I am speaking with Evan Aidman. He has been a trial laywer for almost a quarter of a century. He is also the author of “Winning Your Personal Injury Claim”. Hi, Evan, thank you for taking some time to answer some questions. Hi, Bill ,my pleasure. First thing is I understand that you use modern technology quite a bit in your practice and I'm curious as to how. Person listening to this could use modern technology in choosing a lawyer or dealing with a personal injury. There are so many uses for the Internet, both in choosing a lawyer and in in pursuing your case, I could give you so many different examples of that, for instance. If a person was involved in a slip and fall accident and they need to know how long was the ice that they slipped on on the ground, which is a really crucial thing to know in that kind of a case, you can go to any of a number of different websites such as www.wunderground.com and you can. In a matter of moments, get a complete weather report for the area geographically where you fell and the time period. If you need to locate a particular person, for example when you file lawsuit, you have to serve the person with the lawsuit papers. It's very simple simply by going to. Any of the number of locators out there. How to find a particular person? I particularly like whitepages.com. I find it to be a very very effective person locator. So just from a research point of view it it serves people very well. Absolutely. You don't have to go to the library. Well, I haven't been to the library in ten years because it's all available on my computer with just a couple of taps on the keys, so if it's available for you, it's available for the link as well. Almost everything is. There are some exceptions to that where the information might be particularly sensitive. For example, there's a website called accurate. Which is an incredibly powerful web tool that is really available to law enforcement, to the IRS, to attorneys, and several others. Our listeners can find a way to get onto it, and there are there are many ways to get onto it. It is the most powerful search tool on the Internet. So with all this information available on the Internet. Then is the Internet the way to go to find personal injury lawyer? No, the Internet is not the way to go to find a personal injury. But the Internet is a tool that you should use to make sure that the choice you're making of an attorney is the right one. There is really. I think only one way to find an attorney. It's the same way you would choose a doctor, which is by reputation. You really have to go to someone that you trust, and the only way to find an attorney that you really trust this by going to a family member or a friend who you trust and who's had a very good experience. With an attorney, then at that point, once they've decided based on referral, then they could do some homework and check out your background. Yeah, that's right. You what you must do is you must Google the attorney and the law firm and see everything that's on the Internet about that attorney and about that law firm you're gonna get. Much more than just their website, although it's important to look at their website, but you may find that that attorney has got some disciplinary problems, but you may find that that attorney has had press write ups that are very, very favorable or very unfavorable. That is a piece of homework that you must do when you're making a selection as important as an attorney. Now I understand that you offer on your website a newsletter and E newsletter, right and electronic newsletter. It's e-newsletter for sure and it it actually tells people how to do some of these things. What would be on your newsletter? I've really tried to focus a lot on Internet resources, although I cover a lot of different topics in the e-newsletter. It comes out every three weeks and it's absolutely free. Anyone who wants to subscribe through my website can get the e-newsletter and really what I'm doing with the e-newsletter is I'm writing the 4th edition of my book. My book is winning your personal injury claim and the third edition came out recently and when I come up with ideas. That I think are going to be helpful to people who either are representing themselves or who want to be more effective in monitoring their lawyers performance than I put out that information in an e-newsletter which ultimately is going to be incorporated into the 4th edition of my book. Well, that's a great resource because I'm sitting. Thinking I was injured and I'm going through all the stress of dealing with my injury and then on top of that dealing with mitigation that having a tool like that would be so valuable and to be offering it for free is a wonderful resource. I think it is and and you also have access to me via email now another one of the amazing technological advances is that instead of having to call your lawyer up, you just send your lawyer and email. And if your lawyer is technologically savvy, he should be able to respond to it very quickly and efficiently. So email being another way that the Internet can help those out there, what are some other advantages of the Internet technology? One of the things that you have to do is you have to be able to locate your defendant because you have to be able to serve that defendant with the lawsuit papers. I'll give you another story. I got involved with a lawsuit against a homeowner. Over a 6 year old who had been very badly injured in the persons yard as child had climbed up onto a a cement block wall and one of those cement blocks was not properly mortared in in the child ended up having an 80 pound block fall on his fingers and had permanent damage done to his fingers. I waited until the trial was fully grown before I filed the suit because I needed to know what the permanent injury was going to be, and my fear was that the defendant would long since have moved and I was going to have difficulty serving that defended again. I went right to Google. I put in the persons name. Within a matter of seconds I had located the person in another part of the state and was able to serve her. So how does the Internet help you with your practice? Well, I'm a solo practitioner. That means I'm here all by myself. Back in the old days, before the Internet, if I needed help with the case, I had to get on the phone and call another return. And now I have access through listservs to the best trial lawyers in the state each and every day I post. Emails onto the trial lawyers list server. What that means is when I send an email trailers around the state see my questions or comments on the listserv and they respond just as I respond to their queries. It's like having a large law firm at my disposal of the best lawyers in the state, and so. It's really leveling the playing field for for the smaller practitioner as opposed to the lawyer who's got 50 lawyers down the hall from the playing field is really leveled not just for the average layperson, but also for attorneys as well. Well, I can see you here too that the Internet would make this process go lot faster than it could have. I I think that's true anytime you can show the insurance company that you know what you're doing and you've got your case ready, you're much more likely to get the case settled than if you've got the tools to do that. You're in much better shape. Evan, in terms of the Internet, how can you use it as a tool for medical malpractice? There are numerous websites out there that you can gain access to the disciplinary records of of doctors. For example, www.healthgrades.com is a site that enables you to research over 600,000 the physicians nationwide. You can get access to their certifications, their contact information, disciplinary actions against them, patient surveys, or you can go to choicetrust.com for instant national searching on doctors, dentist, chiropractors, nurses across several specialty areas and check out their credentials. This is. Crucial before you go in to see a doctor, and certainly if you suspect that there's been malpractice, you're going to want to check out that doctors record absolutely. Now let's let's switch over to your your book called Winning your personal injury claim. As I look at the cover, it looks like a really wonderful resource for people to. Any other questions answered about all types of personal injuries tell us about your book. Well, I published this book first in 1997. It it occurred to me that the average guy really needed a book to really guide him or her through the process. Personal injury litigation can be very complex and even stressful for. For the average person, and I wrote this book. Really targeting two different types of people. I first really wanted to focus on people who wished to represent themselves in personal injury litigation and in addition, what I ended up finding as I wrote the book was that I was focusing more on people who want to be able to effectively monitor the performance of their attorneys. Most people don't really have any idea if the attorney is doing a good job for them. It's kind of like when I take my car to the auto mechanic. I know so little about. Automobiles. Then I'm really at the mercy of the of the mechanic and it's that way I think with with litigation, the average person really has no idea whether his attorney is doing a good job. And and my book is directed at enabling people to ask the right types of questions of their attorney. And to know whether they're getting straight answers at the top of your book, it says take control and save money in legal fees. So part of that taking control would be to have that knowledge going in with that person knowing what he or she should be doing for you. Right. And the book has forms that you can use. The book provides you with samples of fee agreements that are favorable to litigants. The attorney is really looking out for his best interest in making as much money as possible, and he may offer you a fee agreement that is much more favorable to the attorney than it should be. And. With my book you see sample fee agreements that not only guide you in negotiating a lower fee for the attorney, but structuring the fee agreement so that the ultimate fee that is taken out is is the lowest possible amount. Well, I think that's a great resource because I know if I were to come see you, I would just be totally at your mercy as to what percentage that you would get from my claim someone would get a good idea of about what kind of percentage that they should expect. Yes, that's right. And it really depends upon the type of case. How good the case is and the different area in the country where you are? There are local rules that put a ceiling on the amount that an attorney can charge in certain States and in other states. It's really completely wide open, and that's something you need to know. I also see on the cover of your book I have and stop the insurance companies. Run around. I know from my own experience it's so hard to deal with insurance companies just to get a claim filed for going to the doctor, much less a personal injury claim. And so in your book, you help people with that. Yes, insurance companies are in the business of of making money and they're going to pay out the least amount of money they can. And frequently they're going to delay that payment for as long as they can if they suspect that you don't know what you're doing or that your lawyer. Doesn't know what he's doing, that you're in for a big problem. So you really need to arm yourself with the weapons that you need to fight a war because personal injury litigation can be war. So in your book, you do help people dealing with insurance companies. Yeah. From the very beginning of the process. From the time of the. Auto accident or the slip and fall injury, or the medical malpractice or the product defect that caused an injury from the very beginning up and through settlement of the case. I go through it suit to nuts from A-Z. Every possible aspect of it that I have had experience with. I talk about in this book. Evan, I see from your book and of course your free e-newsletter, that you're really providing resource for people to empower themselves to make responsible decisions here. Well, that's right. I think self advocacy is it's just so crucial in so many aspects of our life, whether it's when going in for medical treatment and what I focus on is in legal disputes being able to take charge of your claim so that you're a part of the process and that you're knowledgeable about what's happening to your important. Legal rights and so that you're able to work with your attorney as a member of the team, not just being guided by the lawyer, but working together with him so that you've got a dynamic approach to solving the legal situation to solving the legal problem so that you can. Show your attorney that you can be a productive team member. Well, that sounds like it's a win win situation. I think that your attorney ought to rejoice when he finds out that you bought my book or subscribe to my e-newsletter because I'm going to give you the information you need to help your attorney do the best possible job for you. That's great. Well, Evan, let's switch now to an area of your practice that you are specializing in in that's personal injuries involving vision injuries. Can you explain a little bit about that list? Well, I really got interested in this area as a result of my wife specialty, my Wi-Fi. Allah got her masters degree several years ago. I said educator for the. Visually impaired and I was working on a case for a poor woman who had been struck by a car and had a terrible eye injury, a permanent injury and when I was talking to my wife about it, she said to me, you know, I've and I can put, I can put together goggles that just by wrapping cellophane around. The the gangal I will be able to simulate this woman vision and I thought to myself, wow, that's going to be amazing. I'm gonna take this into a settlement conference and have the judge put on these goggles and the judge is literally going to be able to see through my client size. And it was. It was amazing. It was a very, very difficult case in terms of the responsibility for the accident. But when the judge put on those goggles, I saw the reaction that he had and the insurance company attorneys jaw practically dropped and we got the case settled for a very, very healthy sound that was very smart idea. On your wife's behalf and it really motivated me to get more involved in the litigation of vision injury claims. Since then my wife has handled many cases as an expert witness for attorneys who have clients with vision injuries and I've become somewhat of an expert in the field and I've had quite a large number of attorneys. And clients consult me about their eye injury claims. Now, if someone listening to this has an eye injury. What's the first thing they should do? On my website I have several different sections having to do with injuries. I've got a whole section of eye injury law information. Then there's eye injury care information in which I address the various kinds of eye injuries that people suffer and what the first thing they should do. For example, treatment for a black eye or chemical burns from acid splashed into the eye. What do you do immediately to deal with that kind of thing? I also have on my website a number of links to injury resources, websites around the country that a person with an eye injury or an eye injury claim can go to. Various eye hospitals or how you find an eye doctor or encyclopedias of eye health information, and I welcome phone calls, faxes or emails. If you've got an eye injury claim growing out of an eye injury, I I'd like to be able to help you and I welcome your call anytime. Well, Evan, I certainly appreciate you taking the time to speak with me today and answer these questions and I can really see that you're about empowering individuals to really advocate for themselves and and to learn as much as they can about the practice of law and that you're here to help them when they have other questions. I'm here to help and I I just wanna emphasize that. The crucial word is trust. You have to be able to trust that the attorney who's working for you has your interests in mind. Your best interests. And if you've got the information at your disposal that you need to make sure that lawyer is doing the best possible job for you, then you'll know whether you have a lawyer. You can really trust. Well, it feels. Good. On this end, he say that. Thanks, Evan, I appreciate you taking the time. Thank you, bill.