



‘Stop Trying to Make **“FETCH” HAPPEN’**

ALTHOUGH SHE COULD’VE BEEN NICER ABOUT IT, Regina George in *Mean Girls* gave Gretchen Wieners fairly good advice when telling her, “Stop trying to make ‘fetch’ happen.” Despite Gretchen’s best efforts, “fetch” simply wasn’t catching on at North Shore High School. Trying to make “fetch” happen was really Gretchen’s only way of trying to shine from underneath Regina’s shadow. And being told otherwise is finally what cracked Gretchen Wieners.

As young lawyers, many of us have our own version of “trying to make ‘fetch’ happen.” Early in my career, I was trying to be a trial lawyer by getting as much trial experience as possible at the Office of the Texas Attorney General. Although many other attorneys got that trial experience, it just was not happening for me. Instead of simply moving on, I tried to make “fetch” happen. And I cracked. Then, when I was a staff attorney at the 4th Court of Appeals, I really had my heart set on applying to be the chief staff attorney one day. But again, it just wasn’t happening for me. That time, I stopped trying to make “fetch” happen and just moved on.

“Trying to make ‘fetch’ happen” is metaphor for the goals some of us young attorneys cling to in order to find ways to step out of the shadows of those around us and shine on our own accord. But unless we’re careful, those goals can become limiting beliefs—ideas that a certain goal must be achieved before we can be great lawyers. For me, getting trial experience was a goal I needed to achieve before I could become a good appellate lawyer. And being chief staff attorney was a goal I needed to achieve to truly shine as an attorney. But it turns out I wasn’t being reasonable in dwelling on those goals, and they ended up becoming limiting beliefs. Like most limiting beliefs, neither of those beliefs were true. Instead, they became self-imposed limits and were harmful to my mental health. Certainly, it is good to have career goals. But not every goal must be reached, especially when there are many other paths to achieving the same success.

Attending TYLA’s Wellness Summit last year—particularly, our keynote speaker Pam Owens’ presentation on the art of surrender—helped me better understand my propensity to turn my goals into limiting beliefs and to be more present rather than fixated on my goals. I’m excited that TYLA is offering this programming again—among other CLE presentations and wellness activities—at this year’s Wellness Summit at the Magnolia Hotel in Houston on January 12-13, 2023. I hope you can make it. But if not, you can always visit TYLA’s attorney wellness website at texaslawyercare.tyla.org for wellness tips. And, if you realize that one of your goals is holding you back, I hope you’ll remember that when it comes to such a limiting belief, “She doesn’t even go here.”

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