

January 2023



Yarnell Regional Community Center

Serving the Weaver Mountains' Communities

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Sea Legs

As a teenager, my son once wrote a poem titled "Of Rowboats and Sea Legs." He used to do "Spoken Word", a kind of dramatic reading of poetry using tone, and pace, and volume to dramatize the words of the poetry. He had a gift and was often recognized by those who heard his talent as exceptional. In this particular poem he really bared his soul. One line in particular has always resonated with me. "As a ship I'm drifting seemingly in the right direction, As a captain I used to have perfect sea legs...I used to have perfect sea legs, Now I have a lot of 'I don't know' inside of me." It speaks of a young man growing up and dealing with life in general. He speaks of getting seasick as he tries to figure out this life he is navigating.

Sea Legs... Sea travel mandates changes in the control of the body. Our adapting to life at sea is known as getting one's sea legs. Developing sea legs is a necessity if one is to successfully interact with the environment and keep from getting seasick.

There are many suggestions on how to avoid getting seasick. Here are a few basics:

- Be well rested before setting sail
- Get fresh air
- Choose your itinerary carefully

As we head into a new year, I believe these three are good instructions for life in general. Let's attempt to maintain our perfect sea legs in 2023. "Be well rested before setting sail." The older I get the more I read just how important our sleep habits are to our health. It affects everything. Brain function. Memory Issues. Mood changes. And, appropriate to this line of thinking... Balance. Getting more/better sleep will help our balance.

"Get fresh air." There's nothing quite like a breath of fresh air on a sunny spring day. But did you know that getting outside is scientifically proven to be good for our health? From the sunshine vitamin to improved recovery, getting some fresh air has healthy benefits. Oxygen directly affects the release of the hormone serotonin in the body. This hormone is responsible for regulating our mood, and increased levels of this stuff make us generally happier people. There is no specified 'correct amount,' but the more we get it, the healthier we feel. Happy = Good.

"Choose your itinerary carefully." Thinking about where a road might lead is again, just a smart idea in general. Now, I get the whole "it's the journey, not the destination" conversation. It is important to enjoy the process, and not just always look ahead to the destination. If we were to retrace our life, examining its course as a series of forks in the road, an alternate landscape might emerge. At each fork in the road, we made a choice: left or right, yes or no. We probably weren't aware of most of those binary choices, yet each of them sets our path, leading to subsequent forks, more choices, ultimately placing us right where we are now. Even ONE different choice would have dominoed into a different present reality for us. Our choices matter and we should choose our itinerary carefully.

So, if we get our rest, some fresh air, and choose our path carefully, we increase the likelihood of maintaining our perfect sea legs and "drifting seemingly in the right direction." Welcome to 2023!

Jimmy