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Let's Get Rid of All Those Annoying Bike Lanes!

As I build up my training for yet another Ironman race, my plan always includes more time in the saddle. My recent 100-mile bike ride through the beautiful foothills of northern Colorado included city streets, wide open highways, and narrow country roads. Some of the roads I traveled had expansive bike lanes while others had absolutely no bike lane whatsoever. Interestingly, what I'm continuing to notice is that I'm actually safer on roads with no bike lanes.

Inevitably, all of my "close calls" where drivers get uncomfortably close when passing seem to occur on roads with wide bike lanes. On the roads lacking a bike lane and where I have no option but to take the lane and merge with traffic, I'm given a much wider berth, typically at least 48 inches.

A recent study by Monash University in Australia followed the daily experiences of 60 cyclists. With just this small sample, researchers found 18,527 times where a car overtook a bicycle. In over 1,000 of those times, the distance between the car and the bike was under just 39 inches.

The speed limit in the area usually affected how close cars would get. On medium-speed roads, the average distance between a bicycle and a passing car was 75 inches. But on roads with slower and faster speed limits (under 35 mph and over 60 mph), the distance shortened to an average of 60 inches. Getting this close is dangerous, as even a slow collision with a car can cause serious injury to a cyclist.

Having no bike lanes might work better for cyclists.



Ironman New Zealand, 2019

Many cities are moving beyond just having white lines painted on the ground to separate cars and bicycles. One street in Boulder tried putting a physical barrier between the lanes on just four blocks — but it was quickly dismantled due to traffic congestion complaints.

Drivers do not seem to want protected bike lanes — but the study found that having bike lanes at all may be the problem. The distance between cars and bikes was greatest on roads where they shared the entire space. Therefore, you might be safer on a road with no bike lane than a road with a painted one.

The solution may be to either separate bike lanes with barriers or remove them completely. Removing bike lanes from roads sounds like a risky proposition for cyclists, but my experience indicates it's actually safer than our current bike lane system.

In a perfect world, we could have separated and elevated bike lanes. While the U.S. is moving in this direction, we've got a long way to go to get to the extraordinary bike

track infrastructure Amsterdam has in place to protect its cyclists. Until then, stay focused while driving or cycling, ride defensively, and don't be afraid to take the lane.



Bryan VanMeveren



Hiking With Your Kids

Watch Their World Expand With Every Step

Hiking has many benefits as a family activity, such as mental health improvement, strengthening your relationships, and experiencing new sights and discoveries together. It's also great exercise, and you get plenty of quality time, fresh air, and sunshine. Here are three guidelines to help you and your kids have fun on your next hike.

Encourage Their Curiosity

One of the best ways to have your children learn about the world is letting them explore it. Being there for your children and encouraging them to ask questions about flowers, bugs, or animals you see on the trail will help them expand their vocabulary and learn how things work. When they learn they can explore independently and ask about the world around them, they're gaining the confidence to teach themselves.

Bring Along Some Tools of Discovery

Getting your children to engage in nature while you're out hiking can be as simple as bringing a magnifying glass along with you. Let your kids look at leaves, rocks, insects, or anything else you might come across on the trail. You can also bring binoculars to help them look at a bird that might be perched a little too high up. Another option is a bug holder to let your kids catch smaller insects, such as grasshoppers or pill bugs, and give them a close-up look.

Keep Safety in Mind

While you're out on the trail, it's essential to make sure that both you and your family are safe. Wear breathable, noncotton material and sturdy shoes that don't expose your toes. It's important to dress according to the weather. For example, if the day is sunny, wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from harmful UV rays and apply plenty of sunscreen on any exposed skin. Bring your kids' favorite snacks and water bottles for everyone to stay hydrated. It's crucial that you also bring a fully stocked first-aid kit in case someone is injured on the hike.

Starting with one of your local hiking trails can be a rewarding way to spend the day with your kids. You can watch their excitement as they expand their world with new discoveries.

Our Clients Say It Best

WHAT SOME PEOPLE ARE SAYING

"Bryan VanMeveren is the attorney I recommend to my friends and family. He is an expert in the field of personal injury. I think that his experience of working on both the plaintiff and defendant side of insurance cases gives him a deeper knowledge of how to get the best settlement for his clients. His case analysis is thorough, concise, and all-encompassing. He has built a solid reputation with insurance companies of producing quality work which gives his clients the advantage of quicker than average settlements.

"His hard work, ethics, and honesty have given him a sterling reputation in the legal community as well. Clients do not hesitate to recommend him, not only because he gets settlements done efficiently but also because he gets to know clients and treats them like family. He knows that a lot of times, people are going through some of the toughest times in their lives, and he will always take the time to talk one on one with a client. He makes their lives a priority in his life."

-L.H.



A Change of Pace

Meet Jenny Ellison, Trial Attorney

Jenny Ellison has worked in law for the past 15 years. Before joining VanMeveren Law Group, Jenny spent 14 years with the local district attorney's office. It's certainly been a change of pace, but it's a change Jenny has welcomed with open arms.

"I really enjoy working with the team. I come from a different background where I didn't work directly with clients. I've enjoyed getting to know clients and having the chance to sit down with them one-on-one. It's challenging and exciting. There's something new every day."

Working at the DA's office is very different than working at a law firm. The focus there isn't necessarily on the individual (though, much like here, every case is different). The DA's office does work with victims and their families, but by and large, most of the casework involves representing the community's interest as a whole. They focus more on public safety, for instance.

Working at VLG, Jenny says, "I feel like I can make a difference." And that's what we strive to do: make a difference for every client. As Jenny puts it, there is something special about being able to get a client and their family a fair settlement. We work



with folks who have been through a lot. It's a good day when we can get them what they deserve and alleviate the stress that follows an injury or accident.

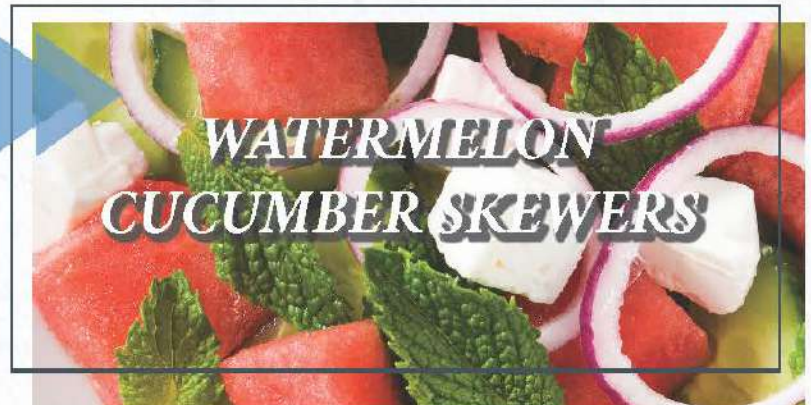
Outside of the office, Jenny keeps busy with two kids. She's also a soccer coach and spends much of her free time enjoying the great outdoors. She's also a big Rockies fan and gets down to games when she can!

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4	6	8	2	7	1	3	5	9
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Solution.



Skewers are a Fourth of July favorite, but these are not your classic kebabs. They're a fresh, light, and fun way to start a barbecue. Oh, and they don't require any actual cooking

Ingredients:

- 1 medium-sized watermelon, cubed
- 1 block feta cheese, cubed
- 2 cucumbers, cubed
- 1 bunch fresh mint leaves
- Salt, to taste

Directions:

1. Assemble skewers by placing one watermelon cube, one cucumber round, one feta cube, and one mint leaf on skewer in that order. Repeat until skewer is full.
2. Lightly season with salt and chill in fridge until right before serving.



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'Fierce Conversations'

Learn How to Get Your Message Across

So often, we talk to our friends, coworkers, and loved ones without actually saying anything. We'll beat around the bush on important subjects or hesitate to bring up sensitive matters. Global business coach and best-selling author Susan Scott has set out to change that. In her book "Fierce Conversations," Scott argues that the key to get more out of our personal and professional relationships is to learn to lower our barriers and convey our message honestly.

"Fierce Conversations" is one of those works born out of a simple idea with big implications. As the author explains it, "While no single conversation is guaranteed to change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship, or a life, any single conversation can." By having the communication skills necessary to create lasting bonds, handle strong emotions, and overcome barriers, you'll be prepared when crucial conversations present themselves.

Those who tend to judge a book by its cover may make the mistake of associating the word "fierce" with "aggressive." However, as a master of meaningful communication, Scott has found that it's important not to force emotions one way or the other. As she observes, "If your behavior contradicts your values, your body knows." Instead of relying on fake bravado or false modesty, the author argues it's better that the bravery be genuine. Breaking down those social barriers to be authentic in our conversations takes true ferocity.

Scott does more than simply explain why frank and honest communication is important; she gives readers the tools to get there. Having spent years as a business coach, and now as the head of a firm that trains CEOs around the globe, Scott is well-versed in the art of teaching exercises. "Fierce Conversations" is brimming with action items, tactics, and tailor-made examples of how to communicate in every situation, from board meetings to parenting. If you're someone who likes concrete guides over vague concepts, this book will pleasantly surprise you.

NEWLY REVISED AND UPDATED
National Bestseller

FIERCE CONVERSATIONS

Achieving Success
at Work & in Life,
One Conversation
at a Time

SUSAN SCOTT

Foreword by KEN BLANCHARD, PhD