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## This Is A Business As Much As A Practice

By SHAUN SALMON

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Attorney [Cory Morris](#) has not been out of law school all that long, but he's already been named a Super Lawyer, awarded the Equality Award at the Suffolk County New York Civil Liberties Union 50th Anniversary Gala, and honored with the New York State Bar Empire Justice Award for Pro Bono work. As a solo practitioner, Cory works across a variety of legal fields but holds a special place for civil rights and constitutional law within his practice. In addition, he has taught courses on the subject matter, including his Lawline CLE program, [Ohio v. Clark and Confrontation Clause Concerns](#).

Cory discusses why he focuses so heavily on civil rights and what it's like as a young solo practitioner.



  
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**What made you decide to practice law, specifically in the civil rights arena?**

I practice civil rights law because it is meaningful, has provided me purpose and was

necessary. I became a lawyer to help people and make an impact in their lives. The practice areas in which I focus allow me to help people who need it the most. Along with my private clients, I work on the assigned counsel defender plan of Suffolk County, New York, and take on matters involving civil rights and government accountability.

### **Why did you decide to become a solo practitioner?**



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There were a number of motivating factors behind my decision to go “solo.” I went solo out of necessity, opportunity and because of my desire to help individuals suffering from mental illness, specifically clients who were suffering from substance abuse issues. I now take criminal cases involving nonviolent drug users and help others who are facing criminal charges as a result of an addiction.

### **What challenges have you faced in building your own practice?**

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Enormous challenges. Finding clients, learning how to practice ethically, learning the administrative part of practicing law. I continue to face new challenges every day, whether it be a difficult opposing counsel/litigant or incorrect charges on a credit card account. Additionally, technology often poses issues and blurs attorney ethical obligations. One of the biggest challenges is the marketing aspect—specifically internet marketing—of running a law practice.

### **What has been your favorite experience in the courtroom or as a lawyer?**

My favorite part of the courtroom experience is cross-examining law enforcement agents. One of the greatest experiences as a solo lawyer, for me, has been the client

referral from someone who met me while carrying out their law enforcement duties. Courtroom advocacy, trial and being able to argue on the record are all favorites in my book.

**What advice would you give to other young attorneys interested in starting their own practice?**



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Work hard. This is a business as much as a practice. Even churches of God fail. This is not for the faint of heart.

**What is one attribute/skill you think is necessary to be a solo practitioner?**

The ability to simply work hard. A solo practitioner is not just practicing law but also runs a business. Work ethic and integrity are necessary for any business, but a solo practitioner needs to account for every facet of the practice from managing attorney trust accounts to cleaning the office at the end of the day. Delegation, management and basic knowledge of accounting is helpful, but it will not amount to much unless you work hard and continue to work hard even though the phones may not be ringing.

**Why do you teach CLE programs?**

To learn, to help others and to collaborate with other lawyers.

**If you had to choose a career path other than law, what would that be?**

Counselor or psychologist. My advanced degree in psychology allowed me to explore my interest in helping substance abusing clients and persons suffering from impulse control disorders. Unfortunately, there appears to be a great need for addiction counselors at the present time.

**What lawyer do you admire most?**

Morris Dees, the founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a group that is known for devising innovative ways to cripple hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan.

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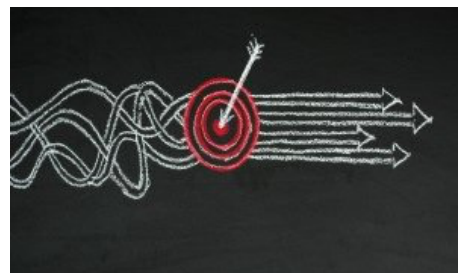
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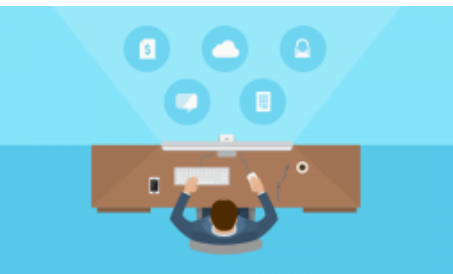
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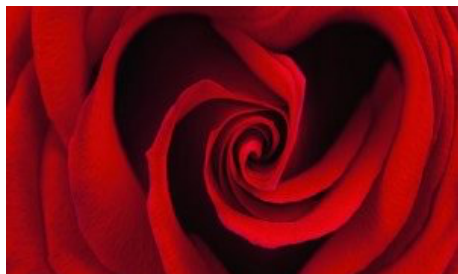
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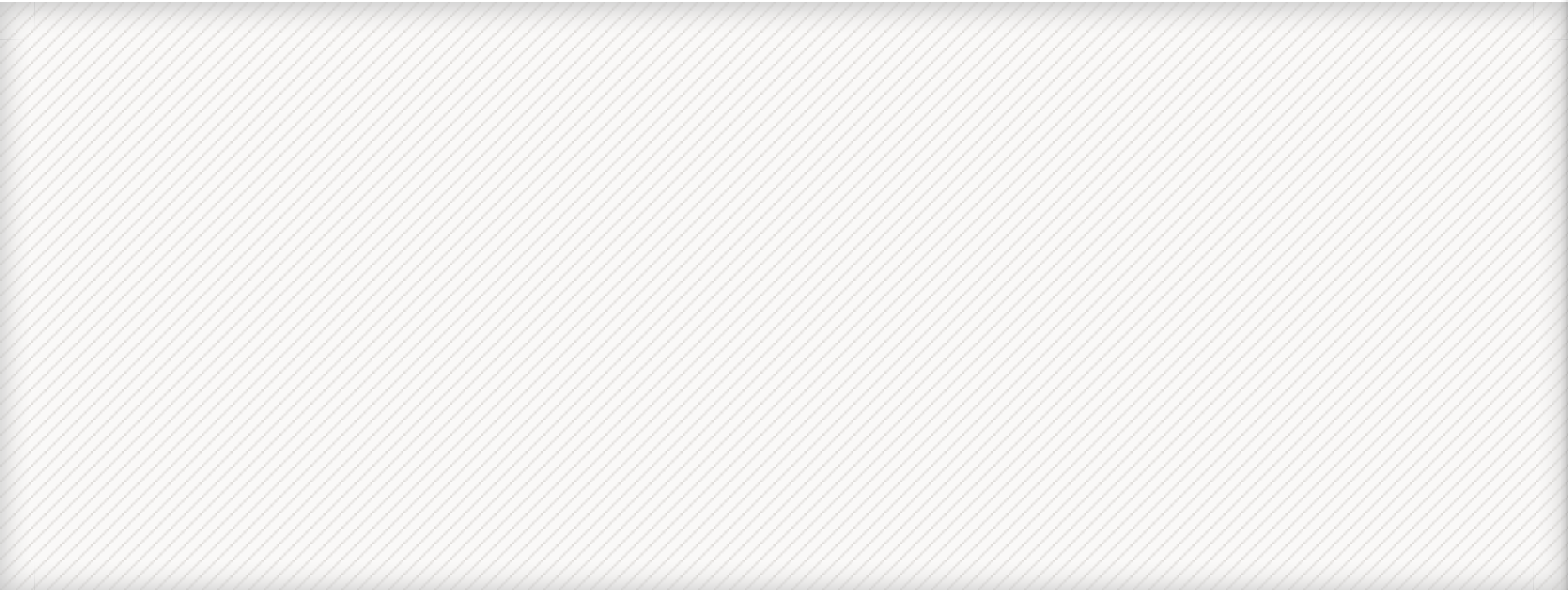
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