



Season 2 Episode 14: Scott's Coparenting Story

Craig: In today's podcast. We are going to talk about co-parenting one of the biggest challenges when relationships fall apart is for two people to stay focused on the best interest of their children. And I am grateful to have with us today, someone who has been able to do that today, we're with a, a longtime client named Scott and Scott found himself as a, as a relatively young man with a very serious legal situation. So, Scott, as always, it is great to be with you. Thank you for being here to have others learn from the road that you have taken. Well, thank you.

Scott: Thank you for having me. And, um, I remember from one of the very first times that you and I sat down, you told me from the get-go that it was not about me. It was about my son. And so that really got ingrained and stuck in there that, that all of this was not about me and it was not about his mother. It was about him. Right. And getting the best outcome and best circumstances for him. And so, it is, as you said, it has been a long journey. There was bumps along the way, but I think a good journey in the end

Matt: And Scott, so for our listeners, so they know our relationship goes back 13 years now, right? That is right. That is when you first darkened the doors to initially sit down with Craig and then I have had the pleasure of working with you as well. Tell everybody just how everything started.

Scott: Well, I, I found myself 19, 20 years old, dated someone off and on through high school, into the early years of college. And we found out that we had a baby on the way, at that point in time, I had no plans to have a baby. She did not either, but it was one of those situations where it happened. And so we're, we're going to take this and we're going to try and make it work. Right. And so we did that in the beginning. We are trying to make things work. I tried to be civil. We tried to work together in the end that did not work out. We tried. Um, but it just was not meant to be. So when, when my son was about a year old, that is when we both came to the conclusion that it wasn't going to work. And that's kind of where the first time that I walked in the door, um, to sit down with Craig was at that point in time. Cause I knew I wanted to be involved in his life. I didn't know how to do that or what I could do to make sure I was protecting my rights to be able to be involved and then protecting his rights to make sure that I was involved.

Craig: Scott, I think you know, this, but I have loved you from really from the very first meeting that we had with one another. And, and one of the biggest reasons is because I just get so inspired by men who notwithstanding their circumstances really step up to the plate and act like a man. And God, that's one of the things that I have always been impressed about you is that from that very first meeting as a 21 year old kid, you acted like a man, what motivated you?

Scott: I just knew that that, that my son was coming into the world for a reason. And so to me, when I look back at where I was at that point in time in life, I wasn't necessarily on the right path. Right. I wasn't on a path to getting out of school anytime soon. I was not on the path to deciding what I wanted to do. But at that point in time, he came along, and I knew I wanted to be a part of his life. And, and to me, if I look back at my life, it was kind of a catalyst. It kind of got me jump-started and said, okay, you got to get your act together. Right. Okay. Cause you cannot be that 21 wild and crazy college kid. Who is worrying about where we're going to go tonight. I haven't worried about what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. Right. I got to start thinking big picture. And so, at really jump-started at that moment in time that, okay, the fun is over, the wild and crazy days of college. It's time to get serious and really look at life and what am I going to make it myself? And what am I going to make for my son?

Craig: So what I heard you say is that your son really was the catalyst. He lit the fuse for becoming an adult without a doubt.

Matt: So you come to see Craig, you want to be involved in your son's life. How long did that initial legal proceeding take from beginning to end.

Scott: the first time through, because as you know, as I'm sure we'll get into this, there's been several different occasions throughout, but the first experience it was about, about an 11 month process, right? From the moment I walked into Craig's door till we had some kind of longstanding resolution as to what things are going to look like moving forward.

Craig: And I think that is something that our listeners should hear. Very few people, especially if they have very young children are able to create a legal resolution. And then that resolution work for the remainder of the childhood of, you know, their son or daughter, oftentimes as life happens, as circumstances change along the way, those things have to be, have to be modified. The legal terminology for that is a material unanticipated change in circumstances. And when those unanticipated changes in circumstances are having adverse effects on a child, a court can relook at the custody factors and make a decision as to whether or not custody should change, whether or not there should be a restructuring of a visitation schedule, essentially when you have a child with someone that you are not married to, and there is a legal resolution, those aspects touching their care custody support both financially and emotionally are always subject to being, to being changed. And Scott, that sort of has been your story along the way.

Scott: That's right. And you told me that from the get-go that that no matter where things stand at the, at the end of this beginning of this process, it's not set in stone forever, right? I mean, when you think about it, it's a two-year-old child, there's a whole lot of runway left right in the childhood. Um, and so things are going to change and that has certainly been the case and, in my life, and in my son's life, things have evolved and changed over time.

Matt: In divorces or different family law actions, there are some things that once they are decided they're decided, but anything dealing with the child is not permanent. It is subject to being changed, to evolving or to, you know, being modified later, coming out of that initial legal case, which you said took about 11 months, you secured a schedule that was going to allow you to be very involved in your child's life. Things remained pretty civil with your, with your child's mother throughout that process. Right?

Scott: For the most part during that 11 month period in time, when you, when you're going through legal proceedings and you've made the decision that you're not going to be with someone else, typically

there's many reasons that you're not with someone, right. You may not always see eye to eye. You may not get along. Um, so they were certainly bumps in the road where we didn't agree on things. But I think for the most part, we have always tried to be a civil as possible, especially when we're around our son. Right. Cause we want him to not see any of the, any animosity that may have been there or that could be there. We want to keep him away from that and just let him be a kid because he's a kid and he deserves that. And so, we have worked really hard to do that.

Matt: It's important for people to know that just because you don't agree with somebody on a particular subject doesn't mean that you can't have respect for them and respect for who that person is in your life or who that person is to your child. And that's something that I've always gotten from you is that no matter what was going on in y'all's lives, you maintained a level of respect for your child's mother and the place that she is in his life.

Craig: Talk about the extended family dynamics, because you were a young man, only 20 years old when your son was born, how did the dynamics of your extended family, both on your side and on your child's mother's side play into, um, what transpired over the years to come?

Scott: I think we, we both had support systems. We both had our families, our parents who were there supporting each of us and being a parent. Now I know that as a parent, you are going to champion your child 100%. Right. And you are going to back them up. And I fully understand that as, as my child is getting older and I have additional children now with my wife. But with that, I think that a lot of times family is so pulled in one direction that sometimes they're, they're pulling you one way and it's kind of clouds of water. Right. Or kind of muddies it a little bit. Right. So, um, I think that we had that support system, but we each had that support system that was pulling us in opposite directions. It did not always bring us together to promote compromise.

Craig: What I heard you say. And I, and I know your parents and I adore your parents.

Scott: My parents they're fantastic.

Craig: Especially mom, um, she texted me still to this day. I am sure she, I'm sure she texted me on my feet when I'm in open court and she texts me periodically now.

Scott: I wouldn't expect anything less.

Craig: but one thing that I heard you say is that, you know, we, as parents are advocates for our children, but sometimes in that advocacy, we don't always see the big picture or our love and adoration for our child can sometimes overshadow the full component of, you know, making sure we raise great human beings.

Scott: I think that is perfectly worded.

Craig: So, you finished your first journey through the legal system. We, we created a resolution. And as in any child custody visitation case, the resolution involved, you know, the custody of your child for those new listeners, two types of custody in Mississippi, there's physical custody and there is legal custody. Physical custody is who a child actually lives with. And legal custody is the thinking side of custody. And then there is an access schedule or a parenting plan, a visitation schedule, lots of different words for it. And then we take care of the financial aspects of caring for a child. Those include, you

know, child support, daycare expenses, extracurricular activities. And then as they get older, you possibly private school educations college, cell phones, automobiles. So, all the financial dynamics of raising a child. So, you found yourself with a resolution. Uh, we now know that that would not be the permanent resolution. So, talk about life after that first court case.

Scott: So after that, we started, going by the agreement, right. And we started visitation schedules, which I had a very generous visitation schedule. I had the ability to see, to see my son on a consistent basis many days throughout the week. So that was great. Um, and we went on that schedule and we went by that resolution for, for several years after that, nothing really changed except for a few, like we might tweak a holiday here or there. We pretty much stuck very rigidly to what the agreement said. And we did that. I think it was good for both of us because we were not necessarily at the best point in time in our relationship. And co-parenting at that point in time. Um, cause it had been that experience we'd been drawn out and, you know, we'd made the decision, we didn't want to be together. So we didn't really know how to work together very well at that point. Um, so we just went by the resolution, did exactly what it said, asthma, our son got older and as he got closer, um, to go into school and school age, that's when we looked back at it and the agreement that was in place at that point in time, really when necessarily wasn't going to be the best situation for him at that point in time. So we looked at, you know, what do we need to do at this point to, to change it or to modify this.

Craig: If I remember correctly, you and your child's mother lived in close proximity to one another. So you were able to actually spend many days a week with him, even if it was just for a few hours in the afternoon after school, but when you're in close geographic proximity and the child is really young, you can have that type of flexibility, but as your son entered school age, and there was a little bit of a geographic separation between you and your child's mother that became increasingly difficult and so that's what we say when a visitation schedule is not working as written and we have to relook at it and reshape it so that it fits the new dynamics of the family and specifically the child.

Scott: That's right. And I will be perfectly honest when this came about, I didn't bring this up. I did not look and say that this is not, that we need to look at changing this. His mother brought this upon me. And at that point in time, I was not necessarily very happy about it. Cause I liked the schedule that we had, and I thought it was a good schedule and that we should not necessarily change it. But you know, she looked at it and said from, from the geographic distance, I mean, it was a relatively short distance in between us and going to school that maybe we should look to change the schedule and looking back at it now I think that was the right decision. So I can give her credit that at that point in time, that was the right thing to look at it. And let's say, let's do adjust this a little bit to make it more feasible for us and more feasible for him.

Craig: Yeah. And I think that, you know, there is this balancing act that parents have to do because you know, there really is a benefit and a burden to all parents. And in a lot of ways we cherish our kids so much that sometimes our vision gets clouded by that. You know, we want our time with them. We feel like we are legally entitled to our time with them. But you know, sometimes it takes someone else who has a little distance or has a little different perspective to give us feedback, to be the catalyst for something new.

Scott: That is right. You know, and again, kind of going back as the parent you're, you're so focused on doing it this way and looking at it this way, it's definitely, to me having y'all that we could bounce ideas off of, or that I could come to and talk to has been tremendous throughout this entire process.

Matt: You know, I think as parents, we, we love our children so much that sometimes it is easy to let our feelings and our desires to be around our children or to experience things with them cloud what is actually in their best interest. So, it is, it's easy to convince yourself well, it's in their best interest to be, you know, with me during this particular event. And you are feeling that way mainly because of your desire to be with them, not as much because it is actually in their best interest. So, parents are usually they have good intentions. It is just very difficult to take their own feelings out of it and focus solely on your child. And if I'm hearing you correctly, you know, you can look back on it now and say that, you know, that changing the schedule was, was a good thing and ended up working well for your son, even though at the time you weren't that happy about it. Cause it, it meant that you might get a little less time than what you had enjoyed before. Right?

Scott: That's right. That is, that's exactly that the first feeling and that's, that's me the individual thinking about myself and again, not necessarily putting the child and really thinking about what is actually best for the child in that instance. And so that was the fear. I mean, I remember the fear within me that I was fearful that I was not going to be able to spend as much time or see him, or as being involved in his life. It actually worked out the opposite. In that instance, we were able, without having to know, to go through, you know, a full blown out legal proceeding and having to go to court, we're able to work together and put together a resolution that we came up with on our own as an agreement as to what it was going to look like going forward.

Matt: So, the legal action, number two, settled, he didn't have to go to court and, and just very quickly, I want to touch on something that you just said. I think it is important for our listeners just because your child does not live with you. The majority of the time does not mean that you cannot be intimately involved in almost all areas of, of their life. You can go to soccer practice; you can be the soccer coach. You can go to recitals, you can go to these practices, the, you know, things that are happening at the school, just because it's not your designated night where your child is going to be sleeping under your roof that night, it doesn't make you any less their father or their mother. You can still be involved in all of their daily activities.

Scott: 100%. I mean, when he was in elementary school, kindergarten, first grade, every volunteer opportunity that you could possibly do. And in those grades, you get a lot of choices and a lot of opportunities to go help in the classroom. I was there. Coach. soccer every year that he played. So you can get involved and be there, whether it is your designated time or not, it just takes the effort on your part to step up and do that.

Matt: So after you got settled legal action, number two, how long did you live under that order?

Scott: I'm going to say that was another couple years. Let's see. That would have been around kindergarten. And so we, we worked under that resolution until the third grade say end of second beginning, end of second grade. So it would have been going into third grade a couple of years after that resolution.

Craig: Scott, you know, parenting as a two person job. And once your son became school age, he learned differently than other kids. And, you know, we know now that I think one in five children have some level of dyslexia and some level of learning challenge, and that's something that your family had to deal with, right?

Scott: That's right. And so, our son is dyslexic, um, and that is, that's been a challenge that was a

struggle academically early on in school for him figuring out what was going on when we got his diagnosis. And we were able to take steps to help him, you know, start correcting. It's probably not the right word but starting taking action towards putting things in place to help him learn and in his own way. Right. I mean, to me, we, we kind of say that one in five learn differently. I think each and every one of us learned differently. Right. We all do. Right? Um, and so we had just had to find ways that worked for him. What did he need to learn? One of the greatest blessings he is ever had in his life is his dyslexia tutor. She worked with him every single week for over two and a half years, helping him work through this and learning to read and sound out words, phonetically his way, uh, the way that worked for his brain and the way that he's wired. So that was a huge, tremendous blessing for him.

Craig: Scott, we talked about that you guys were in the middle of dyslexia, tutoring, the initial dyslexia tutoring that a child will do as they create a toolkit, so they can learn how to read. And, you know, you, you learn to read, then you read to learn. And during the middle of that, you receive communication from your child's mother, that there was going to be a big move. Talk about that.

Scott: That's right, a big move. You know, we talked about how they'd been a little geography in between us, but, you know, towards the end of that school year after his initial diagnosis and in the beginning process of starting tutoring, she presented the potential that there may be a very big move, um, with a whole lot of geographical difference in between us, about six hours' worth of drive time. In between the two. So, for my son, that was a very challenging time because he's just starting to go through the process of the dyslexia tutoring. He is just starting to, you know, get his feet wet, learn this process and go through this. And then we are going to have the potential that it's going to be a complete 180 for him, right. A complete change in, in life and lifestyle. It's going to be a change of being actively involved with both of his parents on a pretty, almost weekly, if not more consistent basis to where he's going to be very far away, he's going to have a new school environment, new processes, new tutors, all those challenges and changes. I was not just necessarily sure that that was the best thing for him at that point in time.

Craig: Right and so we did have to file a court case in an attempt to modify custody. And, and I think, you know, I have been doing this for 20 years now, but your situation was very unique in that both of your child's parents are good people and they have involved grandparents. And, but this was a situation where there was a significant move. You said a drive time of six hours. And typically speaking a move for legitimate reason, I job change a, you know, a remarriage, there are lots of legitimate reasons that people have to move. And typically in Mississippi, that's not a reason to modify custody, but you have the unique situation where there was this material, significant change in circumstances, not just in the geographic move, but that your child learned differently. And there had been put in place a treatment regimen for that. And so, you had a true situation where the living situation was really necessary for his nurturing and development at that time.

Scott: I would agree, you know, it was we'd found, like I said, he had a fantastic tutor that really connected with him, and that was really helping him. And we were seeing progress that was happening very, very rapidly. And for him to have struggled, you know, previously, academically, and then to see progress quickly, start to go in the right direction. It is one of those things where the massive game changer for him, right. You know, finding the way to learn, figuring those things out, mastering those things that have been a challenge and working around that, that's going to impact the rest of his life. So, it's not just that you're looking at the geographic distance, you're looking and saying, this is this. If we make this change, is this having the potential to have a negative impact on him for many, many years to come? And I felt like it did have that potential. I felt like the plan that we had in place in what we were

doing, his school, his tutor, the whole surrounding setting as his support system was so important to him at that point in time that it was worth taking, taking it back and looking at it again.

Matt: So, you had this complex, intricate network set up to help your son springboard, you know, forward academically. And as we moved into that modification case, unfortunately we did have to litigate it. And ultimately the court agreed. It was best for your son to stay in that network that you guys had set up. Right?

Scott: That's correct. It was again, another process in this instance, and I know this is very abnormal. It was a very short process, right? I mean, it was one of those things where if this change is going to happen, it is going to happen over the course of a summer. And so, we had to move very, very quickly. You guys were fantastic jumped right in headfirst. And we made this happen very, very quickly. We did have to go through the court process. We did not have to go through litigation. We got to a point though, when that outcome to where the court agreed that it was not his best interest to stay here, continue on the path that he was on. It was exciting news, you know, for, for me and for my family, you know, from our perspective, I was very excited for him and very excited for us that he was going to be here. But on the other side, I can't speak for his mother, but I think that was probably very challenging for her to process, right, because that was a complete change. She'd always had physical custody, physical custody was going to now be with me. He was going to live with me and I'll give her kudos. I mean, going through that process, looking back, I do not know that I would have handled it as well as she did. She handled it about as good as I think anybody possibly could going through a change like that for her personally. So, I'll give her all the credit in the world on that.

Craig: Right. And I don't remember your case as being one, you know, it was not really a situation where the parents attacked each other. It really, I believe was more focused on your child and what his needs were at that time. And that's a little unusual because I think that it's really easy for things to get nasty. I mean, you know, when you have a child with a person, you know, that is a very special relationship. And a lot of times our deepest, darkest secrets can be weaponized against one another, but you guys really did not do that in that proceeding. It really was more about the academic side, the focus on what was best for your child.

Scott: Right. I mean, and that goes back to that very first conversation that you and I had, you told me in that conversation, I can remember it. Like it was yesterday that this is not about me, it's about him. And so, I have always looked at it from that way, the best that I can as a parent with my own feelings, sometimes those glasses get a little foggy. Right. But you try your hardest to do that. And I think we really did try hard not to sling mud, not to be negative. Of course, there probably was some of that along the way. I think that's just, you know, sometimes just happens, but it wasn't intentional. Um, I think we both tried to be as civil as you possibly can be in those situations. Um, cause it's, it brings up emotions in each of you and it's, it's hard to be civil. I mean, it takes effort to be civil sometimes, but sometimes you gotta make that effort.

Craig: Talk about the season of time that there was that geographic distance between the two of you. How did you guys manage?

Scott: I again, that's, I think that in that instance that has really, what's made our co-parenting to where it is now. It's, it's certainly improved over time. It's one of those things where, you know, as you give it time, things get better. Right. And our co-parenting certainly has with the distance, you've got a co-parent in between there, right? Um, there was a visitation schedule to where he would visit two times a

month back and forth. So that is, that is a pretty six hours there. And back over a weekend is a pretty long haul. So, you got to make effort to communicate all the different interests, seas have that, you know, transfer. Um, and then you got to talk about, you know, academic life and what's going on because one parent is geographically farther away. So that makes it a little bit harder to be as involved.

Matt: I remember one, I'm going to call it exercise that we went through during your modification case that I think is one of the best ways to get a person to identify whether or not their feelings about seeing their child is fogging, what might actually be in their best interest. And that is the creation of that proposed visitation schedule. Because when we did that with you, we had to look at it from the perspective of, we do not know if you're going to have custody or if you're not going to have custody. So this schedule, you have to look at it as is this something that you're going to be able to live under, whether you're the custodial parent or the noncustodial parent, because if we suggest a schedule that maybe you're going to love best as the custodial parent, what if we lose? And then, then you might be living on the wrong end of it. And that was a, a very real moment watching you go through. Okay, well, I have to, I have to take myself out of it and not look at it as to which side of this I'm going to be on which one is going to work best for my child.

Scott: Oh, certainly I remember doing that. And it was an incredible challenge. And the actual, the order that came down from the court was pretty much the proposed visitation schedule that we had given with one minor change. And the one that we had given, we actually stated that the noncustodial parent would get two visits a month, but one would be in their hometown and one would be in the child's hometown. Um, the court changed it to where both were in the, in the noncustodial parent's hometown. So the child had to travel twice a month, but you know, it was originally set up to where that one parent was going to come home or one time a month and then go visit the other time of month.

Craig: And what I heard you say, during that and Matt, I think that was a great point for two reasons. Number one is whether you work with our firm or whether you work with some other firm, it is important to articulate to a court, exactly what you want the court to do. And Scott's situation there, there was going to be one parent that lives six hours away from the other parent there's was not a situation where Scott was at liberty to move closer to his child's mother because of his other obligations and responsibilities and work. But so, what we did was we created a noncustodial parent visitation schedule, and it puts Scott in a position where he had to think in terms of, okay, if I'm the noncustodial parent, this is going to be my access schedule. And if I am the custodial parent, this is going to be my child's mother's access schedule. But what I heard you say, which I've never really thought of before, but in your situation, because there was a six-hour distance, it made communication critical. You had to communicate about meeting times for visitation. You had to communicate about school and extracurricular activities. It forced you guys into a situation. If you wanted to both stay involved, that communication was critical,

Scott: Right, because we'd both always been involved, but communication between us had not always been the greatest, right. Or it had not always had to really even exist because we were always in close proximity, we could do exchanges and things like that. Always, we were always just either at a sporting event or it would just work itself out with the distance that changed. You had to communicate that, right? You had to communicate things about what we're going on at school. What was academics, looking like all those different things. So, it forced us to where we had to communicate. And I think that's been a great thing because it started off very small, very little communication. But over time it is gotten much, much better to where either one of us now we'll pick up the phone. If we have a question about what's going on or can we do something different? And we talk about it and we make changes on

the fly. I mean, sometimes was visitation and things like that. And when we worked together to, if it's a holiday and we need to change this, we'll change it. Whereas in, before I told you, we were pretty rigid on sticking with what that schedule was. But now we're much more understanding where each willing to give compromise. I mean, compromise is key to our relationships, right? You can't always be right. All of us married, I'm married now. Right. You got to give and take. And it's certainly the case in a relationship like this, where you're co-parenting with someone that's not a spouse, there has to be give and take,

Craig: Right. You can either be happy or you can be right. Pick one.

Scott: Happy is better.

Matt: So, we are now, is it three or four years removed from the last legal action?

Scott: Four and a half.

Matt: Wow. Time flies. So tell us, how's everybody doing right now?

Scott: Everybody's doing fantastic. Like I said, I'm married. I got married way back in the process. Several years before the last court proceeding, uh, my wife and I, and we have two children together now. And then my son's mother has actually moved back a little bit closer. So, there's not as much geographic distance in between now. That is made things a little bit easier just because there's not so much drive time spent on visitation time. It's actually time. You can do stuff and have fun and be together. So I think all in all, I'd say everyone's in a really good place.

Craig: Scott, we've been in relationship now for a long time. And I know that when you and your wife had your first child, there were special challenges. Could you talk about those challenges and how that impacted ultimately your relationship with the mother of the child that we have been talking about today?

Scott: Right. And so our, our first child together was born soon after this court case ended. Right? So soon after our life changed pretty dramatically, right? Because our son came to live with us and that had never been the case on a fulltime basis. And soon after that, we had a baby. So, life changed pretty dramatically in our household and just a matter of a couple months. And then, you know, after our son was about a year and a half old, we started to have some concerns. My wife started to notice that he was not talking as much and he'd actually kind of regressed a little bit with words and vocabulary. So, we stayed on top of it. Our pediatrician just kept telling us, wait a little bit longer, wait till he is two we'll look at things there. Of course two came around and things had not gotten any better. So we started looking further and got some testing. Um, we found out that our son is autistic. He's on the spectrum. It's a challenge for him but to me it's another one of those, those blessings, you know, one of those catalysts that's been in life, it's been another like spark, right? Because you want to see him succeed. You want to push as hard as you can. It certainly strengthened our relationship, um, you know, between myself and my wife, cause there is challenges every day and our household, um, I think every household has challenges, right. But with a special need's child, you know, you've got certain challenges that are going to be there. It's forced us to have good, clear communication and then in that instance with, you know, my, my oldest son's mother and co-parenting, there has to be communication in there too, right. Because there's another added thing that's happening in our son's life. You know, now he has a special needs brother. And so, with that comes different things. There's therapies and different things that, that our oldest son can be involved in and be a part of. But you want to make sure that you are communicating that with the other co-parent to make sure that they're okay with that. Um, and she's

been fantastic with that and she's all in wanting him to be as actively involved and in therapies that we do for our special need's child and all those things. And he was just at therapy earlier this week and my co-parenting partner actually dropped him off to be at therapy with our middle child now. Cause we have a baby. So it's um, thanks to come long long way.

Craig: Scott, here in just last few minutes that we have talked a little bit about how things are today, how, how you do, co-parent give us a peek into your life today.

Scott: I mean, I think it's communicating, um, whether it's, you know, a great at school report cards where we're always talking to each other, whether they're good grades, bad grades, they're all in between. Right. It's our son's responsibility to put in the work to get those grades. We communicate on those on, on a consistent basis back to the, to the visitation schedule, you know, things change, right? You may have somebody that is come in town to visit, or there may be a birthday or anniversary. All these things, we try our best to work on it. Right. And going back to, you know, just last year when, when my wife and I, his daughter was born and that moment in time, there was a special moment that was going on for my son's mother's sister. Um, and she had asked if he could go be involved in that. And that was one of those instances to where it wasn't exciting for me to say that, honestly, I really, we can't do that right now. Cause we've got a baby that's going to be born any day now. And then we really would prefer that he wouldn't be out of town. But again, we had that conversation, she understood 100%. She agreed and said, you know what? I think you're right. Let us let him stay here. He won't go on this with us. So even in instances where the other side does not necessarily get the outcome that they want, it's been that way for me too. But that was just an example. We still continued to co-parent after that. Right? We have not let that be a roadblock and say, Oh, just cause one time, it did not work out the way that I wanted it to. We are not going to come back and try this again. We continue to keep coming back and communicating.

Craig: All right, Scott, this is going to be a challenging question for you. Let's say that you're a speaker and you're in an auditorium full of 21-year-old Scotts. Now here you are 13 years removed from that. What do you say to that room full of your young proteges?

Scott: That is a great question. Now. I think that number one never give up. I mean, it is life. You are going to get hit. There is going to be roadblocks. You are going to get hit. You're going to stumble. You're going to fall. Never give up, keep going. Um, get back up the next day. Try again. Always, you know, do your best, put your loved ones before yourself and just never give up. I mean, I think that's been the story of my life is never giving up. I tell my son, my oldest son, every single day, outwork the person next to you. Cause if we outwork him, you're going to be ahead. So hard work pays off. Always continue to outwork your counterparts that are around you. But those are the two things that come to mind.

Craig: And what perspective would you give on parenting on this 13 year journey that you've been on?
Scott: Never say never. that's the first thing that I learned early on. Never say never, but know that it's going to have joys, and it is going to have ups, downs, challenges, everything in between, but it goes by so fast. I can't believe it's been 13 years. I can't believe it's been four years. You know, since my middle child was born, I can't believe it's been four months since my daughter was born. I mean, time goes by. So, so fast take the time to enjoy it. Right? And in life today, we're also busy. We're going and we're going, we're going sometimes you just got to stop and enjoy the moment.

Craig: Well, if you listeners heard that sound, that was the mic drop.

Matt: Scott, thank you for being with us today. Your story is inspirational. And one that I think is going to fill our listeners with some hope. There are a lot of people that are listening right now that are in a dark place and that aren't sure that things can work out. And I think that your story, the story of your son and your son's mother is a great Testament to the way things can work out. And you know, if you maintain respect for the other person, stay focused on your child. Everybody can make it through and make it through successfully. And even in the moments when you don't particularly agree that you can stay civil and there can be life after those disagreements. So, thank you so much for being here.

Scott: Thank you guys for having me. It's been a blast.