



307 Southgate Court,
Brentwood, TN 37027



Phone: 615.205.5155
MusicCityPlasticSurgery.com



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UNPLUGGED FUN—IGNITE YOUR CHILD'S IMAGINATION BEYOND SCREENS

In today's world of video games and streaming for entertainment, one of the most powerful — and rewarding — steps you can take is engaging your child's imagination without electronic devices.

A MAKE-BELIEVE STORE

One great way to do that is by putting your child in charge of a make-believe ice cream store. It's easy and only takes a few common household items, starting with a few bowls.

First, squirt a generous helping of shaving cream into each bowl, then add different colors of food coloring to each. After stirring with a spoon, your child will suddenly have a variety of make-believe "flavors" to offer to their customer — you.

They'll have fun scooping up the flavors you want from each bowl into a plastic cup. You can even have other small household items in other bowls (such as buttons and small craft items) that can serve as the ice cream "toppings."



BALLOON SPORTS

You can also engage your child's hand-eye coordination skills with a fun game of balloon tennis or volleyball.

To start, simply blow up a few balloons of different sizes. Then find a chair or other items around your house that can double as a "net" between you and your child.

The fun comes in batting the "ball" (a balloon) back and forth across the net. When your child bats the balloon to your side and you hit it back without it passing back over the net, the point goes to your child, just like in real tennis or volleyball. You can keep score if you'd like.

You can also make up your own rules, like players can hit the balloon two times before returning it to the player on the other side of the net. Or, if you want to really challenge your hand-eye coordination, you can use two balloons and try to keep both in play at the same time.

At the end of the day, with fun activities like these, you can engage your child's imagination with a true brand of homemade fun!



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A Year of Gains

REFLECTING ON 2023 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Can you believe we just began another year? This time of year, after the festivities have all calmed down, I sift through the blessings, check off achievements, and look at those goals I jotted down way back in January of 2023.

"SO, AS WE BEGIN TO CRUISE THROUGH 2024, IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT SETTING RESOLUTIONS OR HITTING AN AMBITIOUS TARGET. IT'S A RESET BUTTON, A CHANCE TO DECIDE WHO WE WANT TO BE KNOWN AS, AND THE LEGACY WE WANT TO LEAVE BEHIND."

This year, one of the game-changers for me was a book I stumbled upon, "The Gap and the Gain" by Dr. Benjamin Hardy and Dan Sullivan. It dives into the idea behind goals and how we often shoot for the stars, but it feels like trying to reach the horizon — forever elusive. The authors call it the gap, and it hit me square in the feels. Instead of just aiming for a distant target, they suggest looking back, measuring your progress, and turning it into a gain. It's like leveling up in your kid's favorite video game — celebrating the victories, big or small.

Dr. Hardy and Dan Sullivan discuss how it's not only about endlessly pursuing happiness but, more so, it's important to expand the joy you already have. Reverse-engineering the pursuit, if you will. It got me thinking about appreciating the little wins, the everyday joys, and not just waiting for some grand moment to be happy. The book also introduced me to the idea that we can re-create our past. Instead of just focusing on the future, we have the power to change how we look at our past. If we remember things in a positive light, it can actually shape how we move forward.

So, as we begin to cruise through 2024, it's not just about setting resolutions or hitting an ambitious target. It's a reset button, a chance to decide who we want to be known as, and the legacy we want

to leave behind. We can tweak the impact we make on the people around us.

In my world, and my career, I'm lucky to have the ability to impact others in a big way. It's a blessing really. And I want to throw this out to everyone reading this: Think about how you can impact others this coming year. It doesn't have to be some grand gesture. Holding the door for someone, offering a genuine smile — it's the little things.



I've even chatted with my children about how offering up a simple smile to another student in the hallway can mean the world to someone else. It might be their wink from God, that little nod from the universe that says, "Hey, you matter." The impact of one small act of kindness is like a ripple effect; you never know how far it'll go.

So, here's to 2024 — a year of new beginnings, gains, and positive impacts. Let's reset, embrace the joy we already have, and sprinkle a bit of kindness wherever we go. Happy New Year! May it be filled with smiles, laughter, and happiness.

—Dr. Mike

DISCOVER THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CHLOROPHYLL

Chlorophyll, the green pigment responsible for absorbing energy from the sun and assisting plants in photosynthesis, is often referred to as nature’s “green magic” due to its numerous health benefits. Let’s explore the perks of adding some to your diet.

ANTIOXIDANTS

Chlorophyll is rich in antioxidants that help combat oxidative stress in the body. Neutralizing harmful free radicals can reduce cellular damage and lower the risk of chronic diseases such as certain cancers and cardiovascular conditions.

DETOXIFICATION

Chlorophyll aids in purifying the body by binding to and removing toxins, heavy metals, and chemicals. This process supports liver health and promotes overall well-being.

ALKALIZING EFFECT

Chlorophyll helps alkalize the body and balance pH levels. An alkaline environment is less susceptible to diseases, making it an essential component of an anti-inflammatory diet.

IMPROVED DIGESTION

Including chlorophyll in your diet can help promote healthy digestion by reducing inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract and enhancing the growth of beneficial gut bacteria.

ODOR CONTROL

Chlorophyll can act as a natural deodorant by neutralizing odors in the body and reducing bad breath.

SKIN HEALTH

It’s believed chlorophyll can assist with skin conditions such as acne, sun damage, and eczema, as its anti-inflammatory properties can soothe irritated skin and promote a healthier complexion.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Chlorophyll supplements can aid in weight loss by controlling appetite and suppressing cravings. These effects can lead to a lower calorie intake.



IMMUNE SUPPORT

By strengthening the immune system and reducing inflammation, chlorophyll can help the body protect itself against infections and diseases.

CANCER PREVENTION

While more research is needed, studies suggest that chlorophyll may help protect against certain types of cancer by preventing DNA damage and inhibiting cancer cell growth.

While chlorophyll is generally safe, be sure to consult a health care professional before taking chlorophyll supplements, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, or taking medications.

By incorporating more chlorophyll-rich foods and supplements into your daily routine, you’ll be on your way to improved overall health!

LOOKING BACK ON LIFE WITH THE LITTLES

Having kids really puts time into perspective — I blinked, and I have three teenage boys and a 9-year-old daughter. Where did the time go? I remember the days when we had three kids in diapers, and now we host discussions about colleges and careers.

On Jan. 6, it’s National Cuddle Up Day, and on Jan. 8, we celebrate National Bubble Bath Day. In the spirit of looking back on the days when my kids were much younger, I realize I’m quickly leaving both my cuddle days and bubble bath nights behind. Every now and then, I’m lucky enough to have my daughter climb into my lap(maybe during family movie night), but she’s rapidly getting too big for that.

Back in the day, I had all three boys snuggled up on my lap at the same time — that was pure bliss for me. Now,

I’d get some punches in the arm from my teenagers if I gave that a whirl. Over the holidays, we visited my family in New Jersey and had the opportunity to spend time with my sister and her kids. My daughter had the time of her life getting in baby snuggles with my sister’s baby and her younger kids.

Another one of my favorite memories from having younger children is the bubble baths. Because our three boys are so close in age, there were times when all three were in the tub at the same time — just the thought of it spells disaster. In an effort to make sure the entire bathroom didn’t get flooded, I used to stick the three of them in the tub with the bubbles, close the shower curtain, and peek my head in over top. Then, I’d count down: “3, 2, 1 — SPLASH TIME!” The boys would go wild, splashing to their heart’s desires. It’s memories like this

CLIENT
PHOTO?

that keep me alive. But on the thought of National Bubble Bath Day, a nice warm soak is always an amazing way to relax and give myself some self-care.

This month, our wine spotlight is Far Niente Cabernet and the name literally translates to “do nothing.” It ties in perfectly with both Cuddle Up Day and Bubble Bath Day. Now is your time to relax, do nothing, cuddle up, and take a nice, long bubble bath — you deserve it!

—Dr. Mike

Injecting Hope

GLOWING TRANSFORMATION: BBL’S SKIN REJUVENATION MAGIC

In the realm of aesthetic advancements, broadband light laser (BBL) has emerged as a revolutionary treatment offering a spectrum of benefits for various skin concerns. From improving aging skin to addressing issues like acne, rosacea, sun spots, and hyperpigmentation, BBL has become a go-to solution for individuals seeking non-invasive and effective skin rejuvenation.

Hope, our board-certified physician assistant is thrilled to share some information about BBL!

AGING SKIN

One of the standout benefits of BBL is its ability to reduce signs of aging. The procedure stimulates collagen production,

improving skin elasticity and reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. This results in a more youthful and vibrant complexion.

ACNE AND ROSACEA

BBL is effective in managing acne and rosacea by targeting the blood vessels responsible for redness and inflammation. The laser energy gently heats these vessels, reducing redness and calming the skin without the need for invasive procedures or extended downtime.

BROKEN BLOOD VESSELS

Broken blood vessels, a common concern, can be effectively treated with BBL. The laser energy is absorbed by the blood vessels, causing them to coagulate and gradually fade away, leaving the skin with a more even tone.

SUN SPOT AND HYPERPIGMENTATION

Sun spots and hyperpigmentation, often the result of sun exposure, can be significantly reduced with BBL. The laser targets pigmented cells, breaking them down and

promoting a more even skin tone and a clearer complexion.

Unlike more invasive treatments, BBL has no downtime. Patients can undergo the procedure and return to their daily activities immediately afterward, making it a convenient option for those with busy schedules.

BBL sessions are short, typically lasting about 20 minutes, and the results are quick and noticeable! In just one session, patients will see a difference and the best outcomes are achieved with a series of 2-3 treatments, spaced four weeks apart.

A Stanford study has shed light on the remarkable potential of BBL. The research revealed that BBL treatments can restore the gene expression of aged and sun-damaged skin, essentially causing it to look and act like younger skin.

For more information about BBL or to schedule a consultation with Hope, call our office. We are ready to help you achieve your best self in 2024!

SIP OF THE MONTH

Far Niente Cabernet Sauvignon



This Napa cabernet is a reliable choice for the price. Far Niente is rich and full-bodied with smooth tannins and notes of vanilla, cassis, dark berries, bay leaf, chocolate-covered espresso beans, and toffee. These powerful flavors all come together to make this wine a great way to kick off the new year! Far Niente pairs well with beef, hard cheese, and lamb, or any other meal for a special occasion.

—Dr. Mike

INSPIRATION

“If you want
to lift yourself
up, lift up
someone else.”

—Booker T.
Washington

