



“BOB, LET’S TALK ABOUT YOUR INVOICE”



“Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier.”

— *Mother Teresa*

Some years ago, Amy and Jason, wife and husband, were signing their estate plans in my conference room. After they signed their estate plans, Amy looked me in the eye and said, “Bob, let’s talk about your invoice.” She tapped her finger on the invoice in front of her.

Years earlier, a mentor had observed that few things dissipate faster than a client’s appreciation for legal advice. So there I sat, thinking about my invoice. “Had I billed too much?” I asked myself. “Jason is a lawyer – he knows legal services are not inexpensive. Had I made a mistake on this great couple’s invoice?”

Amy paused and then said, “You spent far more time on our family’s legal matters than you expected. We value what you have done for us and our family. Your invoice is too low.”

Stunned, I suggested that the invoice be reduced, yet here was Amy insisting that the fee be increased!

From the moment I met Jason, Amy, and their family, it was clear they were different. Amy’s full name was Amy Krouse Rosenthal, and I tell this story with Jason’s permission.

Amy, an author, also made short films, some encouraging strangers to meet her at “The Bean” (the giant, silver Cloud Gate sculpture) in Chicago’s Millennium Park. Amy loved sharing her ideas, connecting with others, and spreading goodness through these randomly gathered strangers.

These strangers knew how to locate Amy in Millennium Park because Amy was the one person there holding open a bright, yellow umbrella. That yellow umbrella would become Amy’s signature trademark.

Eventually, Amy was diagnosed with a fatal illness. I saw Amy and Jason near the tragic end of her illness. She still selflessly strove to spread joy.

Shortly before she passed away at only age 51, Amy penned an essay entitled, “You May Want to Marry My Husband,” which was published in *The New York Times*. Amy’s article went viral globally. *People* magazine and the *Today* show would later report on the beauty of Amy’s essay and her life.

Even as her strength faded, Amy thought of her husband, family, and others. To continue spreading Amy’s joy and ideas, Jason created the AKR Yellow Umbrella Foundation.



Of course, this newsletter is not about the invoice. This newsletter is about being witness to creating goodness and making the world better. It is about the inexplicable good fortune this humble lawyer has enjoyed. My team and I have witnessed Amy’s, Jason’s, and all our clients’ thoughtfulness and insight. It has been so personally rewarding.

While it’s too late to thank Amy for her gifts to me, it’s certainly not too late to thank her husband, Jason, and to thank you.

amy krouse rosenthal 

