

LIVELIFEBIG™

NEWSLETTER

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Virginia Attorney
Ben Glass



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Life's Short. Take Chances.

By James Abrenio

Ever since I can remember, I've loved comedy. To me, seeing a great comedy sketch is magic. I've always wanted to learn how they did it. So, recently, I stepped out of my comfort zone and took an 8-week sketch comedy class. It was a fun experience and I learned a ton.

The first thing I learned is comedy is really hard (!) (at least for me). During the first five weeks of the class, we wrote a weekly sketch. At the end of each week, we'd sit in a circle and read our sketches out loud. For the last three weeks, we produced and actually put on a sketch show. It was all-around terrifying!

For me, trying to come up with a funny sketch is like trying to solve a math problem. And I'm terrible at math. To spark ideas, I'd watch only SNL skits, listen to standup routines, and watch my favorite comedy movies. Unfortunately, they all were huge reminders that I couldn't think of anything! Anticipating members of my class critique my sketches was really nerve wracking. I did survive, though. And I like to think I wrote at least one or two lines that got a few laughs (but many more that didn't! – oh, well).

Another thing I learned is people who are good comedy writers are really smart. Seeing my classmates come up with original, creative material was super cool and just inspiring to watch. It's also truly amazing seeing people interpret things that you've written in different ways to make them better.

I also learned that stepping outside your comfort zone is important. To be honest, the last time I felt as stressed I did in this class was preparing for my law school exams. Not knowing how I'd do, and being scared that I would freeze up right in the middle of things was constantly on my mind. But once I got into the swing of things, it was really satisfying. And in the process, I met some really great people.

I'd encourage everyone to take their own chances. While it may not be comedy, do that thing (whatever it may be) that you've always said that you wanted to do. Sure, you're busy and there's probably "more productive things" you could be doing with your time. But life is short, and memories are what make it worth living. And it doesn't hurt to be able to laugh a little along the way!

By the way, if you're ever interested in taking a comedy class, reach out to Stephen Hale at sdbhale@gmail.com. He's a funny guy, and runs a great class! ■



James: "Stepping outside your comfort zone is important."

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Meal Prep Ideas

FROZEN BREAKFAST BURRITOS



By Tifiny Swedensky

Making breakfast is a chore, particularly if you are in a rush to make it to work on time. Instead of waking up earlier just to eat, why not make your breakfast the night before?

Breakfast burritos are super easy to make in bulk, plus you can get creative with the ingredients and make something you look forward to eating in the morning. In less than 30 minutes, you can make enough breakfast burritos to last you the whole week.



What You Will Need:

- Quart-sized freezer bags
- Paper towels

Ingredients:

- 1 package sausage or bacon, depending on your preference
- 6 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- tortillas (I like flour tortillas, but you can use whatever you prefer)
- shredded cheese
- 3 diced red and orange bell peppers
- 4 TBS olive oil

Optional Ingredients:

- 1 tsp cornstarch

Directions:

- 1 Heat two skillet over medium high heat and coat each with half of olive oil.
- 2 In a large bowl, scramble the eggs with milk until consistent throughout. You can add the cornstarch for fluffier eggs.
- 3 Pour egg mixture into heated skillet and cook until eggs are no longer runny.
- 4 Open your package of sausage or bacon. If you are using bacon, dice into small pieces for faster cooking.
- 5 Cook diced peppers in skillet until they start to become soft. Add bacon or sausage to skillet and cook until ingredients are done.
- 6 Place one tortilla flat on your counter. In the center of tortilla, layer meat mixture, eggs, and cheese.
- 7 Fold in sides of tortilla. Take one open end of the tortilla and fold over the ingredients.
- 8 Roll the tortilla into a burrito and wrap in paper towel. Place in a freezer bag.
- 9 Repeat steps 6 through 8 until all ingredients have been used.
- 10 Place your freezer bags in the freezer. To reheat, take out burritos, still wrapped in paper towels, and warm in the microwave for 45 seconds on medium power level. Use more or less time depending on the make of your microwave.

That's It! You can experiment with the exact ingredients to suit your taste. You can freeze the burritos without the paper towel, but I recommend reheating them wrapped in a paper towel. This will prevent the microwave from hardening the tortilla too much. ■

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Who Has BENGLASSLAW Helped Recently?

offering no dollars to settle the case to offering \$500,000. Another driver involved in the accident also paid \$15,000.



We were able to help a member of the United States military get out from under a huge bill for over \$40,000 that Verizon was attempting to get him to pay. While he was deployed overseas, a friend used his car (with permission) and ran over a Verizon light pole. Verizon sent the bill to our client and then hired an attorney to sue him, even though he told Verizon that he was overseas at the time of the accident. When we pointed out to the attorney that under Virginia law the owner of a vehicle is not generally responsible for any damage caused by a permissive user of the car, the attorney agreed to drop the claim. ■



Employee Spotlight:

Olivia Adubofour

Client Care Specialist

The team at BenGlassLaw is growing and we're always excited to welcome new people into our family. Olivia Adubofour is on the front lines answering the phone and helping people make the best decisions they possibly can about their cases. Olivia took some time out of her busy day to speak to us about her journey to BenGlassLaw. Special thanks to Olivia for letting our newsletter readers get to know her better!

I grew up in Virginia and I've lived here my whole life, which I love! My parents are native Ghanaians. I've never been back there, but I'm involved in the culture and I do speak Twi, which is the language in Ghana. It helps my siblings and me stay connected to the culture, which is important. When my parents came to America, my dad worked two or three jobs just to make ends meet. My parents really sacrificed for us to have the best opportunity possible.

I've got three siblings and three half siblings. We have a really large family and holidays are great because everyone comes together. I've got a total of seven nieces and nephews combined! Now that we're older, my siblings are really my best friends.

I went to CNU (Christopher Newport University). I started pre-med, but I sort of had an "ah-ha" moment where I realized I had a chance to follow what really interests me. I changed to political science, which I love, and it turned out to be a better fit for me. It was probably the best thing I did because it landed me here at BenGlassLaw! The law gives you exposure to so many different things.

I think it's great to be the first person that people talk to when they're trying to get a gist of what our firm does and what we're about. Sometimes you get that raw emotion if they were just in a car accident or are frustrated that they've been dealing with a disability for a very long time and are at their last straw.

I never take anything personally. I keep a balance. I try to remain patient with everyone and stay empathetic and

understanding that they're going through a tough time. I help connect them to who they need to speak to, set up a consultation, or really just get the ball rolling on getting their issue resolved. I really do enjoy it!

People seem really appreciative of having me be there to listen, while still offering advice. Even if I have to refer someone or we can't help them, they still really appreciate it that I hear them out.

The best part of working here is being able to interact with everyone, including Ben. Everyone has been super-duper patient as they've trained me and prepared me. I applied to one law firm where I could literally hear people screaming at each other in the back! Coming here and realizing it's not a typical law firm was a huge relief. I love the work that I do, even if it can get hectic. Everyone here is so helpful. The environment is all about cooperation, not hostility.

Outside of work, I blog for a social media group called African Girls Killin' It. They're all about fashion and African culture, not just West African. I love to keep up with Ghanaian dishes. Sometimes for lunch I'll bring in leftover fufu.

I like to watch movies. I enjoy reading. I enjoy listening to podcasts and TED talks. I'm really involved in my church. More than anything, I love spending time with my family. I'll find any excuse to go get dinner with one of them - or all of them!

Special thanks again to Olivia for taking time out of her day to let us get to know her better. If you ever call the firm, her voice is likely the first one you'll hear! ■

Reminder About Our Firm's Communication Policy

Our promise to you is that while we are working on your case, we don't take inbound phone calls, faxes or emails. Ben Glass takes no inbound unscheduled phone calls whatsoever. It makes him much more productive and helps get your case resolved faster. You can always call the office at 703-544-7876, and schedule an in-person or phone appointment, usually within 24-48 hours. This is a lot better than the endless game of "phone tag" played by most businesses today. Remember, too, that email is "quick," but is checked no more than twice a day. Replies are then scheduled into the calendar. So if it's really important, don't email—call the office instead.

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Who Has BENGLASSLAW Helped Recently?

By Ben Glass



We recovered almost \$90,000 in accidental death benefits for the wife and children of a man who had died while kayaking on Lake Michigan. The insurance company had denied the benefits alleging that the husband was intoxicated and that his intoxication had caused his death. We were able to prove that even though he had a high blood alcohol level, this had absolutely nothing to do with his dying. We were able to use weather reports, photographs and video to show that at the time that he launched his kayak, the waters of Lake Michigan were calm. Several hours later, huge winds and waves had kicked up and there were no witnesses to what caused our client's husband to actually end up in the water. We filed an extensive appeal under ERISA and forced the company to pay benefits.



We recovered \$515,000 for a woman who was very seriously injured while traveling in a funeral procession. We alleged that the funeral home was grossly negligent when, after law enforcement failed to show up to assist in the procession, the funeral home sent a very young employee into the middle of a very busy highway intersection (which was governed by traffic lights) to hold up a small sign that said "stop" in order to get high-speed traffic to stop. When our client was waved through the intersection by funeral home employees, she was hit broadside and suffered significant orthopedic injuries. We sued for both compensatory and punitive damages and the day after the judge turned down the funeral home's bid to throw out our case, the funeral home's insurance company went from

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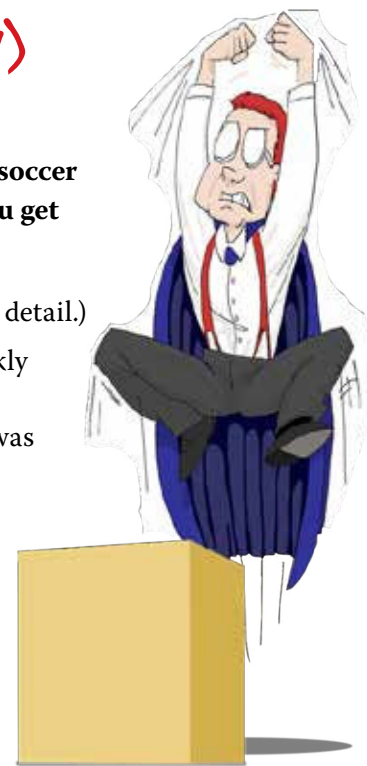
Box Jumping *(They Cheered)*

I'll be 60 early next year. This summer, I made a decision to work on my fitness. The spring soccer referee season wasn't that fun because I had a nagging hamstring injury all season long. You get those types of injuries, at my age, from not being fit.

So I joined CrossFit. (Go to BenGlassCrossFit.com to see my video that discusses CrossFit in more detail.)

My first day at CrossFit was June 5. I thought I was a moderately-in-shape 59-year-old and quickly found out "not so much." It's been a blast and I'm doing some stuff I haven't done since I was 10, some stuff I couldn't do at 18, and some stuff *I've never tried doing before*. My family thought I was crazy (for a little while) because I would come home, tell them that the workout was *exhausting*, but that I couldn't wait to get back for the next one.

Last month, they introduced us to "box jumps from a bench." This is where you sit at the end of a bench, plant both feet firmly on the ground, lean forward to get off the bench, then spring up to "land softly" on a box whose top is 24 inches off the ground. (Just take a minute and find something near you that is 24 inches off the ground and think about launching onto the top of that thing. It's not stepping up to the box and it's not leaping first with one foot then another. It's a two-footed jump to a height of 24 inches.)



Now, that may be easy for you, but it scared the hell out of me. See, the consequences of a miss are pretty messy on both shins. (I had already had one mishap jumping laterally over a barbell about eight inches off the ground that had resulted in a long scrape and scar on my left shin a month ago. That just healed. Now I was going to bound up two feet.)

The first day we tried it, I just chickened out and used the 12-inch box, but I saw a lot other people hitting the 24 inches, so I was *determined* to achieve this new level. This is what worked for me and it just may be a formula for success when you next face your "24-inch box."

- 1** I watched a bunch of YouTube videos showing people gracefully achieving a safe landing atop the box. I then had a very clear vision of myself being successful.
- 2** The next time I was at the CrossFit gym, I got one of the coaches to coach me through each step of the way. We broke each movement down before I attempted the jump. These guys are patient because I was still having a huge mental block on the "painful consequences of missing." (It didn't help that as I was arriving at the gym at 5:45 that morning, there was

another guy hobbling out with an icepack and wrap around his shin!!!)

- 3** The coach reminded me of the foundational base we had been laying: hundreds of squats, wall balls, front and back squats, etc., over the past 2 ½ months. "Trust the System, he told me."
- 4** I was 100% focused on the attempt. One thing I've discovered is that in CrossFit, there isn't a whole lot of room for letting your mind wander during the hour. This is hard work and you could hurt yourself if you don't do the movement correctly.

When I successfully completed my 24-inch jump, they cheered.

I honestly thought it was "impossible" for me to get safely (and softly) to 24 inches. What this process reminded me of was that for every seemingly unachievable goal, there is: (1) someone who had done it before, which shows that it is possible; and (2) there is a proven system for getting there. Most of what holds us back are the "what if's" that run through our minds. ***Change the way you think first and there is little else that can get in your way.*** ■

Who Have You Inspired This Week?



This month, I'm going to share with you an email I sent to my 17-year-old son's club soccer coach. The background is that this is a very competitive team, training and playing at a very high level. Some of the parents are crazy – and little 'ole me has gotten into sideline shouting matches with a few of them (parents on OUR team, can you believe that? I'm so calm and mild mannered), but I do think I have made them think. On a weekend last month, we played four very tough games in very hot weather. The boys were about done at the end of the final game. "The Final" was tough. They battled back from 3-1 down to tie, only to lose in a penalty kick tie breaker shoot out. (But there's always another tournament the next weekend!) Because of where the shade was on this field, the referees allowed the parents to sit on the same side of the field as the team benches (we usually cannot hear what the coach is saying to players).

I reached out to the coach after the game, based on how I had seen him interact with the players:

Subject Line: "Every once in a while"

Coach: I think it's good to have the parents sitting on the same side of the field as the coaches as we did yesterday. Then they can hear you telling the boys to stop whining, be tough, and get on with the game.

Youth soccer is a short-term game... at 19, they move on to the rest of life. Some will play in college, but most won't.

The message that you send that they must learn to fight through adversity, always try to produce quality, completely ignore refereeing decisions that go against them and get ready for the next play, immediately congratulate their opponents once the game is over no matter what the result, are life lessons.

I think the last 20 minutes of yesterday's final showed the product of your relentless message... that was a fascinating ending to the tournament, with players never giving up, even though there were, I think, four players who by then had picked up knocks that prevented them from going on.

Culture starts at the top. There is a reason you have been so successful.

*Thanks,
Ben*

Two things I want you to take from this: (1) You are being watched all the time by your family, your employees, your law partners, the folks behind you at the golf course, and even the folks checking you out in the grocery store. You are setting an example. Is the example you are setting one that you are proud of; (2) the coach thanked me profusely for the note. Seems that not too many people have taken the time to say "thanks" to him recently. Who in your life is doing something for you or someone you love right now that you could thank RIGHT NOW. Go ahead, surprise them. It will make both of you feel good. ■

SMALL BUSINESS WORLD

A USEFUL EXERCISE FOR YOU (AND EVERYONE ON YOUR TEAM)



I was interviewed on a podcast recently and one of the topics we talked about was "how do you find the time to get it all done?" It's probably the number one question I get asked by those who know about the two businesses that I run.

As I write this, we are just a few weeks away from the fall high school soccer season, where I'll be refereeing at least once per week (thus, leaving at 3:30 or so) and my 17-year-old and I are booking a number of colleges to visit and college soccer games to get to as he goes through the process of figuring out where he wants to go to school and whether or not he wants to play collegiate soccer.

I've always considered myself a productive person and I get a ton done in a day, but it is spread across many areas of my life. In order to put on the afterburners this year, I did a couple of things that helped me. You may find this useful as well:

- 1 I had everyone on my two teams write out for me exactly what it is they do to help the businesses make money. One page only. This caused me to look very carefully at what each person thought their job was and then compare it to what I thought their job was. Pretty eye opening. Now we have embarked on the task of ruthlessly going through everyone's list and asking these questions: (1) what 3 things could we do to help you be more productive; (2) what's on this list that you really don't like doing; (3) is there anything not on this list that you would like to be doing?
- 2 I'm having each one of them start to make a list of things they do that could/should be delegated to someone else. Forget about how that would actually happen or whether you have the personnel to do that. Where are members of your team doing things that are not the highest/best use of their time for YOU? Putting this on paper is the first step to improving efficiencies.
- 3 Create your own list: at the end of each day, write down the silly things you did [for example, for me – formatting documents that I was working on!!!] and start figuring out how to NOT do them anymore. Do some no-limits thinking.

I guarantee that nothing about your practice or your life will ever change if you don't make the first step (and have your team make their first step) of getting these inefficiencies down on paper. Then, it's just execution. For me, anyway, what this is allowing me to do is to use my time for my most creative work, whether that's finishing off a brief, preparing a deposition, or figuring out how to teach someone else to do that stuff for me. ■

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