

## Breakup Damage Control - MTP434

Scot McKay: All right, gentlemen, first and foremost, before we dive into today's podcast episode, I want to let you know that after three years, we're finally going to do that masterclass on how to handle the holidays. And since you're going to need at least a bit of a heads up before Thanksgiving, I'm holding that masterclass a week early this month instead of the fourth Wednesday of the month, which would be the day before Thanksgiving. Right. I'm holding it the third Wednesday of the month to give you that time to get in on all the Thanksgiving tips I will be offering in this masterclass. Along with tips, of course, for Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's, and even Valentine's Day. And check it out, we're going to be covering every aspect of how to handle the holidays, including some that are probably going to surprise you. So check out [mountaintoppodcast.com](http://mountaintoppodcast.com) masterclass. The banner for this particular event, Handle the Holidays, is right there near the top. Go ahead and grab your ticket for this coming Wednesday, the 20th of, November at, ah, 8:00pm Eastern Standard Time. You will emerge from that event feeling completely prepared for the holidays and you'll be a man of holiday cheer instead of holiday dread that way too many

Scot McKay: men feel around this time of year.

Scot McKay: Once again, that's Handle the Holidays this month's masterclass on the 20th of November at 8pm, Eastern Standard Time. That's GMT minus five for those of you abroad. And of course, if you can't make the live event, no worries. There will be a complete download portal shortly after the event that will contain everything you need. So looking forward to having you join us for Handle the Holidays, this month's masterclass for M Men. And also gentlemen, it'll be talked about in the context of the show a bit and at the end, but right here up front, before we even get started, since the

topic of this particular podcast is divorce, I am fully cognizant of the fact that a lot of breakups, up to and including divorces, happened very close to the holidays. Merry freaking Christmas, right? Well, if you're one of those men listening to this podcast who's unfortunately headed into a holiday season that's going to be all about a, divorce, I am there for you in the context of this show. We talk about divorce coaching. And given how powerful this podcast was, I went ahead and set up a page specifically for you about divorce coaching. Check that out @mountaintoppodcast.com divorce coaching. Get on my calendar and we can talk for free for 25 minutes to see if it's a good fit. And now here comes a powerful and insightful episode with my new friend, Rayford Palmer from STG Divorce Law in Chicago.

Scot McKay: Enjoy.

Edroy Odem: Live from the mist enshrouded mountaintop fortress that is X and Y Communications headquarters. You're listening to the world famous Mountaintop Podcast. And now, here's your host, Scot McKay.

Scot McKay: All right, how's it going, gentlemen? Welcome to yet another episode of the world famous Mountaintop Podcast. I am your host from X and y Communications, Scot McKay. And today we're going to talk about, having a breakup with a woman, a significant other. And even though it might be necessary, ah, what if it doesn't actually ruin your life and or hers in the process? Good topic. And I have the perfect guest to discuss that with. Before we dive into that, we'll remind you guys that you can go to mountaintop podcast.com anytime. Check us out and our sponsors also join the Facebook group Mountaintop Summit anytime you want. A bunch of guys there waiting to, hang out. We talk about all kinds of topics relative to being a better man and getting better with women on X, on Truth Social, on TikTok. You can find me at Scot McKay.

Also YouTube @Scot McKay, @Real Scot McKay on Instagram and on threads, although I pretty much never use threads. With me today, like I said, is a new friend of mine. He comes from Chicagoland. He is the managing partner of STG Divorce Law and the author of a book that may have the most compelling and, dare I say, perfect title of all time. It just makes you want to grab it right off the shelf. I just want this done on getting a divorce. Raiford Palmer from Chicago and STG Divorce Law. Welcome, man.

Raiford Palmer: Thanks, Scot. I really appreciate being on the show.

Scot McKay: Yeah, you know, we love having real good, effective and honest, ethical divorce lawyers on the show because so many guys end up marrying the wrong woman or a decent relationship goes south over the years to the point where it's irreconcilable and they hire a lawyer and

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Scot McKay: they're not sure who they're really up against. Are they really, you know, are they really up against the woman who's soon to be their ex on the other side of the room? Or really, are they having to fend off the lawyers who are basically coming for their entire net worth in the process?

Raiford Palmer: Sure.

Scot McKay: So you've written this book. I just want this done. What compelled you to write this book? As if we really need to ask, but I want to hear it in your words.

Raiford Palmer: So Scot this book really came out of a frustration I had that there was a

lack of good information out there. Telling people the inside scoop on what goes on in divorce court and the key do's and don'ts, and the mindset that I've developed over 20 years of representing people, high net worth individuals, professionals, business owners in divorce cases. This is the wisdom gained from all those years in the trenches and then my previous experience in commercial and business practice, bringing that to bear on the divorce practice to try to get people the inside track. Because I find myself telling my clients time and again stories, analogies, do's and don'ts, things that became obvious to me that were very important to my clients and I wanted to explain the whys and wherefores and there were no resources to give people. This wasn't nuts and bolts stuff that you can just find in a Google search. This was all of the things you learn as a divorce lawyer over a long period of time.

Scot McKay: How long have you been a divorce lawyer?

Raiford Palmer: 23 years.

Scot McKay: Wow. That's probably longer than most of the marriages you're assisting in the dissolution, right?

Raiford Palmer: Yes, that's probably accurate.

Scot McKay: All right, so the title of this particular podcast, Breakup Damage Control. Now, even the word breakup kind of implies damage by default, doesn't it?

Raiford Palmer: It absolutely does.

Scot McKay: Yeah. I mean, you're gaining closure or something really cute when it

comes to a divorce. You know, that kind of terminology just doesn't cut it. This is a breakup. Something is being rent asunder. It's this relationship. And so how do you control the damage when something's being broken up? What are your first words of advice to a guy when it seems like a divorce is imminent?

Raiford Palmer: So it's important to let your head rule, not your heart, and that's going to be difficult. So being logical and methodical and being a planner and gathering the right team around you, including coach, lawyer, and that is going to be essential to keeping your wits about you and getting through the process as efficiently as you can.

Scot McKay: So what would you say are the warning signs that this relationship is not going to be fixed by going to yet another marriage counselor and it's time to lawyer up?

Raiford Palmer: That's a great question, because my second book is about deciding when it's time to get divorced or whether you should stay married. And that's called I Just Want to know. And I'm still working on that, but it's supposed to come out by the holidays. And, it's all about discerning whether it's time to get divorced or Stay married and with all steps included and no steps skipped. It's the book I wish I had in 2014 when I was struggling with the decision to get divorced. And the question you had was great, which is, when do you know it's time to throw in the towel and you're in marriage counseling, you have, people have a pretty good sense of when things aren't working. If you're saying the same things over and over again in counseling and there's no progress, you don't feel like there's any breakthrough. Your soon to be or your spouse is saying the same things and not budging. This is a sign that the counseling is not going to help and that you are just, you've become the classic immovable objects or one or both of you has and understanding that's happening is important to then say, okay, now we need to move to the next phase of deciding how to, get divorced in an orderly

manner and minimize the damage to both of us and our kids.

Scot McKay: Yeah. I would add a couple things to that from my own personal experience. First of all, if someone is no longer in our reality because of mental illness, it's hard to negotiate any kind of armistice between the two of you.

Raiford Palmer: True.

Scot McKay: And also when someone just says they're done and they refuse to work on this anymore. I remember one time I was told that during a one on one session by a marriage counselor, look, this isn't even your decision to make anymore. She wants out. And until she doesn't want out, we're stuck in the mud. There's nowhere to go. Yes, that was hard to hear, but, it was the truth. And you know, as guys, we want to fix everything, we want to think we got this handled, we can negotiate with her, we can talk to her. Even after the breakup happens and guys come to me rave thinking they're going to get this woman back. Their faulty logic, and it is faulty, is that if I could just talk to her, I could convince her to come back. When this is far beyond anything logical and it's gone way even beyond emotional and she's just gone. She's trying to disconnect and

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Scot McKay: the guy's trying to reel her in with some sort of thought process. Bad idea. Right?

Raiford Palmer: Right. It's not a business problem that you can solve or a tactical problem to solve. You're absolutely right. In my experience, doing this all these years, once that mojo is broken, it's virtually impossible to put it back together because it's

emotions we're talking about. It's not necessarily logical. So you're right. With mental illness and things like that, that's really a different.

Scot McKay: Oh, yeah. You know, that's just illogical. Yeah.

Raiford Palmer: But once somebody's telling you they're done, listen to them. It's. It's usually absolutely the case. And trying to talk them out of it. Virtually impossible. Out of all the divorces I've done, in all this time, I've seen two reconciliations. That's hundreds and hundreds. Okay, that's hundreds of cases over all these years. And two reconciliations. That shows you the probability is low. Once somebody says they're. It's over.

Scot McKay: Wow. That's just amazing.

Raiford Palmer: It's the truth. It's the truth. I mean, I. Obviously, this is anecdotal, but, there. There is something significant about even taking the steps to go to a marriage counselor and then taking the step, to contact a divorce lawyer once things have progressed to that point. It takes so much emotional energy to get there that getting back from that is so difficult. It is a tiny minority of people that can recover from something like that when one of the two people has gone that far. Very difficult to salvage.

Scot McKay: Yeah. But to be fair, you have hundreds of anecdotes from which to choose. So it may be anecdotal, but, you know, this is what you do for a living. And you've seen it hundreds of times.

Raiford Palmer: Right. And heard across the law firm. It's far more than that. It's

thousands of cases across our law firm and. And then elsewhere, when you talk to other divorce lawyers.

Scot McKay: This is.

Raiford Palmer: These are one of the. This is one of the things we know from doing this business that once they call a divorce lawyer, chances are there's no saving the marriage. And I don't mean to bump people out out there. It's worth trying, but, being realistic about it is important.

Scot McKay: Well, I'll tell you not to disagree with you, but to perhaps shine a ray of hope on this. My divorce lawyer 20 years ago now was married to the same man twice. But at least, you know, they were both divorced lawyers and probably looked each other in the eyes, said, what are we doing handing our, wealth over to someone else? You know?

Raiford Palmer: Right.

Scot McKay: Somehow it worked for them. But, you know, for the most part, based on what I've seen, you're exactly right. And I will add this layer to it from the dating coach perspective. A lot of times, Rafe, these people know the marriage is doomed from the moment they say I do to each other. I mean, I've had guys go out with Women. And they'll come back and they'll talk to me about how the date went, and they'll say things like, well, she told me she's crazy, she's bipolar. She's probably not relationship ready. She's a mess. Sometimes she goes crazy, and probably I should just avoid her. And by all means, never marry me, because I'll probably just flip my lid and leave you. so should we have the second date or not? What should we do?



Raiford Palmer: I mean, it's like what people do build. You're right. People do build failure right into the system.

Scot McKay: Well, she pre announced she's not relationship material, and this isn't going to work with anybody, let alone you.

Raiford Palmer: Right.

Scot McKay: And women are guilty of the same mistake.

Scot McKay: Women will have guys sit across the table from them and go, I never want to get married. I never want to make babies. I have a really fierce temper and most women generally just get scared of me. Plus I'm a raging alcoholic and, you know, do cocaine on the side, and I gamble all my money away. And she's like, telling her girlfriends, oh, I found this really nice guy, you know, maybe he's the one. And I was like, honey, what are you thinking? You know what I mean, right? Yeah.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah, that's true. it's like you've said and we've talked about a little while ago. When people tell you who they are, listen. Yes, they're being honest with you, and you're not going to be the one that magically fixes them.

Scot McKay: Hey, that's valid.

Scot McKay: Even when we're in a voting cycle, let alone when we're in a dating cycle. I mean, no matter who they are, even if you're a hiring manager and you're interviewing people for a job, it's amazing how they'll tell you exactly who they are and why you shouldn't hire them. And they're usually right.

Raiford Palmer: That's absolutely right. And then emotionally. Right. And when the tough thing is emotionally, we want things to work so we sort of can have a construct in our mind about how this is gonna work and it's gonna be okay. And we sort of override these warning signs and say, well, it's all gonna be good and it'll work out. And, you know, to our detriment, whether it's marriage or, like you said, these other relationships, because we want it so badly that we don't look at these facts that are right in front of us.

Scot McKay: Well, something that goes along with that.

Scot McKay: And this is a really cynical yet true aspect of Dating and relationships almost always across the board. Whoever wants

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Scot McKay: the relationship least is the one in total control.

Raiford Palmer: Oh, that's true. I agree 100%.

Scot McKay: Yeah. If you desperately want to reconcile with your honey and they're desperately dying to leave and take half the net worth with them, well, you know, that's not an even playing field, right?

Raiford Palmer: Absolutely correct.

Scot McKay: Yeah. You know, that brings up another point. A lot of times I talk to guys who are going through the throes of a breakup like this and they've decided they'd rather mediate than litigate. And here's what I've noticed about that. Although on paper

that sounds like it's going to be a lot easier, a lot less emotionally painful. Usually the one who's pushing to mediate is the one who wants the relationship more. Right. And then the one who agrees to the mediation uses that to drag out the process. Get more mad money as a pre divorce settlement from a guy who's probably got some wealth, and it ends up going worse and ends up being more painful than if they just would have freaking litigated it. Am I wrong or am I onto something there?

Raiford Palmer: So I would say yes, and it can be genuine so that what you say is correct.

Scot McKay: My observations are purely anecdotal as well. I have nothing that's a peer reviewed study to back this, but I would say there's at least a dozen and a half cases where I've talked to the guy and they're mediating. And I have yet to see where mediation is making this less complicated instead of more complicated. That's where I'm coming from here.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah, that's fair. So my book is one of the things. It is an intro to alternative dispute resolution. And I preach the gospel of the advantages of collaborative practice, mediation, arbitration as an alternative to litigation. But it does take the right set of circumstances and the right people. So, yes, the mediation process can be abused. It can also be an excellent tool to help resolve a case or issues inside a case. And I've seen the process abused. And some of it depends on the parties, obviously. some of it depends on the lawyers involved. In Cook county in Chicago, for example, a court process all the way through trial can take three to five years. And mediation is probably worth a shot under those circumstances. And it can be done right. It can also be abused. So what you said is true. I just. I have seen success stories with it. One might argue that those people were predisposed for success anyway, you know,

like they would have settled at some point anyhow. Or, you know, within a reasonable time. And that's probably a valid point to make. but I am a fan of alternative dispute resolution as a time, money, and emotional saving process in the right circumstances.

Scot McKay: Well, if both parties are in line with the title of your book and they just want this done, quote unquote, then it probably makes sense. It's just someone wants to make this really, really painful, and they want to go out as harshly as possible and just make this other party pay. That's when it gets ugly, isn't it?

Raiford Palmer: It does. and those people are usually sorely mistaken. That is, they tend to cut their own throats in the process. And that's something that a good lawyer or a, ah, good divorce coach will warn them about. That the litigation is one of the most inefficient ways to punish somebody in that you're spending marital funds on attorneys and you're burning down the marital estate financing the litigation. So if you don't, that kind of person is not using a cost benefit analysis. They're just saying, well, I'll do anything to inflict maximum pain on the other person. The probably irony of that is they're burning the marital estate in the process, and at the end of the thing, the attorneys have made a bunch of money, and the party that thinks they're somehow winning this way ends up getting a lot less at the bottom line because it's all been spent in the meantime. And I've seen cases with extreme results where marital assets were burned to the ground, both in just spending by the parties or by one of the two. excessive spending on junk clothes and all kinds of nonsense, and paying temporary maintenance to a wife who spends it away, not realizing that money comes from a limited pool. And, it's not growing on trees. And at the end of the day, there's no money left to divide after World War 3 is over. Everything's burned to ashes.

Scot McKay: Yeah, it just goes up in the flames of hate.

Raiford Palmer: Right. And so what do you get at the end? You?

Scot McKay: Nothing. The lawyers got it all well, or.

Raiford Palmer: It just got ground up. In this case, Target got a lot of it. She was just spending money left, right and center. And, and this isn't to knock women in particular, but in this case, this woman was spending like there's no tomorrow. And the guy, they had a large estate, the gentleman had owned a business, got a large settlement of

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Raiford Palmer: a few million bucks. And over the course of a few years in this, litigation, she just thought that continuing to swing punches would be a successful Strategy. Well, it gave our client no choice but to go all the way through trial. And ultimately I was able to negotiate a settlement. And there's actually a copy of the letter I sent to the other attorney in the book with names removed as a strategy to explain to this person, here's the damage that's been done already, and here's what continuing to go through trial will do to you. It'll destroy whatever's left. And shortly after we sent the letter, they settled the case after, a year of ongoing trial. A day here and a day there. Yeah. So it was. People can destroy themselves in this process, and ultimately there are no winners in that process. And you feel good in the short term or this vindictive wife felt good in the interim. And at the end, our client went off to start a new H Vac company and was doing well, and she was in trouble because there wasn't a lot left.

Scot McKay: Well, sometimes they're just borderline. Sometimes drama is what they want. They love that sort of emotional high, whatever they're getting from it, and whatever dysfunctional, mentally ill way they derive that feeling. And, you know,

sometimes people think anything prosperous must die. And a lot of times that's what led to the ultimate divorce anyway. And I've seen people take advantage of that. Not just the wife or the husband, but the lawyers as well. The other thing that comes to mind in a situation like that is what we call in Texas, the best interest of the child.

Raiford Palmer: Sure.

Scot McKay: So whenever you have children involved. I've seen children go through horribly emotionally distressing and even horribly inconvenient scenarios that the family law system is trying to impose upon them as what's good for them.

Raiford Palmer: Right.

Scot McKay: Do you want to comment on the complications of having children involved vis a vis the title of your book? Just Wanting It Done. Is there a quick and easy way when children are involved that makes it less stressful and, well, just eases the impact on them? Or is it inevitably going to be more complicated and stressful because the kids are involved?

Raiford Palmer: This is. It's always difficult when kids are involved, even in an amicable divorce, because you're no longer, together as a unit. You are going to. Whether you're mom or dad or whatever, you are going to have limited time with the child, and the child is going to be going back and forth to do two different households, wherever they may be. It's going to be hard for the kids and hard for the parents. There's really no avoiding that. And the kids are going to be hurt by the process, even a good. I'm putting good in air quotes. Even a good divorce is going to hurt the kids and hurt the parents because they're not going to be with their kids all the time and it will change their relationship.

Anything that the parents can do to make the process smoother and not put the kids in the middle is huge. To make it as best as possible to get to the other side sooner. And time doesn't make it better. The divorce cases don't age like fine wines.

Scot McKay: And if you have an 18 month old or a 2 year old, stop kidding yourself. They know exactly what's going on.

Raiford Palmer: You're absolutely right. Kids read their parents. They can tell what's going on at.

Scot McKay: A very young age is what I'm scoring. Oh, yeah, yeah.

Raiford Palmer: at a very young age, kids feel that there's a problem between the parents and it's upsetting to them. So you're absolutely right. Even very young kids aren't ignorant of the situation.

Scot McKay: So, next question, and this is one I can't wait to hear your answer to. Rafe, you've already talked about how by the time people lawyer up, it's pretty much over. They've thrown in the towel, it's time to get divorced. But you would describe yourself as a pro marriage divorce lawyer. How does that flavor your practice and your views on things and indeed what you wrote in your book?

Raiford Palmer: It's a number of things. So it's about not. People would think I'm jaded about marriage because I'm a divorce lawyer because I got divorced myself. But I'm remarried and thoroughly enjoying my marriage. And I tell people a good marriage is better than a good divorce any day of the week. And if there's good there, it's worth putting effort in and trying to save it. So to go a little bit, I mean, I know we talked about,

you know, when it's done, it's done. On the other hand, in our law firm, we always recommend people try counseling. We'll get people that call us very early in the process and, they're not sure if they want to get divorced. They want to know what's involved in a divorce to help inform their decision making. So, you know, what's it going to look like financially, what's going to happen with the kids, things like that. And they'll say, you know, I haven't made a decision. I'm just calling to see what, what it's about. And sometimes they'll ask, at the end of the conversation, they'll say, well, you know, what do you think I should do? Like, hey, that's not my call.

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Raiford Palmer: You know, that's a cosmic, much higher order decision that some guy you just talked to for an hour on the phone is a divorce lawyer shouldn't be making. That's a very personal decision you should make. After a lot of contemplation, talking to other professionals, coach, counselor, and making every effort to evaluate your own role, your spouse's role in the relationship, whether it can be fixed, what needs fixing. And so I just think it's worth, you know, we invest a lot in our marriage, but everything from financially to emotionally and our children, that it's worth giving a shot to making it right if we can. Before we jump out of the airplane, we should check, do all of our checks and see if we can fly the airplane safely to the ground. That's my analogy on that.

Scot McKay: Well, you know, it sounds like you're inspiring trust in the people who consult you. I'm reminded of a friend of mine who sells Audis, and they're not cheap. And, the people who come and perhaps might buy one from him aren't the unemployed. There are people who have some affluence. They don't make stupid decisions based on heart disease. And he says it's uncanny how many times someone will have talked



to him about a car and they'll finally ask him, so should I buy this Audi or should I buy a BMW? And he says he always gives them the same answer. He goes, well, I'm going to be a biased opinion obviously. And he just laughs because what he knows is the person has already made the decision. They're just looking basically to pass off the blame in the moment for signing off on that much money for the next five years to the nearest person close to them so they could feel like, hey, you know what, it's this guy's fault. I bought the thing. He was too salesperson. And I was like, yeah, that's kind of like seduction between men and women. He goes, exactly. They're all horny, but they want this to be your fault that they came over to your place and got naked because they don't usually do this. I go, exactly. He goes, well, that's human nature now, isn't it? So people are looking for someone they could trust, but they also want the validation that they're making this decision. And I would suspect you hear that reasonably often from people because it's an ugly decision to have to make.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah, it is.

Scot McKay: Because most normal red blooded people don't go into a marriage hoping they'll get divorced someday.

Raiford Palmer: Oh, I say that all the time. I, say, you know, when you're at the altar, you're not like, gee, I can't wait till I get divorced. You know, that's. Everybody wants their marriage to work out when they get married and people want to be happy and it's our default. And then we live life and things are challenging and human relationships can be difficult, obviously. And if it doesn't go well, we struggle. And there's no good user manual for this stuff, which is why coaches like you are so valuable and counselors are valuable people with professional training and life experience to help shed light on this for people and talk to them about their options and help hold a mirror up to them so

they understand their decision making process. Yeah, it's critical.

Scot McKay: You know, you bring up a good point. And I wanted to mention this before, but since you brought it up again. You talk about getting a divorce. Coach and I have acted in that capacity for, dozens of men over the years. I consider it to be at times an integral part of my practice as a dating relationship coach.

Raiford Palmer: Sure.

Scot McKay: And it's necessary because it's a very deeply emotional time where we as guys and even the women we're divorcing aren't really going to act like ourselves sometimes. And it's nice to have another unbiased person to talk to you truthfully, to bounce ideas off of who is different than the person you're paying the legal fees to. I appreciate you acknowledging that.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah, that's absolutely right. And it's. I talk about being very cognizant if you're getting in a divorce situation or thinking about it, about who your circle of advisors is. So it's. Your family is going to be your cheerleaders generally. So they're not going to be objective. Your buddies aren't going to be objective.

Scot McKay: On anything in life.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah. And they shouldn't be. They're on your team and that's their role. That's okay. But you're right, having, another opinion, another unbiased opinion with that person's unique perspective is tremendously valuable when you're struggling with this stuff. And the divorce lawyer has one, set of objectives and one and a set of expertise and experience. And the divorce coach comes from a different angle and a

different background. And I found coaches to be tremendously valuable in the divorce process, both in collaborative mediation or in litigated, you know, court cases. Because the thing that you're saying is so so true. And that is one thing I've said is that 90% of the stuff that bothers us in a divorce is the 90% lawyers can't do anything about. And you

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Raiford Palmer: know, we fix like we do nuts and bolts stuff, divide property, deal with custody and visitation, deal with alimony. But most m of what bothers guys in divorce is emotional communication related. It's all that stuff that comes with it that lawyers aren't a court order, won't fix. And that's where coaching is so valuable. And you know, the lawyer's not the right tool for that. That's not what the lawyers are trained to deal with.

Scot McKay: Yeah, I think that's very well spoken. That is exactly how it tends to go when a guy hires me for that specific purpose. I had a very rough divorce. I also have a lovely wife. And our relationship, like yours with your wife nowadays is wonderful. We're walking the talk. We're living the dream. Both after having gone through respective evil, horrible divorces against evil, insane people. And that brings to mind the simple fact that also like us, you see the flotsam and jetsam, of, failed relationships all day long. And it would have been easy for you to go, man, I'm just going to become cynical. I'm going to become one of these men going their own way. And I never want to see a live woman who could fog a mirror anywhere near my life ever again. But you're more resilient than that, and you're more optimistic and generous than that. And you're not a victim like we were. And I think that mindset is all important and not only on the part of our partner in litigation, but on the part of the coach we hire. And of course, I get guys who come to me who are in a pretty rough mental place. They're upset, they're angry,

they need someone to vent to. They can't go acting like that with people close to them because they won't, you know, read that correctly.

Raiford Palmer: Right.

Scot McKay: And I've seen lots of divorces over the years.

Raiford Palmer: Sure.

Scot McKay: And I've coached a lot of guys through a lot of situations. So in many ways I've seen it all. And that informs my ability to be a good, solid coach for those guys. But, you hit the nail on the head, Rafe. I mean, a lot of guys are like, what do I do? Have I even hired the right lawyer? What should I expect? And I can't give them legal advice, but they don't want me to give them the legal advice they already have. Somebody doing that for them. They want to know how to navigate the humanity of the situation when they get back out there. What should I do? What should I not do socially? And so I just think it's an incredible, insight that you're offering here that not only does a guy need to lawyer up once the divorce is imminent, but he needs to get a good coach, too, you know. Now, obviously, I'm a biased opinion, but sure.

Raiford Palmer: Well, it's been my experience, and I'm unbiased from that perspective because I've seen it in, in real life, work so well for clients. And I. I have a whole chapter devoted to coaches in the book and how. What their role is, what they are, what they aren't, and why it's a good thing. And I didn't know about them until I started doing collaborative in 2007, and I saw them as such effective members of the team in these cases, really helping with breaking through the emotional barriers. Things like there's infidelity. The coaches would help the parties kind of work through that so that we could

even have a meeting, you know, to talk about settlement, because the wife was so angry about an affair that the coaches would air that stuff, out. And then we could actually make progress. Because a lot of the things stopping progress in divorce cases is that 90%, it's the emotional stuff that, like you mentioned earlier on, what can make these cases really bad is somebody, you know, emotionally stuck or dragging their feet or intentionally using the process to beat up the other person. And the coach can help the person see that and point out to them, this isn't effective, and you're going to be upset in the end. That's where I think the coaches can really accomplish a lot of breakthroughs in these cases. And lawyers just don't really have the time or the training to address all that stuff.

Scot McKay: That's not.

Scot McKay: That's not what you do for a living.

Raiford Palmer: No. And it's, you know, we're training strategy and tactics in the legal world, and we'll pick up this stuff anecdotally over time. But clients will ask those. Early on, before I knew about coaching, a client would say, well, my wife said this and that and said this bad stuff to the kids. You know, what do I do? Let's assume it was something that I couldn't file a motion. I couldn't get the court to do something. It didn't rise to that level. So I would say something that I would tell them, like, well, I can tell you some common sense stuff. My dad used to tell me when I was a kid, like, just ignore it. It'll be okay. But, I'm going to charge you this hourly rate to give you common sense advice when you could pay a professional, probably substantially less, to get advice based on a lot of training and education that will be better for you. And, you know, it's like you can hear it from me, but you're better off talking to a pro who does this all the time and has

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Raiford Palmer: all that background.

Scot McKay: You know, you mentioned when there's been infidelity or someone's been done wrong in this relationship.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah.

Scot McKay: One of the things I've consistently offered as a coach to people in that situation, and I've seen men and women who have been cheated on and who have also been the cheaters. When the person who's done wrong has an opportunity to get their power back emotionally, to get their dignity back. I've noticed if the other party is willing to abide that, you know, it could be scary if you're the one who was the cheater and we're talking about empowering the one who was cheated on. But I think if you. If there's an opening there for the person who's been hurt to get their power back legitimately, not in some Pollyanna ish way where you're patting them on the shoulder saying, you go, buckaroo, you can do it. Be resilient. You know, resilience. Coaches are littering the market nowadays. Right.

Raiford Palmer: Okay.

Scot McKay: But when they legitimately start feeling empowered again, the anger and the hate tends to subside just a little bit, and you see that vortex of doom subside with it.

Raiford Palmer: That's true.

Scot McKay: And it ends up being easier, relatively speaking, less costly, relatively speaking. And of course, as an ethical divorce lawyer on your side, you don't want this to go on for 10 years. You got other cases, too.

Raiford Palmer: No. Right. Exactly. It's when people. You're right. When they're not mired in their misery.

Scot McKay: When they're not bitter and angry.

Raiford Palmer: Right. And they realize that. And I've had this conversation more than once with a potential client when they're the person that's stung, either by an affair or just that the other person pulled the trigger first. The other person said, I want to leave you, and the person talking to me wants to stay married. Or they believe they do.

Scot McKay: Yeah.

Raiford Palmer: And, you know, you ask the question, well, do you really want to stay married to somebody who has just told you they don't love you or who treats you this badly? And that's sort of like, hey, you know, that's a wake up call. You don't deserve to be treated like that. And that's kind of a revelation that, to your point that, once that switch flips and you realize, well, you know, this person isn't good for me either, then they're taking agency and they realize there's probably something better for me out there.

Scot McKay: And you're right.

Raiford Palmer: Then you have a breakthrough and you can make progress.

Scot McKay: Yes. Hurt people. Hurt people.

Raiford Palmer: That's a good idea.

Scot McKay: Yeah. As long as the person you're divorcing remains hurt, they're going to make this as ugly as possible. all the way till the elevator slams to the bottom floor.

Raiford Palmer: Right. Which is one of the reasons why I always say, you know, you, when you're on the other side of that, refusing to engage and taking the high road is so important in not perpetuating the cycle of violence in these cases. And it's not easy. I know it isn't easy. But if you can continue to maintain high road and being cool, you will do better in the long run, you know, in the aggregate.

Scot McKay: But I want to be careful to add to that. That's not the other party's job to instill in the one being broken up with. I mean, the last thing my soon to be ex wife would want to hear from me is you're beautiful and smart and someone's going to love you. Stop being a victim.

Raiford Palmer: I don't mean that.

Scot McKay: That's for someone else to impart to them.

Raiford Palmer: That's absolutely right. I don't mean that. I just mean.

Scot McKay: Yeah, I knew you did, but I wanted to be clear.

Raiford Palmer: That's a great point. yeah, I'm meaning don't make it worse. It's like,



with doc, you know, with doctors. Like with doctors, they say first do no harm.

Scot McKay: You know, Exactly.

Raiford Palmer: It's like, we've already got the injury. Let's, let's take care to not make it worse. And the other person is going to be hurt and angry and they might be trying to make it worse. Try your best, to not engage.

Scot McKay: Yeah.

Scot McKay: Sometimes that's really difficult because you're just.

Scot McKay: As frustrated as your hurt and angry ex you cheated on is. So you're sitting there trying to mediate through this thing and you're on the other side of the table rolling your eyes and going, oh, God, now we're never going to get out of here because there she goes again. What you've done is just throwing a match on kerosene. You're going to be there three times as long now because you opened your big mouth, that sort of thing.

Raiford Palmer: It's like, like letting people vent. And just like sometimes in a collaborative setting or in mediation or whatever, sometimes it's just so important for people to feel heard, even if they've said it three times. Sometimes they want people to bear witness, and they want to say it in the room with all of the lawyers around. You know, you did XYZ to me, and it hurts me. And your client might think, I've heard this 20 times, but, sometimes it's really important to that other person to say, you heard me, and here's how. And, I'll be preparing my client to say, just keep your mouth shut and nod or. And say you're sorry and leave it at that. You don't have to grovel or anything,

but sometimes just acknowledging that in the room where there are other people there, especially like the lawyers or whatever, sometimes that is like a moment where there's an epiphany or a sort of a burying of the grievances. And, I've seen that happen a couple times when there was, an affair in a situation like that where the one party said, well, my wife's never admitted

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Raiford Palmer: it, or she's never, I know she did it. I caught her, but she's never apologized. And I talked to my client and I said, let's sit in this conference room over here, and I just want you to apologize to him. And she's like, why? I said, because he needs closure and he needs you to admit it.

Scot McKay: Well, I think what you're saying is extremely profound, because I think in our youth and immaturity, sometimes we can't restrain ourselves from lashing out and making things worse, Right? And that immature lack of restraint ends up costing us thousands and thousands of extra dollars in litigation because we just ignited her passion against us even more hotly and brightly by opening our damn mouth instead of having the maturity to shut up and nod your head and perhaps and condescend to apologize.

Raiford Palmer: Right? And sometimes the best action is doing nothing, whether it's litigation or, like you said, sitting there at the table and just listening. And I've told people before, you don't have to believe it. Like, you don't have to agree that you're a bad person or whatever. You just have to listen, and that's enough. People just want to be heard.

Scot McKay: And meanwhile, m. The guy's going, I'm not going to be disrespected. Like this at the table, getting all macho and yeah, he's just gonna have to open up his wallet because he wasn't willing to sit there. Take it.

Raiford Palmer: It's a no win situation. Just let it ride, you know, just get it over with. Let it ride and you'll get out with more of your rear end attached to you, you know, if you, if you take. Which is important.

Scot McKay: Having most of it chewed off.

Raiford Palmer: Yeah, yeah, right. So it's like do you want to be, do you want to be right or do you want to be happy?

Scot McKay: It's just big picture stuff is what it is. It is not in the moment stuff. Yeah, right.

Raiford Palmer: And using, but applying that concept all the way through, whether it's divorce or you're in relationships, is important.

Scot McKay: Well, anybody who ever read the Albert Camus book the Stranger in high school about existentialism and living in the moment knows where it got the main character in that book. It got him on death row. You know, it's like the old Johnny Cash song. He's in Folsom prison for killing a man just to watch him die. You know, that's what famously happens in that classic book highlighting existentialism by Albert Camus. That's what happens. And I think sometimes if we let ourselves lash out across the table in front of an angry, soon to be ex, we're not exercising a whole lot of wisdom and it's going to cost us down the road.

Raiford Palmer: Right. We're just going to, we're going to go right back into another cycle because that becomes a self fulfilling prophecy for the other person. And she just says, see, he's the bad guy that I told you he was. And we go around again, terrible stuff.

Scot McKay: But this conversation on the other hand, has been wonderful stuff. Rafer Palmer, will you come back and join us again when your new book comes out?

Raiford Palmer: It would be my pleasure and a privilege. Thank you very much, Scot. I would love it.

Scot McKay: Yeah. Because I love how you talk about this very, very touchy subject with, such grace and with a heart. And I think that's, that's going to catch a lot of the listeners off guard. I think that's exactly what we need to hear from someone so close to the family law system. And I think it's great that you came on Today, talked about what your book's about and gave these guys some kind of frame of reference. And you know, gentlemen, whether you're going through a divorce or not, I hope and trust that this was valuable to you. Just if for no Other reason than because it gives you some window on how relationships can go south and maybe perhaps keeping them from getting to this very deeply bad place to begin with. And not to be underestimated, was that bit in this conversation about women announcing who they are to you early on? Yeah, bad decisions to begin with. His name is Rayford Palmer. He's from SDG Divorce Law up in Chicago. He's the author of the best selling divorce book on Amazon. I Just want this done. Great book, great title.

Scot McKay: I have it at the top of.

Scot McKay: My Amazon influencer queue right now. If you're listening to this particular show within a few days of its release.

Scot McKay: So you can grab a copy of.

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Scot McKay: R A I F you will go to stglawfirm.com Rafe what will they find there?

Raiford Palmer: They'll find all the information about the law firm and how to reach us if they're in the Chicagoland area and are looking for a consultation related to divorce. also the book website has a lot of information about me and how to reach us on our social media. The law firm website is great for that too, for all our socials. And then I'm just easy to find on the Internet if you search my name. Rayford Palmer. Very easy to find. I'm at Rayford Palmer on X, at Rayford Palmer on Instagram. So real easy to locate out there on, TikTok at Rayford Palmer also. So look forward to engaging with your listeners and love speaking with you. Scot, thanks very much for the privilege.

Scot McKay: Yeah, man, likewise. It's good to get to know you. And gentlemen, if you are in the market for a family law firm and you are about to lawyer up, first of all, I want to talk to you for, the reasons we talked

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Scot McKay: about in this show. I can most likely be of assistance to you in that

process. And as well, obviously, I think you probably found your lawyer who is Rafer Palmer, our guest today. Once again, Ray, thank you so much for joining us today. I appreciate you, man.

Raiford Palmer: It's my pleasure, Scot. Thanks so much. Appreciate it.

Scot McKay: Yeah, man, absolutely.

Scot McKay: And gentlemen, if you have not been to mountaintop podcast.com lately, I want to remind you that this month's masterclass is coming a week earlier than usual so we can talk about how to handle the holidays. The reason for me doing it on the third Wednesday of the month instead of the fourth is so that you have some time to get your mojo in order for Thanksgiving. Of course, if I did it the day before Thanksgiving, well, that wouldn't give you much time. Go to mountaintoppodcast.com, click the masterclass link there. Or you can go right to mountaintop podcast.com masterclass and click that banner for the Handling the Holidays masterclass right there near the top of the page. And hey, if you happen to be listening to this podcast sometime a week after I've produced it, definitely still head over to mountaintop podcast.com because we've done 32 of them. There's definitely a topic or two or 10 in there that will be of interest to you too. Mountaintoppodcast.com masterclass also want to thank our.

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