

THOUGHTS THAT STICK

LAW, LIFE & EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

THIS MONTH

NEWSLETTER

Insights from the courtroom to the coastline

From the Outback to the Courtroom: The Story of the Guy Mailing You This Newsletter



Pictured: The small bush planes we flew in from Aboriginal village to Aboriginal village to hold court when I clerked for a judge in the Outback.

I'm **Rory Safir**, a trial lawyer in the Tampa Bay area. I didn't take the usual path into law... Before I ever stepped into a Florida courtroom, I was chasing experiences. I worked at a war crimes tribunal in The Hague, prosecuting terrorists. I earned my Master's in Madrid, defending my thesis on the U.S. and European wine trade. I spent a year in the Australian Outback clerking for a judge and flying to remote Aboriginal villages for court.

I traveled through 40+ countries, Latin America, Europe, South-east Asia, and Australia... sometimes to live and work, and sometimes for adventure and to see how other people lived. None of it was the "right" path. But it taught me how to listen. How to connect authentically with people from completely different worlds. How to recognize the humanity in someone even when the worst version of their story is front and center.



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NEWS UPDATE



New Mural Honors St. Pete History

Local artist, Alyssa Marie, is one of six artists chosen to create a series of murals that honor the history and transformation of the St. Pete Pier. Her mural celebrates St. Pete's past with the pelicans in front of the pier much like our logo does.



As of June 2025, I am one of only six attorneys in Florida to earn the Forensic Lawyer-Scientist designation from the American Chemical Society, with advanced hands-on training and experience to challenge flawed forensic science and brutally cross-examine toxicologists.



Pictured: Uluru, a massive sandstone monolith in the heart of Australia's Northern Territory. Uluru holds deep cultural and spiritual importance for the Anangu Aboriginal people. Also, pictured are the people I worked with at the Local Courts in Alice Springs, Australia, and us winning trivia at one of the only pubs in a town of just 30,000 people.

That's what pulled me into being a public defender and eventually, into running my own law firm here in St. Pete, Florida. Today, I focus on DUI defense and criminal defense, often for first-time offenders.

As a public defender, I handled hundreds of cases. I learned how to think fast on my feet, negotiate under pressure, and stand in front of a jury with no safety net. Those years in the trenches taught me how to fight for clients when the odds are stacked against them and how to stay steady when everything is on the line.

It was not glamorous, but it was the best training ground a trial lawyer could ask for. Over time, I saw a pattern. The clients who walked into my office were not just facing charges. They were facing fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear of losing everything. Fear of being judged for a single mistake.

From the Outback to the Courtroom: The Story of the Guy Mailing You This Newsletter (continued...)

When I opened my own practice, I built it around that reality. Yes, I am here to fight charges and put a spotlight on weak investigations or evidence.

But my job is also to give my clients a sense of control in the middle of chaos. To explain the process in plain English so every step makes sense, no matter how overwhelming the situation feels.

To make sure they never feel like they are walking into court alone, because in that room, the stakes are too high and the pressure is too heavy to face without someone in your corner.

Whether it has been in a courtroom, holding court out of a trailer in the Outback, or a crowded market halfway across the world, I have seen the same truth over and over again.

People want to be heard.

They want to be seen for more than their worst day.

The law may be about facts and evidence, but every good defense begins with something deeper... recognizing the person behind the case.

Rory G. Safir



Why We Need Breaks Before We Think We Do

Breaks aren't a reward. They're a strategy.

Most people wait until they're running on fumes before they stop. By then, the "break" isn't really rest... it's recovery.

I used to think I could push through anything. Another case, another late night, another weekend on my laptop. I'd tell myself, "Once this week is over, I'll slow down."

But more often than not, the opposite is true. You come back sharper. You notice things you would have missed. Problems that felt stuck suddenly have a way forward.

The best breaks aren't always long or expensive. They're a walk outside in the middle of the day. A quiet coffee with no phone on the table. An evening where you refuse to open your email.

You give yourself the space to make better decisions, to spot opportunities you would have missed, and to respond instead of react. You notice the details that separate good work from great work.

You have the energy to follow through on the things that matter most. Because the truth is simple... burned-out you is never your best you.



Then the next week came, and I said the same thing.

The problem is, by the time your body and mind force you to stop, you've already paid the price. You're foggy, short-tempered, and your work starts to lose its edge. Taking a break before you need it feels wrong at first. You'll tell yourself you're wasting time or falling behind.

The trick is to see a break not as an escape from the work, but as part of the work. If you wait until you've "earned" it, you've already waited too long. By then, the sharpness that makes you effective has dulled, and getting it back takes more than a weekend off. When you take the pause while you still have momentum, you protect your clarity.

Your best work, your best ideas, and your best conversations happen when you are sharp, focused, and fully present. That version of you shows up with energy, solves problems faster, and actually enjoys the process instead of just enduring it. The break is not a reward you get after the work is done. The break is the strategy that lets you keep doing it well.

The Best Conversations Happen Over Coffee



Pictured: My favorite spot, Black Crow Coffee, 2157 1st Ave S, St. Petersburg, FL 33712. I have had so many great conversations here, and one life-changing one in particular comes to mind...

Some of my favorite conversations have happened at a small table with a mug in hand. Not at a conference table. Not over the phone. Not while checking email between meetings. Coffee slows things down. It's a built-in pause. You're not rushing to get to the next thing, because the whole

point is to sit there and drink it. In those moments, people tend to open up. You hear about the trip they're planning, the challenge they're working through, the book they can't stop reading. You learn about the person, not just their title or the bullet points on their résumé.

I've had coffee with strangers who became friends. Friends who became trusted advisors. And colleagues who, over a cappuccino, stopped being "just" colleagues. Some of the best connections in my life started with four words:

"Want to grab coffee?"

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

All September, the city of St. Pete turns into one big stage.

Theaters, dance companies, jazz trios, comedians, and poets fill venues from cozy coffee shops to the Mahaffey Theater.

One week you might catch a late-night improv show, the next a string quartet at the MFA. You don't have to be a "theater person" or a "music person..." just curious will do.



Pictured: The Mahaffey Theater: a performing arts facility and concert hall located on the downtown waterfront in St. Petersburg, Florida. The facility first opened on May 6, 1965. The 2,031-seat facility features European box-style seating, a ballroom space and views of Tampa Bay.