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“At our Firm,
Your Estate Plan
is Not Business,
it’s Personal...”



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“The way to get
started is to quit
talking and begin
doing.”

- Unknown

THE POWER OF ROUTINE

If you look at social media at all these days, it appears everyone is having the time of their life... except you! You can see the latest Instagram “model” on some exotic island, maybe a known actor flying in a private jet, or the latest bitcoin entrepreneur snowboarding in Whistler... And then there’s you... and me... and the countless other people who have their heads down doing something unheard of... working!



Let us be reasonable here. We all partake in sharing some of our best moments in life in the eyes of the public. Whether we are traveling, having an amazing dinner with a great group of friends or peers, and the list goes on. It does keep life interesting, and personally, keeps me motivated to always achieve more. But keep in mind, we are (I assume if you are reading this newsletter) all of a certain age. Technology and the Internet have been a part of our lives at a relatively late phase of our maturity. But I am thinking about the new generations behind us, those that are born into it, and the incredible toxic effect it can have on them.

As a concerned Mom, I have to make sure to keep my kids away from this inevitable technology craze as long as possible. I am very well aware that there is nothing I can do to stop it. My only hope is that I instill in them sufficient principles that they will continue to govern their life with ideals that help them thrive to be better humans.

We have spoken at length about the dangerous dopamine addiction that can be created by mindlessly scrolling through your phone for hours on end. Tik Tok, or as some of us ‘older’ folks call “The Tik Tok”, is a prime example of the countless hours that can be spent on this app. Is there a remedy to it all? Well, you can start by creating a healthy environment and routine in your daily life. Philosophy Teacher Jordan Peterson talks about the importance of making your bed first thing in the morning. This simple task helps get your mind straight right from the moment you wake up.

Contrary to popular belief, inspiration doesn’t just ‘strike’ you as if you were some type of creative genius. What is not mentioned often enough is the routine set up around that individual’s work space. Some of these factors include working at the same time every day. Having a very neat desk so your thoughts are freer and not cluttered by its environment. Creating a healthy workout regimen so the vessel of the mind, the body, is functioning at its peak. The boring times, the grind; these are all necessary periods of time you have to work through in order to create something meaningful on the other side.

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INTRODUCTION

April is all about Spring and begins with the funniest day of the year, April 1st! Watch out for those ‘crazy’ events that coincidentally happen on this day.

The second quarter of the year has begun. It’s like a smaller version of January with longer days to enjoy the springtime weather. Winter blues are slowly fading, and the lovely spring delights begin with flowers blooming and the leaves turning back to its good ol’ green color. Begin your day with a smile on your face and a cheerful attitude! There are so many lovely things in the world that you have yet to discover.

At our office, we start talking and preparing for the fun activities and vacations we anticipate for summer. Often times, it is said that the anticipation of an event brings greater happiness to the overall experience than the actual event itself. Isn’t it amazing how the mind functions? So don’t be shy in the coming months, and plan ahead! 😊

ASPECTS OF DOMESTIC ASSET PROTECTION

If you have followed us for any length of time, you know our firm is a big proponent of asset protection, both domestic and offshore. There are both pros and cons in choosing either forum, and one that exceeds the purpose of this article. Today however, we will narrow our conversation and focus on the benefits and shortcomings of having a domestic asset protection.

People often associate Asset Protection with affluent clients only, and nothing could be further from the truth. If you live in Southern California, chances are you own your home. Would that asset alone not be worth protecting? Now expand your assets to your bank accounts, IRAs, investment properties, etc... Suddenly, you quickly realize that irrespective of whether you would consider yourself 'rich' or not, you understand the benefits of protecting what you have worked to earn your entire life.

The best part of domestic asset protection is that its tax reporting is significantly easier than its counterpart, offshore AP. That, and the fact that the entry point, aka the price, is quite a bit lower. A brief history for the inquiring minds. When offshore asset protection was gaining momentum, many U.S. states realized they were losing business to estate planning that could legitimately be incorporated at home. And so Alaska was the first state to set out the first DAPT (Domestic Asset Protection Trust) in 1997, thereby providing its citizens with convenience and familiarity. Furthermore, the notion of keeping everything you owned domestically brought a great deal of comfort.

DAPT's enable you to create what is called a self-settled trust, a tool whereby you are allowed to be the Grantor and its Beneficiary, a concept not recognized in the majority of states. Why? Courts do not approve of creating an instrument where an individual can derive all the benefits of an asset, but should a lawsuit ensue, claim that he has no right or ability to pay from that very asset. That particular benefit is often only recognized in the state where the trust was established. Therefore, being a California resident and trying to claim a state benefit from a Nevada Trust may be a tough legal argument to put forth. So here is a little hint for you – never rely on a practitioner whose sole protection lies in the jurisdiction where the trust is incorporated.

Though we would like to believe that states recognize the full faith and credit clause, where one state recognizes the law of another; it often works in theory but not reality. For a myriad of reasons, a judge could simply deny the application of another state's trust laws. Once again, there are ways to ensure that discretion is not left in the hands of the court, but you must hire someone who has had experience in the arena.

When it comes to litigation, a DAPT will successfully deter the majority of creditors interested in coming after you. If you anticipate an aggressive litigator and want to stay domestic, it is imperative you bring onboard a professional familiar with the shortcomings of a DAPT, as there are ways to strengthen those potential exposures. When it comes to your family affairs, nothing beats dealing with a seasoned attorney in the field of estate planning and asset protection.

Best of luck and let us know if you would like to learn more about this subject!

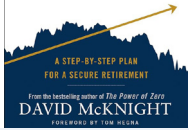
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There is nothing wrong with distraction every so often. Where we have to be careful as a society is that it has permeated every minute of our day. With the phone right next to you, there is no denying you need not feel bored for 1mn of your time anymore... and that is exactly what is wrong with such accessible technology.

Stay focused and in your lane, learn to enjoy what Cal Newport calls Deep Work. Maybe the aim is not always happiness, but fulfillment in doing something difficult that brings value to your community. I can assure you, having done estate planning for the better part of twenty (20) years has definitely had its ups and downs. There were many times when a change of career sounded like the right move. Looking back, I am grateful I didn't give in to those superficial urges. In the end, everything worth doing is difficult, embrace it!



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WARRANT BUFFET: 43 LESSONS FOR BUSINESS & LIFE

Not only is Warren Buffett regarded as one of the best investors of our day, but of all time. Buffett has excelled in his ascent to the top, surprising countless initial doubters and winning the admiration of millions.

In his book you have a chance to benefit from the numerous life lessons of one of the most successful investors of all time, one who is still extremely active and at the top of his game, whether you're a leader, entrepreneur, potential investor, student, or something else entirely. Though Buffet is best known for his successful investments, the wisdom he has derived throughout his life is quite unparalleled. This book has the power to drastically alter your life. 43 of his most insightful and motivating life lessons on money, people, and general improvement have been broken down and explained, along with practical advice on how to apply those teachings to your everyday life. This book aims to be inspirational and instructive with practical advice from the great man himself .

Here is what may appear to be a basic, yet profound principle - never give up looking for the career you love. Try to locate the position you would have if you were independently wealthy. Never mind the pay. It doesn't get any better than spending time with the people you love while doing what you love. The majority of individuals think they will never be able to follow their passions and will have to spend their days toiling away at jobs they detest without ever taking the time to figure out what their actual calling in life is. Simply put, finding your passion is a journey.

Managers are guardians of shareholder capital, according to Buffett. The finest managers approach business decisions with the mindset of owners. They prioritise the interests of the shareholders. However, even the best managers can have interests that are at odds with those of the shareholders. In Buffett's lengthy career, resolving those tensions and encouraging managerial stewardship have always been top priorities, and this has been a major theme in many of his publications. In doing so, Buffet, though a natural introvert, had to learn to speak up, share his ideas not only in a non-confrontational way, but in a manner that would leave his team inspired. By being exposed to so many uncomfortable situations, Buffet shares his wisdom with you in the book.

Though far from perfect, we can all learn from someone who has kept it together for so long in the eye of the public. Among the many quotes shared in the book, here is one of the ones that stood out "You will move in the direction of the people that you associate with". Do not be fooled into thinking this is intended for individuals with a finance background. Quite the contrary, it is applicable for people in all walks of life. After all, who can't use a little more wisdom in their day-to- day?



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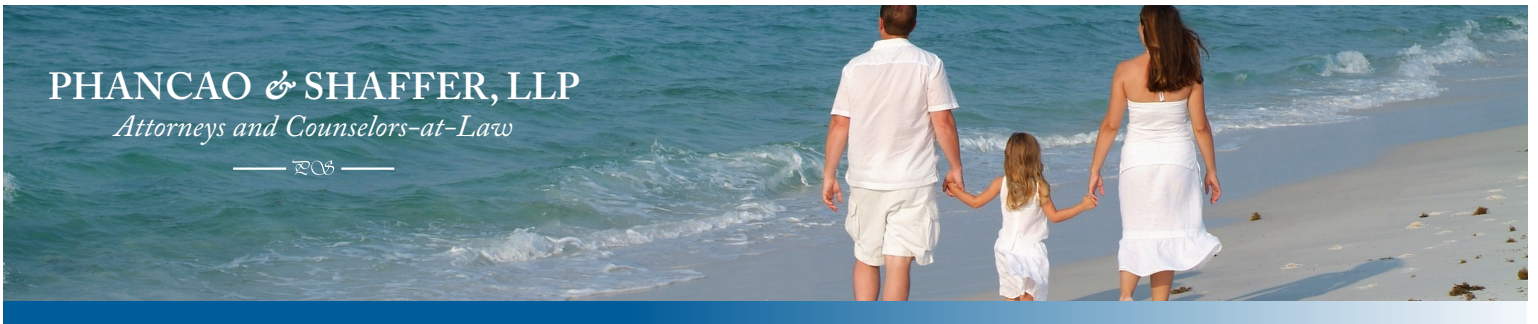


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Patrick P. Phancao
&
Shadi Ala'i Shaffer



The month of April usual begins with jokes, pranks, and humour. But once the shenanigans dissipate a bit, it is a great opportunity to show kindness. In the Christian Faith, Easter is often celebrated as the return of Christ. It is a time when many people express humility and gratitude for what that event represents. We develop resilience via the ups and downs of life. We value the things that are actually significant because of our gratitude. Every day is unique and lovely. Consequently, make the most of every day this month. Spring is upon us, so go out and start enjoying some of that sun when time permits!

