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THE PACKARDPRESS

A collection of thoughts and stories to educate, entertain, and inspire

Elizabeth Sears finds hope with the Packard Law Firm

Elizabeth Sears gladly gave us permission to share her story.

In her early 20's, Elizabeth Sears was diagnosed with bipolar, PTSD, and Manic Depressive disorders. One moment she would feel brilliant and successful and the next she would feel pathetic and worthless. Just like every young woman, she had dreams. She wanted to become a mother, to be independent and successful.

Unfortunately, with her medical condition, she was too unstable for regular employment. On her bad days, she would spend most of her waking hours in bed fighting depression. On her manic days, she was too distracting to her co-workers. Things took a turn for the worse when she lost her father's health insurance coverage because they no longer considered her a dependent. Her bills were piling up and her life had nearly collapsed. How was she going to take care of herself? She felt vulnerable, alone, and afraid.

Liz began searching for answers and ultimately filed for Social Security Disability. She reached out to a law firm with disappointing results. Her lawyer's firm failed to stay in contact with her and the firm's mechanical approach made her feel forgotten and vulnerable. At her hearing, her lawyer's apathetic approach was contagious. Like the lawyer, the judge did not seem to really care about her situation and denied her claim.

Legally speaking, Liz was now past her deadline and she was faced with immense legal obstacles. Her only chance to prevail was to have the administration admit that the hearing was not performed correctly and that a new hearing should be held with the same judge! To get the administration to admit such a thing and have a judge change her mind is, statistically speaking, nearly impossible. Out of options and in desperate need for help, Liz turned to the Packard Law Firm.



At the Packard Law Firm, Liz immediately felt like things were different. Looking back, she later explained: "From the first meeting, it was clear that the Packard's and all the employees have a passion for Social Security Disability. They walked me through every step of the process. Most importantly, the attorney got to know me and understood why this case was so important." Amazingly, the appeal was approved and the administration agreed that a new hearing was warranted. The Packard Law Firm met with Liz and helped prepare her for the new hearing. With zealous representation at the hearing, the judge changed her decision. Ms. Sears was approved for Social Security Benefits on October 25th, 2016.

"They walked me through every step of the process. Most importantly, the attorney got to know me and understood why this case was so important."

Despite 4 years of delay and three denials, Elizabeth Sears never gave up. Now, with the approved benefits, Liz can finally support herself and get the medical care she needs. With the Packard Law Firm at her side, she felt neither alone nor afraid. For the first time in a long time, Ms. Sears feels happy.

10 FUN FACTS ABOUT ST. PATRICK'S DAY

01. St. Patrick was not Irish. His parents were Roman citizens that were living in either Scotland or Wales. So, St. Patrick was actually both Roman and British.

02. As a 16-year-old child, St. Patrick was kidnapped by Irish raiders and sold as a slave. He spent six years in captivity as a shepherd. He later recounted that the time he spent in captivity was critical to his spiritual development.

03. Where did the pinching come from? Legend has it that leprechauns would pinch you if they ever saw you. To be safe from these angry little men, you could wear green, which makes you invisible to leprechauns.

04. From 1903 until 1970, St. Patrick's Day was considered a religious observance. As luck would have it, Irish pubs were closed on that day.

05. The odds of finding a four-leaf clover are 1 in 10,000.

06. There is more Irish blood in America than Ireland. It is estimated that there are over 33 million Americans that have Irish ancestry, while under 5 million people living in Ireland.

07. St. Patrick's Day, March 17th, is the day that Patrick died.

08. St. Patrick's favorite color was probably not green. In most of the artwork created during his life, he was wearing a light shade of blue.

09. Every year, 100lbs of green dye are poured into the Chicago River in honor of St. Patrick's Day. The dye lasts for about five hours.

10. St. Patrick used the shamrock to preach about the trinity.



DEVELOPING THE ART OF LISTENING

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM PRINCESS PENELOPE

Written by Samuel Packard

What does it mean to be a good listener? As I sat hunched over my desk, writing and rewriting ways to explain how to really listen, I heard small footsteps. I turned to see Princess Penelope, my seven-year-old niece. She quietly approached and asked me what I was doing. I responded that I was trying to explain how to be a good listener.

With bright blue eyes, a wide smile, and all the excitement she could muster, she said: "Oh that's easy! I know how to do that! You start by opening your eyes. Then you open your ears. And then you open your heart." I sat there amazed and dumbfounded at what I had just heard.



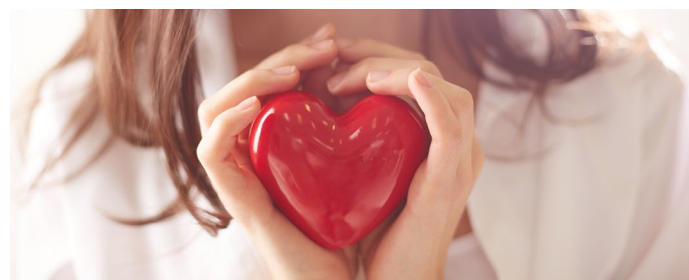
LISTENING BY OPENING YOUR EYES

Distractions are inevitable and will tempt us to move our focus away from meaningful conversations and discussions. To be a good listener, you must be intent on making sure that distractions wait their turn. To do this, remove or limit those distractions. Turn off or silence your smart phone or that television show that's running in the background. You can learn a lot by surrendering your attention and keeping your eyes focused on the person that is speaking to you.



LISTENING BY OPENING YOUR EARS

Stephen R. Covey once explained that "most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." We should take time to hear people out. If our personal views and opinions are interrupting or even guiding the discussion, can we truly understand the other person? If we do not truly understand, can we really be helpful? Opening our ears requires us to stop interrupting and start listening.



LISTENING BY OPENING YOUR HEART

Many people listen just enough to get the basics before searching for solutions. This fix-it type of listening is inadequate for people that are trying to share feelings or concerns. People do not care about what you know until they know that you care. Someone who listens with an open heart will focus more on making connections rather than solutions.

Princess Penelope's wisdom is beyond her years. People don't just want to be heard – they want to be understood. If you can listen by opening up your eyes, ears, and heart, you will become more trusted. You will help more people feel motivated. You will discover great ways to solve problems and move past emotional roadblocks. Though it can be a challenge to really listen to others, it is worth the effort. This skill, just like any other, can be developed and cultivated with a little practice and a touch more patience.

IT'S MADNESS TIME!

MARCH MADNESS MAGIC: 3 TIPS FROM THE PACKARD LAW FIRM

Written by Samuel Packard

March is here and for all the sports enthusiasts out there, it is the most wonderful time of year. Madness Magic is the time where the top 64 college basketball teams in the country will get a chance to leave their blood, sweat, and tears on the court to find out who should be the champion of the world (well, champion of America, but, same thing right?).



Millions of Americans, ranging from experts to beginners will do their research, say a prayer, and maybe even do a rain dance before filling out a bracket to predict the winner. As you grapple with yours, you might want to consider the following pointers:

1. DO YOUR RESEARCH

Getting to know every team that is ranked in the top 10 in each conference can be tedious but will pay dividends. Many times, the winner of a matchup will be a tossup but with a little research, your odds can improve significantly.

2. WISH UPON A STAR

If you're struggling between two teams, lean on your stars. Star players (and coaches) win games. It is that simple.

3. PLAY THE NUMBERS

In the last 14 years, with only one exception, every national champion team was a 3 seed or higher. Teams that are ranked 10-16, statistically speaking, almost never win more than a game or two. Also, 5 vs. 12 seed matchups are the most volatile in the tournament. The 12th seed has historically won just over 35% of the time. This match up seems to be where the games become more evenly matched and doing a little extra homework on this matchup might pay off.

Above all, enjoy the reason for the season. Enjoy the captivating storylines, the upsets, and all the trash talking with your fans. Don't overthink your picks and have fun. If you do, you will feel magic behind all the madness.

AND FOR A LITTLE FUN!

X O N I U Q E L A N R E V Y P P U P A T
 E B T P O A C H I N G I E N E R R O R N
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 I A S H W E D N E S D A Y T I L A U Q E
 D Y X D V N Y I H E I H C C P A P E R R

Take a little break and see if you can find the March themes hidden in the word search.

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|----------------------|-------------------|
| Animals | Labor Rights |
| Ash Wednesday | Lent |
| Bacteria | Leprechaun |
| Cesar Chavez | Lungs |
| Circles | Pi Day |
| Cross | Plants |
| Daylight Saving Time | Poaching |
| Destruction | Poetry |
| Discrimination | Pollution |
| Disease | Prayer |
| Doctor | Puppy |
| Equality | Ratio |
| Fasting | Shamrock |
| Forehead | Spring |
| Forest | St. Patrick's Day |
| Green | Support |
| Happiness | Tuberculosis |
| Health | Vernal Equinox |
| Heritage | Warm |
| Infinite | Water |
| Irish | Wildlife |
| Kidney | Women |