

Bob Brunson:

It's one of the most grueling things I've been through just because it never seemed like it was going to end. Her attorney was basically trying to turn everything against me, make it like I was the bad guy when I'm not the one that ended up having the affair.

My name's Bob Brunson. I run a boat building company in Wilson. In December of '17, my ex-wife decided she no longer wanted to be married. We had been married 30-plus years, had two grown children, and she decided she wanted to go back and revisit her college boyfriend after years of marriage with me, which in the beginning was fine with me. It's just that in most marriages, that the attorneys get involved when there's a settlement issue, and that's really what happened with us in the beginning. It was all about the money. So once we had made the decision as a couple that we were not going to be together, then it was a business decision to try to split it. Of course, North Carolina's a 50/50 state. Her attorney was not interested in that, so that was the problem. Her attorney was very aggressive, was asking for completely unrealistic demands.

Once the attorneys for her started making all kinds of what I thought were unreasonable demands, I decided, "Okay, this is not going to work, so we're going to have to have somebody to go up against that law firm." I had no attorney. I knew I needed someone really sharp because I knew this was going to be a pretty lengthy battle. So I started searching. I did some research on the internet, and Angela's name kept coming up more often than others, and most of the reviews that I read on Angela were pretty good. That's when I sought out Angela and we began the saga to try to end this thing. I met with Angela for the first consultation and we were there for about an hour. From the very beginning, she studied everything. She asked the normal litany of questions, but I knew immediately that this was the right choice for me. I was quite surprised because the other meetings I had with other attorneys before I decided on Angela, no way shape or form, did I have that kind of feeling.

We made a lot of attempts to settle and we were reasonable. It just wasn't happening from the other side, but Angela never got flustered. We never lost our way. We were trying to save the company and trying to save as much of what I had as we could. I felt like the other side saw dollar signs and said, "Hey, there's probably some money here. Let's drag it out. Let's get everything we can." It was never that way with Angela. It was like "Let's do a fair settlement. You go your way and I'll go my way."

Angela is a very compassionate and caring person. That's not your typical divorce lawyer. We were both involved in the case extensively. I think that's what makes a big deal. If you're involved in the case, you own a piece of it with her. It was a joint effort and she made me feel involved from the very first day. I think that, for me, made it a much different experience than what I expected it to be from what I had heard from other people or what of my first impression of a divorce attorney was going to be. I can't imagine that you could have a better fighter in the corner than Angela when you're going up against the bulldog attorney that I was going up against.

The issue in our case was a judge had awarded her alimony when in fact she's the one that had an affair. And my point to the judge in court was, "I'm confused. We shared money the entire time we were together. It was never my money, her money. How do I owe her money when she's going to have plenty of money from a settlement?" It would've cost me a lot of money to pay the alimony. So we made a pivot at that point of the case to where we decided we weren't going to go any further.

We weren't going to willingly pay her alimony. We said, "If you're going for alimony and you had the affair, then we're going after the boyfriend with alienation of affection." I think they figured that out from the other side that we were serious. The last settlement letter we wrote was, "If you decide that you want to pursue alimony, that's fine. We're not going to turn back. We're going to pursue him, and it'll be a long drawn-out battle, and we're going to try to get that money back from him." And I think

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Angela was as committed to that strategy. In the end, they buckled and said, "We don't want to do that. Fine. We'll take the settlement and go." The fight was finally over. It's like, "Wow, what a great relief."

And then we had a good laugh about it because Angela's got a great sense of humor, so we were able to have a lot of fun while we were doing this. It was never all about being serious. It was, "Let's be fun and relaxed because we know we'll get through this and we know we're going to be okay, so let's just do the best we can, and let's try to keep the stress level down." It was a positive experience from the very first minute I met her all the way till the end. I knew she was absolutely in my corner. She wasn't adding me to a list of clients. I never felt like I was a number. She's done a good job about being consistent and really caring about the client. That's a quality she has that people could really benefit from in a time of stress. There's a lot of anguish, there's a lot of unknowns. People like me, you've never gone through this before, and so there's a lot of headache, a lot of heartache that could have been avoided, but at least I had Angela.