

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

www.buttonlawfirm.com | 214-888-2216

4315 W. Lovers Lane, Suite A, Dallas, TX 75209 | 1900 W. Illinois Avenue, Suite 101, Midland, TX 79701

8 THINGS MY MOM MADE ME DO AS A KID

(That I Thank Her for Today)

I'm not a parent yet, but I can imagine that it isn't an easy job. There are thousands of parenting books out there, and everyone has different advice on how to raise smart, responsible, community-oriented kids. Fortunately, when it's time for me to be a dad, I have great role models in my family tree. My parents, and especially my mom, did a lot of things right. Her lessons helped lay the foundation for who I am today. Somehow, despite working full time, she found ways to make learning fun for me and my sister! Here are eight things my mom "forced" me to do growing up that made me a better person.

- **Read 30 minutes every day.** This was really helpful for me! I struggled with reading but loved nonfiction books about basketball, leadership, musicians, history, and business. Because she motivated me back then, I still read regularly today.
- **Apply lessons from books to real life.** Just reading wasn't enough for my mom! We also had to apply the concepts and techniques we learned. Today, I still do that with leadership and business books, and it has made me a better entrepreneur.
- **Research our camping and vacation destinations.** My mom required me to research the history and culture of anywhere our family visited. For example, if we were camping in Broken Bow, Oklahoma, I'd have to look up the history of the lake, the fish that were in it, and how to catch them. As a result, I grew up curious about the world.
- **Write post-trip journal entries.** After visiting a museum or going on a camping

trip, I had to write down what I learned. That allowed me to explore my interests (I was fascinated by Native American culture and history) and identify things I wanted to learn more about.

- **Wash my own clothes from elementary school onward.** My sister and I also had to clean our rooms, do the dishes, and put things back where we got them from. It felt like I was doing more chores than my friends, but when I got to college, I was a step ahead! It's still easy for me to keep my space clean and organized.
- **Save for things I wanted.** Instead of buying me expensive presents, my mom taught me to earn money, save it, and buy things myself. Those lessons helped me plan for my future, buy my first home, and live within my means.
- **Explore all of my interests and finish what I started.** My mom encouraged me not to pigeonhole myself. Instead, I tried everything that interested me, including taekwondo, skateboarding, BMX biking, and roller hockey! The only catch was that I had to finish every event or season I started. That process helped me hone in on my passions and keep my promises.
- **Follow my heart.** I was never raised to follow in my parents' footsteps, but instead to create my own. That mindset led me to start The Button Law Firm.

All of these points might give you the impression that my mom is a serious person, but she knows how to laugh at herself, too. I'll never forget the time she planned a road trip that involved my dad driving



all night and napping during the day. The idea was that we would have family time in the evening and they'd avoid the hassle of having cranky kids in the car.

As you can imagine, it backfired! Every morning, our play sessions woke Dad up and he struggled to stay awake for the rest of the day. He made it through the trip, but he was yawning for six months afterward. We still poke fun at my mom for the disastrous drive-all-night, play-all-day vacation idea, and she always laughs along at the memory. My mom and I always have a great time together, and this Mother's Day was no exception. I'm looking forward to another walk down memory lane with my dad for Father's Day this month!

Russell Button

IMPROVE YOUR SKILL SET

WITH 3 EASY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT METHODS

A lifelong learner mentality is often lauded as a habit of successful people, but far too many professional development courses are geared toward entrepreneurs, CEOs, and managers. However, you don't need a leadership title to benefit from this knowledge. Dip your toe into the professional development waters with these three tips for seamlessly incorporating learning into your life.

GO TO SCHOOL WITH THE PROS.

If you could harness the knowledge of world-leading experts, wouldn't you want to? Platforms like MasterClass, LinkedIn Learning, and Skillshare offer expert knowledge in bite-size courses that users can take at their own pace. Learn how to write from Malcolm Gladwell or Roxanne Gay or master the art of negotiation from FBI hostage negotiator Chris Voss. (And for fun, become a chef with Gordon Ramsay!) Commit to one video chapter each week or listen as you do household chores. Just spend a few moments afterward reflecting on the content so it can soak in.

DOWNLOAD APPS FOR QUICK LEARNING.

There may be points when you are just too busy or find that starting a new class or habit is difficult. Don't quit; instead, look at

your smartphone. Download apps like Libby — an app connected to local libraries where users can check out audiobooks or read digitally — to get a quick, easy fix of professional development. You could also try podcasts on Spotify, Stitcher, or Apple Podcasts.

There are plenty of short episodes that focus on professional development.



TRACK YOUR PROGRESS.

With so many options, classes, and tools available to you, it can be overwhelming to set, track, and meet your professional development goals. That's where habit trackers can help! Whether you prefer to use pen and paper for journaling or download an app for digital tracking (try Coach.me or Habitify), a habit tracker allows you to see tangible progress and identify areas of improvement.

Bonus Tip: Find a mentor or buddy to do professional development with you! Everything is easier with a friend, and whether you need someone to hold you accountable or are looking for support from someone wiser than you, someone by your side may be just what you need.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM, JACQUELINE!

Meet BLF's New Marketing Brand Coordinator

Jacqueline Lacoff joined our team at a crazy moment: The day after the epic winter storm hit Texas. Incredibly, she still hit the ground running. She had stopped by the office to pick up her training materials the week before, so she had them on hand when the world turned upside down.

"Our power was super unreliable. It would go out for about eight hours, then come on for 30 minutes. I charged my computer during that time and tried to listen to the training materials and read the books Russell had given me," Jacqueline remembers.

Fortunately, Jacqueline, her husband, Ben, and their two dogs, Raider and Astro, made it through the storm unscathed. That trial by fire (or should we say ice?) showed us what a proactive, dedicated team player Jacqueline would be. Four months later, we still count ourselves lucky to have

her handling our social media, website, blog, and other marketing content.

"We finally found somebody who really loves what she does and has a passion for marketing and our mission here at BLF," Russell says. "Those two things combined are what make her really great for our team. She knows that the more people our firm is exposed to, the more clients we'll be able to help, cases we'll be able to win, and positive change we'll be able to make."

Jacqueline has a degree in public relations with a minor in history. Before coming to BLF, she interned with a PR firm that helped nonprofits, and she also worked as the marketing director for an insurance



agency specializing in home and auto insurance. As an expert in marketing, auto insurance policies, and giving back, she's a perfect fit for our team.

"I feel like what our firm does actually has an impact, and that's something that drew me to it," she says.

If you chat with Jacqueline this month, be sure to congratulate her on her new job and on her wedding! She and Ben got married in February and can't wait to celebrate with a big party this fall.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE RUSSELL BUTTONS

How BLF's Russell Met Russ!

Hey folks, it's Russell again, and I have a crazy story to share! A few weeks ago, I got an email out of the blue from another Russell Button. At first, I was sure the message was spam, but the more I read, the more amazed and convinced I was.

This other Russell (I'll call him "Russ") was a real person reaching out to me because we had the same name. Russ is a musician and an industrial engineer-turned-interfaith chaplain. He's a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and lives in a bungalow in Alameda, California. I couldn't resist finding out more, so my team called Russ to learn his story.

It turns out Russ has been casually seeking out other Russell Buttons since the 1990s. It all started when his 18-piece band, Russ Button's Swing Orchestra, played a dance in Menlo Park, California.

"During a break, this guy came up to me and said, 'Are you Russ Button?' and I said, 'Yeah,' and he said, 'I'm Russ Button!'" Russ recalls. "He pulled out his driver's license and showed me his name was Russell Button! It was pretty funny, and we had a good laugh over it."

That causal encounter inspired Russ to look for other Russell Buttons. He discovered a "distant cousin" in Michigan and ran into another in San Francisco. Then, through Google, he found me!

Russ can trace his genealogy back to Matthias Button, who traveled from England to Massachusetts in 1628. We might both be his descendants. It's a cool story, but what amazed me most is that Russ, like me, is on a journey to make a difference. He had a tough childhood, and healing from trauma inspired him to give back.



"When I was approaching retirement, I wondered, 'What could I do to make a difference? I don't need to work; I have money and the house paid for, so what can I do to make the world a better place?' Working as a chaplain seemed like the thing," Russ said.

Today, Russ ministers to the sick, the dying, and their families in local hospitals. He serves the spiritual needs of people of all faiths and backgrounds. When Russ isn't working, he makes music with his band, Horns a Plenty, or spends time with his violinist wife, Katherine. To hear their music, visit HornsAPlenty.org and TemescalQuartet.com.

BLF HIGHLIGHT REEL



Ashley and Cristina on Cristina's Birthday



Ashley and Cristina's sister got her masters degree



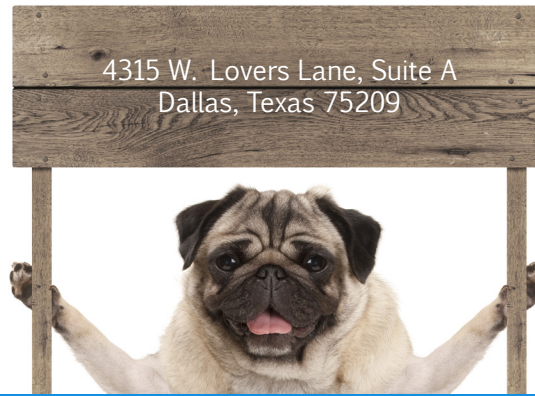
The newest edition to Russell's gym: The Rogue Donkey

CLIENT REVIEW



"The Button Law Firm is full of top-notch professionals. They are currently handling a case for my daughter, and I'm very impressed with their processes, the communication, and updates they have provided me and my wife to date. As a practicing attorney, I have a high standard of who I trust to handle matters for the people I love most in this world. The Button Law Firm has gone above and beyond my expectations, and I am confident I will continue to receive great service from their firm. I highly recommend giving them a call if you have a situation involving an issue with a child and a day care."

Tracy McDuffie



PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 8 Things My Mom Made Me Do as a Kid (That I Thank Her for Today)
- 2 3 Professional Development Resources That Don't Suck
Welcome to the Team, Jacquelinel
- 3 The Curious Case of the Russell Buttons
BLF Highlight Reel
- 4 10 Things Day Cares Should Do to Keep Kids Safe

THE BLF DAY CARE SAFETY CHECKLIST

10 Things Day Cares Should Do to Keep Kids Safe

Imagine picking up a phone call from a day care and hearing these four awful words: "We've lost your child." That nightmare scenario happens all the time. BLF is regularly called in on cases where a child is left behind on a field trip, abandoned in a hot van, locked outside in extreme weather, or if they've wandered off from a group. Sometimes these stories have happy endings, but more often, our clients end up with life-changing injuries like organ failure, brain damage, or heat stroke. The worst thing about these cases is that *they're always preventable*. If every day care in Texas followed the checklist below, we would save dozens of young lives each year.

All day cares should ...

- *Provide reasonable supervision.* Children in day care should be supervised at all times so that they won't get lost or hurt.
- *Hire plenty of staff.* Facilities need to meet Texas' requirements for an age-appropriate ratio of staff to children, and go above them if necessary.
- *Properly train those staff members after hiring them.* Day care staff must know how to supervise children, prevent wandering, and react if a child goes missing.
- *Keep a documented roster of names and use it for regular headcounts.* Headcounts must happen regularly, and simply counting the number of kids present isn't enough. Day cares call children by name and ensure every child responds.
- *Ensure a second employee verifies all children are accounted for after transitions.* If a group leaves a van or heads home from a field trip, one employee should do a headcount. Then, a second should double ensure that no children are left behind.
- *Create a "missing child" response procedure.* All staff should be on the same page and act quickly if a child disappears.
- *Enforce all safety procedures.* Creating procedures like headcounts, double-checks, and staff lookouts isn't enough; management also needs to enforce them.
- *Strategically use locks, alarms, and security cameras.* Alarming a door so that it rings when a child opens it could save a life, as could security footage showing where they've gone or the simple act of locking an empty van so children can't get back inside alone.
- *Keep a list of children prone to wandering.* Staff should know high-risk kids by name and keep an extra close eye on them.
- *Identify causes of wandering and avoid them.* Do loud noises or boring activities cause kids to head off on their own? Smart providers will discover and mitigate those risks.