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Less Is More

THE SIMPLEST LEGAL ANSWER IS OFTEN THE BEST

Some people in my profession have a habit of using excessive legal jargon. As the humorist Will Rogers said, "The minute you read something you can't understand, you can be sure it was written by a lawyer."

It's a common stereotype about lawyers, and it tends to make clients a little nervous. It's also one of the reasons I try *not* to talk like a lawyer. Rather than expounding on the intricacies of the law when meeting new clients, I focus right away on *the client's* needs, saying, "Let's talk 'big picture.' Tell me what your goals are, and we can figure out a way to make it happen."

Walking side-by-side with my clients to find the simplest path to a solution is my goal in all aspects of my practice. In recognition of National Simplicity Day on July 12, it's worth noting why I think that's so important.

Approaching First Encounters

Meeting with a lawyer for the first time isn't most people's idea of a good time. Many are facing a major undertaking or a dispute in their lives or businesses. Perhaps they're starting a new business, or expanding an existing one. Or maybe they need help putting their affairs in order, or managing possible future health risks.

Legal jargon can just make things harder. One of my clients, a medical professional, said reading legal documents gave her empathy for people who aren't schooled in medicine, trying to grasp all the medical-speak doctors use. If you're not a doctor, you don't understand the medical terms. And if you're not a lawyer, you don't understand the legal jargon either!

Keeping It Simple

A lot of new online technology has shiny bells and whistles that purport to make legal processes easier, but they actually have the opposite effect. A growing number of websites offer will and trust forms, but if people don't need or understand the complexity built into these products, they create further hassles for their family when it comes time to use the document. It may be counterintuitive, but it's often simpler to just work with a lawyer.



When I help clients create health care directives for end-of-life care, my goal is to help them speak in their own voice. I give them a questionnaire about their preferences if they were to become incapacitated, and some clients give long, detailed answers, adding color and context. But others state simply, "I want to be cremated," or delegate all decision-making to a spouse or relative. Most important to me is that each client has an opportunity to express their wishes as they see fit.

In business transactions, too, I default to a brief, straightforward form whenever possible. One online provider of DIY legal documents tends to give seekers of a business contract an 80-page opus, including 30 pages they don't need. I help clients pare those down to the essential provisions.

Easing Fears

For me, earning my clients' trust means listening to their fears, walking alongside them through stressful times, and doing everything I can to lay their worries to rest.

Some life transitions are inherently stressful. Estate planning often requires clients to face fears about the future. And if you have a family member on their deathbed or you need help with an emergency probate proceeding, you're naturally going to feel anxious. My goal in these situations is to acknowledge that anxiety, then help you get where you need to be to regain some sense of control. I often hear from clients that my approach eases their anxieties.

- Andrew M. Ayers

When Good Enough Is Better

THE MYTH OF PERFECT PARENTING

Most parents have found themselves in a situation with their kids where they stop and think, “I’m messing this up.”

It usually happens in the middle of an ordinary day. You get short with your child when you meant to be patient, or you realize too late that they were trying to tell you something while you were only half listening. Maybe you were distracted or tired, maybe your mind was already on the next thing.

In those moments, it can feel like good parenting depends on getting everything right all the time. It doesn’t. Kids tend to benefit much more from a parent who is emotionally available and engaged than from one who is so concerned with getting everything right that they neglect the relationship itself. That lines up with the older idea of “good enough parenting,” a research-backed approach that dates back to the 1950s.

Being a “good enough” parent isn’t about lowering the bar you’re working toward. The point is to recognize that kids can thrive with parents who are responsive and involved, even though they are also imperfect, distracted, and human.

Research shows that this approach is actually more beneficial for our kids than over-parenting, which can leave them more anxious and less confident. It also helps to remember that when parents make too much of their own mistakes, kids can start absorbing that same kind of pressure and self-criticism.

So, what does this type of parenting look like in real life? It basically comes down to staying connected with our kids without acting like every moment has to be handled perfectly. Often, that can be as simple as pausing before reacting or stopping to give kids our full attention



when they’re trying to tell us something. It might also mean going back to a moment we handled poorly and trying again. Responses like those can do more to build resilience and trust than parents sometimes realize.

No matter how much effort we put in, parenting will always be challenging. The goal isn’t to get it perfect, but to keep showing up, learning, and growing, while letting go of the idea that every imperfect moment means we’re doing something wrong.

DON'T WAKE A SLEEPING BEAR!

The Strange Laws of Alaska

In Alaska, it is illegal to wake a sleeping bear just to take its picture. The fact that this law exists means that, at some point, someone looked at a sleeping bear and thought, “You know what this bear needs? To wake up for



a photo shoot.” Although the law might sound absurd, it gets at a bigger point. Alaska doesn’t deal with the same day-to-day problems as the rest of the country.

You can see that clearly in laws across the state. Local code in Soldotna on the Kenai Peninsula prohibits what it calls “attractive nuisances,” which is just a codified way of saying people shouldn’t leave food or other tempting things around that invite bears into town. It’s another rule that sounds funny on paper, but it starts to feel a lot less funny when you imagine a bear wandering your neighborhood because someone got careless with their trash.

Under Alaska law, it’s also illegal to view moose from an airplane, although that only tells part of the story. The restrictions are tied specifically to using an aircraft to spot moose for same-day hunting. That says a lot about how common small planes are in the

state and how seriously it takes fair-chase hunting to protect local wildlife.

Alaska’s odd laws don’t stop there. Fairbanks has ordinances covering issues such as unnecessary horn use and excessive shouting in public places. It’s also illegal to ride a motorcycle or operate heavy equipment at night in Fairbanks. Unlike the other laws mentioned here, these have nothing to do with wildlife, but they say something about how much Alaskans value peace and quiet. And at some point, someone clearly decided the nighttime motorcycle situation had gone far enough.

Some of Alaska’s laws may be good for a laugh, but most of them feel oddly practical once you understand the circumstances behind them. It’s one thing to read about a sleeping bear law from far away. It’s another to realize somebody apparently needed a reminder.

TAKE A *BREAK*



Mango Glazed Chicken

Ingredients

Mango Glaze

- 1 ripe mango, peeled and chopped
- 2 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 tsp fresh grated ginger
- 1/2 tsp chili flakes (optional)
- 1 tsp cornstarch mixed with 2 tbsp water (for thickening)

Chicken

- 1 1/2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-size pieces
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Directions

1. In blender, blend mango until smooth.
2. Pour purée into small saucepan and add soy sauce, honey, vinegar, garlic, ginger, and chili flakes.
3. Stir to combine.
4. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, then reduce to low and cook 5–6 minutes.
5. Add cornstarch slurry and stir until glaze thickens, about 1–2 minutes.
6. Remove from heat and set aside.
7. Season chicken with salt, pepper, and garlic powder.
8. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high.
9. Add chicken and cook for 6–8 minutes, flipping occasionally.
10. Reduce heat to low.
11. Pour mango glaze over chicken and toss to coat.
12. Let it simmer 2–3 minutes to fully caramelize.

A BONE TO PICK

The Legal Fight Over Chicken Wings

"Boneless wings" may be one of the strangest names given to a fast food item. Everyone knows that they aren't really wings with the bones neatly removed, but one customer still took that question to court.

In a lawsuit against Buffalo Wild Wings, a man argued that the chain's boneless wings were really just chicken breast pieces, more like nuggets than wings, and that calling them "wings" was misleading to customers. It made it to court, but in February 2026, a U.S. district judge in Illinois dismissed the case. Judge John Tharp's basic argument was that most people aren't ordering boneless wings because they believe someone carefully deboned a pile of tiny chicken wings.

That may sound silly, but it involves a real legal test. Courts often ask what a reasonable customer would understand from a label or the name and description of a menu item. The judge in this case ruled that the name "boneless wings" works more like a common restaurant name than a precise description of the cut of meat being served. He also cited a 2024 Ohio Supreme Court ruling and said diners don't expect "chicken fingers" to be made from actual fingers, either.

Buffalo Wild Wings gets to keep its boneless wings on the menu, but the failure of this specific case doesn't mean restaurants have carte blanche when it comes to naming their food. A label can still become a problem if it claims something that is flatly untrue or genuinely likely to confuse people. The argument in this case just didn't hold up to that.

Odd as it might sound, "boneless wings" has become normal menu language, even if it isn't especially logical. From the outside, this seems like a strange thing for a court to have to sort out, but it is all still based on a valid consumer law question. Apparently, some menu debates really can make it all the way to federal court.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1

How Simplifying Legal Jargon Helps Ease Clients' Fears

2

The Parenting Myth We Need to Let Go Of
Weird Rules of the Last Frontier

3

Boneless Wings Fly Into Federal Court
Mango Glazed Chicken

4

The Woman Behind Radioactivity

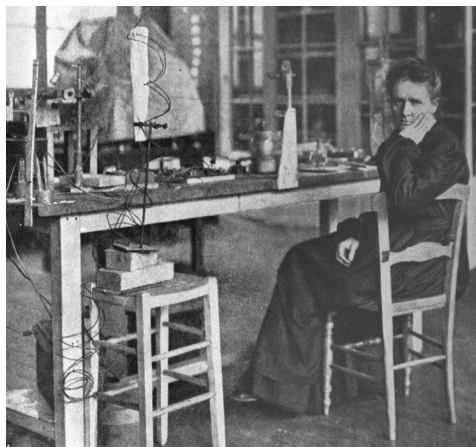
A LIFE IN SCIENCE

MARIE CURIE'S LASTING LEGACY

Most people picture Marie Curie as a scientific legend in a textbook, but long before she became a famous scientist, her life looked a lot like that of many others of her time. The youngest of five children, she was born in 1867 in Warsaw, Poland. Early in life, Curie faced financial difficulties and the loss of her mother, but she was exceptionally bright and threw herself into her studies.

Despite the limitations placed on women in 19th-century Poland, Curie pushed forward. She studied through underground classes, worked as a governess, and saved until she could leave for Paris and enroll at the Sorbonne. In Paris, she studied physics and mathematics and later met Pierre Curie, her research partner and future husband. The two of them began investigating strange rays coming from certain materials.

Curie eventually helped define the field by giving the phenomenon she was studying a name: radioactivity. Her research led to the discovery of radium and polonium, two highly radioactive elements that changed the scientific conversation at the time. That discovery expanded the periodic table and



laid the groundwork for the medical uses of radiation, especially cancer treatment.

In 1903, Curie and her husband were awarded the Nobel Prize in physics for their work isolating the radioactive elements they discovered. Eight years later, she was awarded a second Nobel Prize on her own, this time in chemistry. That made her the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only person in history to have won in two different scientific fields.

Sadly, Curie's work likely also led to her death. After years of radiation exposure, she died at age 66 of aplastic anemia, a blood disease caused by radiation damage to bone marrow. Even with that tragic ending, Curie's impact is hard to overstate. Through her work, she helped open an entirely new field of science that continues to influence research and medicine today.