

Speaker 1:

In August of 2013 I was diagnosed with colon cancer and as a result of that experience I really wanted to change my lifestyle completely from managing a large firm to really focusing on something that would provide me a better quality of life if you will in terms of giving me more time to be with my family and to focus on my health, so after I went through surgery and chemotherapy I decided that I was going to leave the big firm world and join my wife Bertha in her practice to focus the cases she was handling and also to build a mediation arbitration practice.

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There are a few things I think in life that keep us balanced. One is your physical wellbeing, your health. Two, is probably your spiritual health whatever that looks like. Relationships that we have in our lives and I would say the fourth thing would be what causes us to get up in the morning. What is it that we want to contribute to society professionally? I made a major life change for the reason I described earlier because I was working non-stop. I was flying all over the country for meetings, while handling cases and going from project to project to project without really having much ability to have any much of a downtime and so reinforcing the notion of taking time off to refresh, to have time, to reflect and think.

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I'll share a very recent example of a mediation that we had. It involved a workplace sexual assault and it was a case where the mediation started at nine in the morning and didn't end until two in the morning. Both sides were very complimentary and said we think you are the only guy who was able to do this. We don't think any other mediator would have been able to accomplish this and in fact we think any other mediator would have given up. These cases involved real people, real stories, real life consequences and it's the ability to handle those kind of cases as opposed to cases were you're arguing over the meaning or the phrasing of a contract or some esoteric anti-trust concept. I'm not saying those things are not great, but it's the real people elements of employment law that have been satisfying.