

What happens when you take the red pill, Neo?

HOW TO FINISH YOUR DIVORCE AT STARBUCKS FOR \$5

**INSTEAD OF PAYING \$50,000
IN ATTORNEY FEES
AND 7 OTHER TIPS TO
EFFECTIVELY RESOLVE
YOUR DIVORCE**



BY CANDACE JONES, ESQ.

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BY CANDACE JONES, ESQ.

the Attorney
NEXT DOOR



First published by Candace Jones, Esq. in 2018

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First edition

*for Neo...
Here is the red pill.*

For as you are going with your adversary before a magistrate, give earnestness to be set free from him in the way, lest he should drag you away to the judge, and the judge will deliver you to the officer, and the officer will cast you into prison.

Luke 12:58



Stop! Please Read

The contents of this e-book are for informational purposes only. They are suggestions, opinions and thoughts—not hard and fast rules that apply to each and every situation. In all of my e-books I seek to provide a basic understanding of the legalities of a particular issue. Clearly the issues are usually much more complex and often times wrought with emotion.

I often write with humor and reference to pop culture. I don't do this because I think these issues are funny or because I'm cavalier. I do it under the old adage that "laughter is good for the soul." I recognize there is a world of pain encompassing the lives of people who seek legal assistance for

their families and I hope the e-books I offer help as a starting place to gain understanding and perspective.

The truth is every family is different.

Therefore, none of these e-books should be used in lieu of seeking legal advice for your situation. Moreover, none of these e-books are complete in legal advice and are more like highlights to legal issues that arise.

This e-book is based on California Law only.

Downloading/Reading this E-book does not create an attorney-client relationship. This e-book may constitute a legal ad.

-Candace

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I KNOW I'M AN ATTORNEY, BUT...

I know I'm an attorney and I'm probably supposed to keep my mouth shut, but my need for efficiency compels me to speak.

You should know that a divorce only has 2-4 issues that need to be solved depending on whether or not you have minor children.

1. Property (Division of Assets & Debts)
2. Spousal Support
3. Custody and Visitation
4. Child Support



Absent the plethora of non-legal issues that explain the reasons why you might find yourself facing a person dressed in a black robe—you can figure out two (or four) issues in the time it takes to drink one cup of coffee. Maybe two cups of coffee, if you have some complex issues.

But first you need to understand, it's not the stuff, it's not the money, it's the emotions attached to them. It's your sense of justice. Someone has wronged you and if you cannot let go of that wrong or those wrongs, your entire case will spin around the axis of their wrongdoing.



BUT...if you can resolve in your being the following:

1. The sun will rise and set tomorrow
2. The earth will continue to spin on it's axis and not that of the wrongdoing (otherwise, there are much better ways to spend your final hours left on earth) AND
3. You have a bright amazing future that you have yet to map out, no matter your age or set-backs.

You will find that it becomes easier to make these decisions that were once hard because they no longer seem as important.

I'm not here to make things sound trite. You've invested 1, 5, 10, 20, 35+ years into your marriage. And this was not the outcome you hoped for. That's not nothing. It's significant. **HOWEVER**, you must realize the end of your marriage is not the end of your life. You have more to do. You have more to offer the world.

The sooner you realize that; the sooner you capture a vision for the next chapter in your life; the sooner you can decide what you need to get to your next destination and you can stop fighting about material things that cannot control where you are going in life and the height of your potential. This is the perspective you will need in order to take advantage of the tips in this e-book.



If you don't have that perspective you should stop reading this e-book, because it will not work for you and you should just take out a loan for all the attorney fees you will end up paying.



I know I'm an attorney and I should keep my mouth shut. But honestly, if it was me- I'd take the money that you would spend on an attorney and I would use it on a good therapist/life coach; if you have complicated finances, a forensic accountant who can split up the financial accounts; and/or an appraiser if you have high valued property. Use your money wisely and get the information you need to make informed decisions, so you can solve your problems. Get some concrete numbers in place.

So without further ado...*[Drumroll please]*...I'm going to tell you **How to Finish Your Divorce at Starbucks for \$5 Instead of Paying \$50,000* in Attorney Fees and 7 Other Tips to Efficiently Process Your Divorce.****

*Approximately \$25,000 per side in a divorce with kids according to Lawyers.com (<https://www.lawyers.com/legal-info/family-law/divorce/divorce-in-california.html>).

**P.S. *This is not an official top 8..this is the top 8 according to Candace.

TIP NO. 08

STARBUCKS AND THE SELF-HELP CENTER

Invite your former significant other for a cup of coffee at Starbucks-\$5 (per person, okay \$10 total, so sue me...only don't sue me).

Sit down with two or four sheets of paper. (Just don't write "18 pages front and back.") That's a quote from *Friends*-you know it or you don't.)



If you don't have kids, you need two sheets of paper. Title the pages as follows:

Page 1: Property (Assets/Debts)

Page 2: Spousal Support

If you have kids, you need four sheets of paper. Title the pages as follows:

Page 1: Property (Assets/Debts)

Page 2: Spousal Support

Page 3: Custody/Visitation

Page 4: Child Support



Start writing. Start breaking down what life will look like now that you aren't together anymore.

Split the property 50-50 from the date you got married to the date you separated.

Set up a visitation schedule that benefits the kids and talk about how you'll make decisions.

Then talk about how much money exists and how much it will take to finance the kids and life after your separation.

It won't be as bad as you think it is.

If you are successful and reach an agreement, use any of the options detailed herein to draft your agreement using the right legal terms and forms.

You can also go to Self-Help at the courthouse to get the forms you need. The staff will ensure the forms are properly filled out but will not give you feedback as to the content of what you are writing or the terms of your agreement.

Moreover, the forms involved are numerous and can become overwhelming. Thus, you may want to seek some assistance getting the legal paperwork in order.

If the conversation at Starbucks gets difficult: *Rock, Paper, Scissors*. If it gets heated, break before you say anything that will further alienate the other person and try one of the other options described herein.

TIP NO. 07

THE PARALEGAL

A good paralegal that understands the divorce process and forms can be great to facilitate the process of an agreement. As long as your agreement is complete this isn't a bad option.

However, if you are stuck and need to understand the legal implications of the choices you are making, a paralegal cannot tell you that.



TIP NO. 06

LAW SCHOOLS



Some law schools in your area may have a clinic that will assist you in your divorce. Law Students, seeking to volunteer and gain experience are supervised by attorneys to help you.

The benefit is you will likely get great customer service as the clinic will only take so many applicants. Also, your service will likely be timely because they the law students are only there a semester at a time.

However, check to see what the guidelines are as there may be certain restrictions or limitations to the services provided.

TIP NO. 05

FAMILY LAW FACILITATOR

Also, a great option. A Family Law Facilitator is an attorney at the courthouse who will help you draft your agreement. He or she will be able to help both of you get the process. Even better, he or she works in the courthouse and so they know the local nuances to ensure your paperwork is done properly.



You should know that the Family Law Facilitator works for the court however. He or she is not your attorney and therefore your conversations with him or her are not confidential. This works well if you mostly have an agreement. However, if you are stuck, this may not be the best option for you.

TIP NO. 04

LEGAL AID



Legal Aid is great. They have attorneys and paralegals that will handle all the paperwork for you. They can only take on one of you as a client, however, but can help answer your questions about the legal implications of the choices you are making.

The only drawbacks are they have income requirements (if you make too much money you are out of luck); the attorney may or may not accompany you to court depending on the case load; and they may also have a waiting list depending on where you reside.

TIP NO. 03

PRO-BONO/LOW-BONO ATTORNEYS

Maybe not Pro-Bono (free), but Low-Bono ain't bad. These full-service law firms assist those who meet their income requirements with low-cost attorneys.

Harriet Buhai Law Center and Levitt & Quinn are two organizations are non-profit full-service law firms located in Los Angeles.

They are great because they will provide you services and at times, if you have a court date, they may be able to provide an attorney to go with you.

The only real cons are that they usually have a long waiting list and have income considerations.

Know of any others? Make sure to e-mail me and I'll add them to the list!

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Los Angeles, CA 90010

(213) 388-7505

www.hbcfl.org

Levitt & Quinn

1557 Beverly Blvd

Los Angeles, CA 90026

(213) 482-1800

www.levittquinn.org

TIP NO. 02

MEDIATION/ARBITRATION

Ever watch Divorce Court or Judge Judy? This is televised Arbitration.



Arbitration is where you submit your case to an arbitrator—can be attorney, retired judge, or another qualified profession—and ask them to decide the issue for you.

Mediation is where you sit down with an attorney, retired judge, or other qualified professional and work out the issues together, but there needs to be agreement between the parties for the mediation to be successful.

Attorneys are always categorized as these shark-like pariah-acting litigators. We are more than that. At our best, we are problem solvers.

You should know a number of attorneys and former judges offer mediation and arbitration services. This is the perfect option if you are stuck in heated disagreement. Instead of paying \$25,000 per person in attorney fees over the life of your case, hire an attorney or former judge to make the tough decisions for you.

This is better because it's faster and therefore typically cheaper. If you go the traditional court route, it takes a while because the court calendar is full. It can easily take 45-90 days to get a court date, depending on your matter. This adds up quickly. If you have a private mediator or judge, you can see them next week. Get all the issues resolved inside 30 days.

I can't express the benefits of this route sufficiently. It is 1,000 times better. Just think of all the unresolved, bleeding issues that get exacerbated after 1, 2, 3 or more years. Sometimes you just need to rip the band-aid off and start healing. This option allows you to move on more quickly.



TIP NO. 01

THE ATTORNEY NEXT DOOR

Did you really think I would leave out the services I offer? And what kind of attorney would I be if I didn't believe in my own products? Yes, I'm number 1 and now I'll prove it to you.

I am the Attorney Next Door and I offer you customization. Tell me what you need we'll give you customized options to accomplish your goals.

The Attorney
NEXT DOOR



You want to do it all on your own? No problem, we have online videos to help you through each step; each and every form. Watch the videos from your home or at Starbucks or an island in Greece—it doesn't matter. Wherever you want to watch the videos. Whenever you want the videos.

You and your spouse got stuck? Not a problem. Call me or Video Chat with me and I'll coach you through your options.



You and your spouse want to do Mediation/Arbitration? No, problem, we got you covered. We can get your entire case resolved in under 30 days.

I don't have a waiting list (yet) or any other red-tape.

Want to mix and match any of the above options. Yes, you can do that. It's like I always say, an attorney on your side, on your terms, within your budget. It doesn't get better than that. 😊

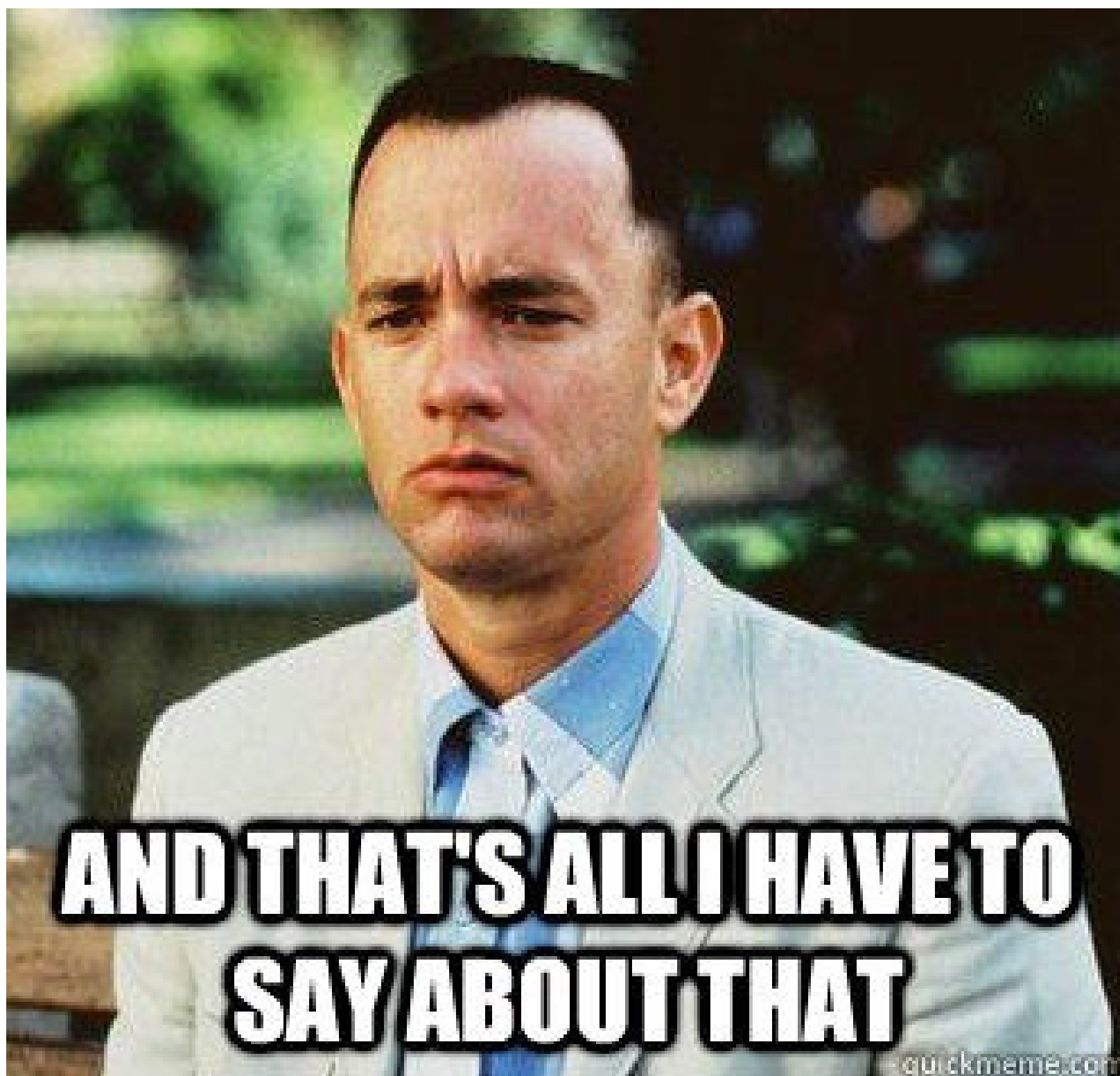
Check us out by visiting us at www.theAttorneyNextDoor.com or [clicking here!](#)



FINAL THOUGHTS

So that's it. That's 8 different ways for you get through this mess. And you will get through it one way or another. But of course, you can always hire attorneys, pay about \$25,000 per person in attorney fees over the course of the next several months or years*, and be stressed out, angry and miserable.

*"That's all I have to say about that."
-Forrest, Forrest Gump.*



*Average duration of a divorce is a year and a half according to Lawyers.com: Divorce in California: How Much Does It Cost? How Long Does It Take? <https://www.lawyers.com/legal-info/family-law/divorce/divorce-in-california.html>.