**“Five Minutes with Fried” Interview with Bracha Etengoff (July 18, 2023)**

Michael: Hello, welcome to another episode of five minutes with [Michael Fried](https://www.berkbot.com/attorneys/michael-l-fried/), a litigation partner in the family law firm of [Berkman Bottger Newman & Schein LLP](https://www.berkbot.com/), with offices in New York City, Westchester, and Long Island. Today my special guest is Bracha Etengoff of the [Law & Mediation Office of Bracha Etengoff](https://www.brachalaw.com/). Welcome to [Five Minutes with Fried](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAb10U-L9XU)!

Bracha: Thank you so much, Michael.

Michael: So tell me, what is the Law & Mediation Office of Bracha Etengoff, and what's your role in the company?

Bracha: So I started my firm about seven years ago with the goal of making the estate world more accessible and convenient to people who have busy lives - as do we all. If you're going to make your will, or if you're going to become an executor of an estate for a family member, this is something that you take on in addition to your responsibilities of daily life. I do everything I can to make it easier for people to get this done.

Michael: You know that I am a matrimonial and family law attorney. When will my clients most often require your services?

Bracha: Your clients and my clients definitelyshould overlap! If people are going through a divorce, then after that, they probably want to look over their wills if they have ones, or they need to create them if they don't have ones. But either way, they probably need to look at who is going to be a trustee for their minor children if they pass away.

Michael: Sure.

Bracha: And maybe they don’t want it to be their ex-spouse anymore.

The other time where your clients and mine overlap is when people are planning to remarry. They need to think about how they want their assets to be used after they pass. Some people wanted them to go first to their spouse to use during their life, but afterward to their kids. And you need to *plan* for that, because it won't happen automatically under the law.

Michael: Ok, so what are the challenges that you face in your area of work?

Bracha: I think that it can be hard for people to approach this subject for a lot of reasons. It can be difficult to talk about issues around death. It can be difficult for people to say, “Let me add this to my busy life.”

I try a number of methods to help people move forward. Some of that is just being a really good listener and helping people talk about difficult issues, like:

* Do you have a child with special needs?
* Is there someone that we need to protect in this estate plan more than usual?
* Do you expect this probate proceeding to be contested? Do you think someone in the family is going to argue about their inheritance? Let's plan for that at the outset.

I think that there's a lot to surmount, but it can be done, and starting is half the battle for sure - just getting started with this.

Michael: Absolutely. So what would be the best way for a prospective client or other professional like myself to contact you?

Bracha: I just revised my website. It's got a lot of helpful information if you want to learn about this area of law, and how it might help you in your life. That’s at [www.brachalaw.com](http://www.brachalaw.com) and my phone and email are there [347-640-0993 and [bracha@brachalaw.com](mailto:bracha@brachalaw.com)].

Bracha means blessing, by the way.

Michael: That’s right. We have now come to the most important part of our show and that happens to be the question of the week. So, Bracha Etengoff, this is your question of the week:

If you could come up with a college course, what would the college course be and why?

Bracha: I don't know if future lawyers are the only people who’d want to take this course – I hope not! I think it would be so great if there was a course about personal law, so that the first time you had an issue with an employment contract you were asked to sign, you had some basic knowledge about what it might mean and how to find a lawyer that specializes in or is competent in that area, if you want to bounce it off them. Of course, for your clients, family law – and estate planning. It would be so great if people could come out of college with some background, and not feel like they're at loose ends the first time they have a legal need.

Michael: That’s a great answer. And I have to say, you have said it all. You are helping people with their estate planning one day at a time. And I want to thank you for being a wonderful guest on Five Minutes with Fried.

Bracha: Thank you, it was such a pleasure to be here. Take care.