

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

Like it or not, we all get older. It is a fact of life. As we grow and mature, it doesn't take long to realize that the media and many of the messages around us are obsessed with youth. The majority of what is being fed to us in magazines is about 'the fast life,' and the latest trend happening now. Access to information is great. But this non-stop messaging to us through all channels does prevent us from learning to be alone, reflecting, and taking the time to know ourselves.

But here is something to contemplate – the maturation story is that we develop the capacity for long-term passion and perseverance as we get older.

Think about that for a minute. This is from Angela Duckworth: The Power of Passion and Perseverance. There is an incredible amount of wisdom in that statement. For a great number of us, we are not 'born' knowing what we want to do with our lives. What does that mean? This means that we had to struggle growing up trying to find our place in the world. For me, I had to take a moment and look internally, see what personal attributes or skills I could develop. As a young high school student, I was always drawn to performance. However, I also was aware enough and realized that there were countless other performers that had an obsession I simply didn't have for the stage. I realized I had a soft spot for being a voice to individuals or families that were not appropriately represented. But again, I realized that most organizations were NPO (Non-Profit Organizations), and coming from a blue-collar family, I didn't have the luxury to work without compensation.

What happened over time was that I merged what I thought would be the best fit for my aptitude and skill sets. The struggles I encountered growing up made me a more conscientious, confident, caring, and calm individual. These life experiences would teach me to let life happen. Hence the irony about getting older. Maybe Oscar Wilde wasn't wrong when he said, "the problem with youth is that it is wasted on the young." 🙄 My point in all this is that we should welcome getting older. There is a tremendous amount of joy that comes with it. Yes, you do not derive the same pleasures as you once used to; yes, the body takes longer to heal. But the mind just keeps getting sharper, and I'll make that trade any day!

*Continued on page 3*

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

For many students out there, September is the dreaded month back to school. Yet, it feels like such a joyous occasion to parents 🙄. Be that as it may, the goal is to keep a positive attitude! As a youngster in school, all you could do was to await eagerly for that extra day off from school, so thank goodness for Labor Day! For many of us, it is business as usual. The needed rest was a welcomed change, but it is time to get back to the grind, so let's get into it!

In this month, we will visit another author we have dissected in the past, Steven Kotler. He was the co-author of the famous book "The Rise of Superman". Some years back, Mr. Kotler was suffering from Lyme disease. It got so bad at one point, that he contemplated suicide. In a series of events that would save his life, we are happy that he chose to stay amongst the living. Since that incident, his contribution to peak performance has been nothing short of extraordinary. This time around, we will dive into his latest book, "Tomorrowland: Our Journey From Science To Fiction To Fiction Fact." That is a mouthful, but it is also an insight as to where we are heading as a society.

On another topic, we know too many Americans today struggle with debt. In that department, multiple credit card woes rank as one of the highest reasons why we do not seem to be able to save. We will dedicate an article on this subject, and see whether you, or someone you know, can use some of those pointers.

If you need help on estate planning, contact us at 714-966-2646 or drop by our office at 17702 Mitchell North, #101, Irvine, CA 92614. You can also visit our website at the [www.AssetProtectionCenter.com](http://www.AssetProtectionCenter.com)

September 2019

**"At our Firm,  
Your Estate Plan  
is Not Business,  
it's Personal..."**



**Patrick P. Phancao**

*Asset Protection, Estate Planning,  
Medi-Cal Planning and Business Planning*

**Shadi Ala'i Shaffer**

*Estate Planning, Probate Administration, and  
Trustee Administration*

## HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

- 01 The Second Chapter
- 02 Why Bother With Asset Protection
- 03 Book Review
- 03 How to Regain Financial Control with Multiple Credit Card Debts
- 04 Labor Day

*Do what is right, not what is  
easy. (Submitted by the  
Wisdom Quotes Community)*

## WHY BOTHER WITH ASSET PROTECTION

Whether because of television, news outlets, or overblown dramatic stories, asset protection is often projected in a bad light. The average consumer imagines some ultra-wealthy individual with bad intentions, a large bank account stashed away in some exotic jurisdiction all the while abusing the system.

Though this lends to a nice Hollywood story, it hardly reflects reality. What's more, the real clients looking for asset protection are much more ordinary than one would imagine. Take it from someone who has been representing them for years. We are talking architects, IT Developers, physicians, farmers; and the list goes on. One of the key reasons you want to focus on asset protection is simply to discourage creditors from coming after you. Let me elaborate.

Before a lawsuit is even filed, creditors want to know whether you even have the ability to satisfy a judgment by doing a simple asset search. Would a collection attorney be interested in taking on the case, would his / her 40% contingency fee be satisfied once all the work is handled upfront? On that merit alone, asset protection offers a very compelling reason to take the time to learn about how it can save you years of heartache.

As much faith as we would all like to have in the legal system, not enough is done to prevent frivolous lawsuits. Thus, playing a proactive role in protecting your life earnings is a better approach than hoping a Judge would be able to decipher when a 'bad player' files a lawsuit.

Whether we want to admit it or not, a lawsuit can be analogized to a game. There is often a winner and a loser. Thus, be it in sports, board games or the legal system, it is advisable to tilt the playing field in your favor. When doing asset protection properly, there is definitely no need for foul play. Just a little bit of early preparation, learning the rules, and you can set your family's financial well-being down a path that will put everyone at ease.

There is an incredible feeling when in a deposition, or on the stand in a courtroom; and being able to answer every question with complete transparency. Speaking the complete truth, and knowing you will be protected. What this often does is create an environment for favorable settlement. Once you are dealing with a hostile party, the sad truth is that most will often not hold back anything to get the final outcome they desire. Knowing that you have undertaken everything in the proper and ethical setting will simply weaken the causes of action that can be thrown your way.

As often explained, asset protection picks up wherever the best insurance leaves off. No matter the premium you pay, you would be amazed how many insurance companies set themselves up in a position where they do not have to be involved in whatever lawsuit you happen to fall under. Again, the whole point is – why take a chance?

So, there you have it, a few reasons why doing some form of asset protection should be undertaken by sound-minded, financially focused individuals and families. It simply makes sense. Though the subject matter may seem overwhelming, we make it as simple as possible for you to learn about it before ever having to commit to doing it. Reach out to us at [www.assetprotectioncenter.com](http://www.assetprotectioncenter.com), we'll be happy to provide you the books and CD's on the subject matter.

### Steven Kotler - Tomorrowland: Our Journey from Science to Fiction to Science Fact

The book by Steven Kotler encourages us to work harder, push farther and dream bigger. These ideas can compel us to achieve advancements – to track motion through sound, to build an electronic star and to treat cancer. All these give us hope - and it is a promise of hope for all of us.

The author presents insights about not only the technological advancements and innovations themselves but also the hardworking and obsessive people behind those projects. What initially started as a research in sports performance has actually transformed into a discovery. A new adventure of how human ingenuity and scientific advancement have merged to bring about our tomorrow.

Kotler gives insights into the hard work of countless individuals encompassing and including gripping redemption stories. He talks about what we now term our first bionic soldier. Think about that for a minute. Not too long ago, it was nothing more than a TV show for kids. There is also a different side of the coin, such as bioweapons. As a species, during WWII, when we learned going from the Atomic Bomb to the Hydrogen Bomb, we forever altered the damages we could do to our planet. In the process, he discusses the many different scientists who were uncertain if what they were developing could really have an impact on the world. Well, little did they know!

If you're an avid reader of popular science, I recommend this book to you. It is compelling and insightful. The author succeeds not only in narrating and highlighting technology, but also in presenting some of the most puzzling moral and social questions – those that resulted from emerging technologies ramifications.

Kotler always has an interesting spin on his research, a philosophy that inspires you to always strive for more, and he does so by looking at the incredible technology advancement that's on the brink of being at our fingertips. Get ready, it is about to be an exciting tomorrow!

### How to Regain Financial Control with Multiple Credit Card Debts

Today, the total U.S. consumer debt is at \$13.51 trillion. This includes mortgages, auto loans, credit card and student loans. Statistics state that the average American household credit card is at \$8,284. Let us not dive into the student debt crisis, this could take the whole newsletter in and of itself.

When trying to cope with unexpected expenses, it is almost an automatic reflex to turn to credit cards. When tempted with these appealing articles of clothing you can't quite afford? Credit cards. What usually starts off as an emergency or a harmless little vice transforms itself into an unmanageable debt. One whose interest rate can trap you in a financial quicksand that can take you years to get out of if left untreated.

There is nothing inherently wrong with using credit cards. While this coping strategy can work in the short-term, it is the wrong solution for the long-term. People can reach their maximum borrowing limits in no time. This damages their credit score, which makes it hard to qualify for a home loan, and once again, you've created a cycle of damages that can last years.

To make matters worse, many credit card companies try charging more fees and increase the minimum monthly payment. They can also impose penalties for late payments, giving borrowers a harder time to regain control of their finances. Again, these are cycles you want to avoid at all cost. However, do not panic if this is your situation.

So how can you manage debt and regain control of your finances? First thing is to determine a good repayment plan to pay multiple debts. Some experts suggest paying debts with the highest interest rates, and then paying minimum on the others to reduce the total cost of repaying. On this particular issue however, we do not agree with that approach. We follow Dave Ramsey's famous "Debt Snowball Effect." This is where, irrespective of the interest rate, simply start off paying the smallest balance and attack your credit card amounts in the order of the balances owed. Based off the incredible success his countless followers have had, we would recommend going down that path.

Credit counseling can also come in handy, based on your personality. You may benefit from a counselor's advice if you were one of those trying to pay your debt with more than 20 percent of your monthly income. If you aren't the proud type, you may gain some great insight on how to approach your finances differently. After all, the thinking that got you to Egypt, isn't gonna get you to the Promised Land. Your thinking thus far got you to this point, be open to hear another perspective. The Credit Counselor can help to organize your finances as well as developing a budget.

Or, simply start by getting help with budgeting. Remember that paying debt off would only work if your spending is under control. One tip is to use a spending calculator online to help you track where you're spending your money and what adjustments can help you save money.

However, you want to do this, the important part is to get started and not feel discouraged. While it's not something you can do overnight, you can definitely benefit from making some adjustments here and there and taking small steps at a time. Before you know it, you will be debt free, and that is an incredible feeling!

*Continued from page 1*

Whatever stage of life you may find yourself in, I believe it has its fair share of struggles. Maybe you could take a moment and reflect on the beauty of that turmoil. Iron sharpens iron, and when it is all said and done, your family and loved ones will remember the character behind the person. The house, the wealth; all will be a distant second.

As you get older, you develop more grit. As you develop more grit, you become more deliberate in your actions and words. Then you soon realize that success, whatever it means to you, is simply inevitable.

Don't simply aim for happiness, aim for meaning. Strive and keep working hard, the cards will unfold as they are meant to be unfolded.

We wish you an amazing Labor Day, and an even better month! Should you have any estate planning needs, we are here for you!



Patrick P. Phancao  
&  
Shadi Ala'i Shaffer

## PHANCAO & SHAFFER, LLP

*Attorneys and Counselors-at-Law*



### Labor Day

This month we celebrate Labor Day! The day is observed on the first Monday of September. As it is a federal holiday, many businesses, organizations and offices are closed. In the past, it was held to celebrate different labor unions' contributions to the economy.

Today, it is the last chance for many of us to have a vacation or go on trips before we officially end the summer. For some, it is the 'small' break from the start of what could be a long scholar year. Keep in mind that many airports get congested this time of year. Whatever you choose to do with it, we hope you enjoy the time off!

There were unfortunately some mass shootings again which took place last month. We extend our full support and prayers to the countless families that are affected by this tragedy. We pray that bringing the nation together, ceases these senseless acts of violence. Be safe out there!