she felt misled. "It would have been nice to know that when you made your application," she said, underlining that courts operate on transparency and direct human responsibility.

Dewald later explained he wasn't trying to game the system or make a viral spectacle. He said he struggles with public speaking and thought a digital delivery might help him make his case more clearly. But judges made it clear that AI, at least for now, isn't a substitute for a licensed attorney arguing in real time, nor a replacement for the human interaction that law depends on.

The incident sparked an online debate, ranging from amusement at the oddly comic visuals to serious questions about where the legal system draws the line between innovation and impropriety. One thing is certain: This awkward debut points to the urgent need for clear rules on AI in courtrooms as technology continues its relentless march forward.



# TAKE A *BREAK*



Who doesn't love a good board game?!

At first glance, board games seem like easy entertainment for a rainy afternoon or an after-dinner family activity. Looking deeper, you'll find that board games can build essential life skills in children. Behind every roll of the dice or strategic move is an opportunity for learning, growth, and connection. Best of all, kids don't even realize they're learning because they're too busy having fun.

### **Builds Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills**

Board games naturally bring people together, creating a shared space for conversation and collaboration. Kids learn how to vocalize their ideas, listen to others, and follow group rules. Turn-taking teaches patience, while cooperative or competitive play helps children understand teamwork, fairness, and respect. These social interactions build confidence and prepare kids for positive relationships both inside and outside the classroom.

### **Develops Emotional Resilience**

Winning feels great, but losing can be just as valuable. Board games teach children how to manage disappointment, frustration, and excitement in healthy ways. Over time, kids learn that setbacks are temporary and that effort matters more than the outcome. This emotional resilience helps them handle challenges with a calmer, more balanced mindset.

### **Supports Academic Skills**

Many board games quietly reinforce academic concepts. Word-based games boost vocabulary and spelling, while number-driven games strengthen math skills and logical reasoning. Because learning is tied to play, kids stay engaged and motivated, often practicing skills longer than they would with traditional worksheets.

### **Encourages Patience, Focus, and Self-Control**

Waiting for a turn, following rules, and staying focused through a full game all help children develop self-control and attention skills. These abilities are essential for classroom learning, group activities, and everyday responsibilities.

### **Creates Meaningful Connections**

Perhaps the greatest lesson board games teach is the value of connection. They create moments of laughter, teamwork, and shared memories. In a world filled with screens, board games offer kids a chance to slow down, connect face-to-face, and grow. Nothing beats that!

## *CHEESY ASPARAGUS ORZOTTO*



### **Ingredients**

- 2 tbsp plus 1/4 cup olive oil, divided
- 1 bunch of asparagus, trimmed and peeled
- 1 leek, halved and sliced
- 1 1/2 cup orzo
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 3 cups broth
- 1/2 tsp salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 oz Parmesan, grated
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1/4 cup basil leaves

### **Directions**

1. In a pot over medium-high heat, heat 2 tbsp oil. Add asparagus, cover, and cook 4 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board to cool, then cut into 1-inch pieces.
2. Heat remaining oil. Add leeks, season with salt, and cook 3 minutes.
3. Stir in orzo and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes.
4. Add wine and cook 2–3 minutes.
5. Stir in broth, 1/2 tsp salt, and pepper, then simmer, covered, on low heat for 12–15 minutes.
6. Add peas to orzo, cover, and cook 2 minutes.
7. Remove from heat, add Parmesan, cream, and butter, and stir until butter melts. Stir in asparagus and basil.

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## RADIANCE AND RESILIENCE

### *The Sun’s Motivating Effect on Mood*



If you’re feeling more mentally clear and optimistic this month than you have at previous times so far this year, the sun above you may have a lot to do with it.

Scientists have long acknowledged the connection between natural light and positive mental health. However, studies have only recently uncovered the exact extent of this partnership’s impact on our overall well-being. Landmark research published in 2023 examined the effects of low light on 787 operating-room nurses in Shandong, China, who typically worked lengthy shifts in high-stress environments without regular access to natural light. The results showed an association between lower sunlight exposure and poorer self-reported mental health.

Here are five other interesting facts and findings about sunlight exposure and our health:

- Research shows that light therapy may provide benefits to individuals experiencing nonseasonal depression or seasonal affective disorder (SAD).
- A study of hospitalized patients with mental health disorders found that those who had stayed in a room with better sunlight generally experienced shorter hospital stays.
- A study in Taiwan suggested that moderate levels of ultraviolet sun rays may have contributed to lower symptoms of depression.
- Additional research suggests that rates of self-reported suicidal thoughts were lower in areas where residents experienced higher and longer sunlight exposure.
- Sunlight positively affects our circadian rhythms, helping reduce fatigue during time changes.

The final takeaway? If you’re feeling down, spend time in the sun. Depending on your particular medical circumstances, you may be surprised by how readily nature provides us with ways to heal our minds.