



Episode 666: No, We Are Not Screwed

Guest: T.K. Coleman

WOODS: I've got so many things I could talk to you about, man; I'm so tempted to ask you certain things, but I want to – especially a show you tried out for –

COLEMAN: (laughing)

WOODS: Boy, I want to ask you about that. But instead I want to talk about an article of yours that I just read the other day, called "No, We Are Not Screwed." Politics does not have to disempower us. That really resonated with me, because I get this a lot. I get this from – and I know this isn't directly to your point, but it's congruent with it. Every four years we get, this is the election of our lifetimes, and if the wrong person wins there's no more America." And then as usual, four years later there still is an America and we get another, oh, but this one, this is it. If this doesn't come out the right way, we're all doomed forever. And you just refuse to take that, so tell me why.

COLEMAN: Well, I certainly don't stubbornly refuse to take it, which is what people often assume when they hear any kind of feel-good message. People often respond to me by saying, oh, T.K., that's just another feel-good message. And my response is, well, what's more appropriate to bad reasons for feeling bad than a feel-good message rooted in logic. If you have to choose between optimism and realism, I say choose realism, because that's enough, because a part of reality is being honest about our outstanding track record as human beings for innovating around systems of oppression.

So my wife and I, we love the TV show *Parks and Recreation*, and it's a show that takes a satirical look at local government politics. And we just watched an episode last night – such great timing – and it was about a fictional small town cult called the Reasonabilists, and they referred to themselves as such because their philosophy was of course the one worldview by which everyone should live. And the Reasonabilists believed that they had this inside knowledge of the precise date at which the world would end, and so every four years or so they would have this gathering where people would all get together and say and do the sorts of things that I guess you would say if you thought the world was going to end. And of course their predictions never come true, and unsurprisingly, they never update their beliefs; they simply update their calendars. They simply assume that, oh, I was just off on some minor small little

thing, but they just return the next four years to let everyone know that Armageddon is now here.

And I think that's pretty illustrative of the political landscape as I've observed it in my lifetime. There is a loud faction of people who consider themselves to be the voices of reason. They show up every four years to remind us that the world is going to end and to make false promises that they're going to move to Canada and so and so becomes president. And you know, I listened to your episode with Mike Malice, and one of the things you said is you describe people as having Trump derangement syndrome – and I love that term, by the way. And it's funny, because this isn't anything new. If you look at Obama, there was *The Obama Deception* documentary that went really viral and people were calling him the Antichrist, and they were afraid that he was going to have us all put the mark of the beast 666 on our foreheads. Then before him you had when George Bush, Jr. was accused of stealing the election, Michael Moore had his dramatic documentary where he showed people throwing stones at the car. And then even when I was in college, someone came to speak about George Bush running, and they said if George Bush wins, it's going to be a black holocaust, and they had us all afraid, shaking in our boots.

And every year, these people continue to show up, and they continue to tell us the world is going to end, and as you said at the beginning of the show, we always find a way to survive. So I'm primarily motivated by the opportunity to be a voice that lets people know that these politicians are not gods, and that you are not losers. And so that's the message that I want to speak, and that's why I'm here.

WOODS: You know, there are these cults of personality around some of these presidents that make them larger than life, and that I think feeds into people's sense that they're just evil incarnate and there'll be no more freedom because of these people. But reality tends to be much more mundane than that, as you say. I want to read a line or two from your article, because you say, "There will always be people, situations, and events that we can't control, and there will always be creative things that we can do to create a freer society in spite of those things." Now, I told you this is Episode 666 –

COLEMAN: (laughing)

WOODS: – and I had all kinds – I had 666 suggestions as to what to do for this episode, and I thought about all kinds of evil that I could talk about. But then I thought, well, wait a minute, maybe we could just shine a light in the darkness on Episode 666. Instead of being obsessed with evil, think about what can be accomplished in the face of evil. And in fact, I've actually started having a decent number of entrepreneurs on the show, because those are examples of people who, yeah, they're oppressed by the government the same way we are, but they live their lives anyway. They have great successes anyway. They experience great joy anyway. They express their creativity anyway. They don't just sit around saying the world is terrible. And frankly, I'll say there are even some people who go into some of the conspiracy stuff who say, well, if it weren't for the Jesuits I wouldn't be earning \$12 an

hour, or if the Pope weren't controlling the world's finances, I wouldn't be some loser. There are all kinds of ways that that can just push people down the wrong path.

COLEMAN: Oh my gosh, you're saying so much great stuff here. Well, first let's talk about this idea of 666, because I think this is interesting, because in numerology – and in case anyone has any objections for me bringing up numerology, the only reason we would make an issue out of 666 comes from numerology and the significance that we attribute to this number. But in numerology, you actually add the numbers together whenever you have double or triple digits in order to reduce it to a single number. So if you add 6, 6, and 6, you have 18, and then you add 8 and 1, you have 9, and in numerology, number 9 is the number that represents global consciousness. It represents compassion and creativity. So even within the numerology of 666, if you actually finish it and do your numerology right, you get something that amounts to something positive. So if you want to do something dedicated to 666, I think this is the best route to go. And again, for anyone who says I don't buy that numerology crap, I say, excellent, because we can stop talking about 666.

Here's another thing: you mentioned conspiracies and how people shout out these conspiracies. I get excited about conspiracies, not because I believe them, but because I actually give a very positive interpretation to conspiracy theories that I think is quite reasonable. Something that often gets overlooked when people talk about conspiracies is the simple fact that a conspiracy is a backhanded compliment to the people who are conspired against. Why is that? Because you don't form a conspiracy against someone that you see as powerless. Human beings don't form conspiracies against ants. We walk around them, we walk over them, and if an ant gets in our way, too bad for the ant.

So why would anyone ever conspire against someone else? The reason is quite simple. You only conspire against someone if you see that person as a potential threat, if you see that person as having the ability to undermine you or overthrow you. So whenever someone conspires against you, that means you are worth conspiring against. Whenever someone secretly plots against you and tries to manipulate your life from the background, that means that this person is threatened by you. And you see this playing out over and over again in our mythology, in our fiction. Why does Voldemort work so hard to intimidate Harry Potter and instill him with fear? Why do Cinderella's stepsisters work so hard to convince her that she's small and that she's a nobody? It's precisely because they have a clear vision of who that person can become, what that person is capable of, and the only way they can win is to indoctrinate that person with a fear-based philosophy that says you're a nobody, you're a loser, you're a lackey, you're powerless. And it's not until you buy into that that you're defeated. So if there's a conspiracy, I say, good, that means somebody's threatened by me. Now all I have to do is find out about myself what they already know about me.

WOODS: Well, that is an interesting way of looking at it, and like you, I don't reject outright the possibility that there are conspiracies, because there have been conspiracies. A very small group of people somehow managed to overthrow the

provisional government in Russia and install the Bolsheviks. That was a very small group of people. It's astonishing how they got away with it. So these things happen.

COLEMAN: Mm hmm.

WOODS: But I think that is the right way to think about it. But also, look, it's true, and believe me, I chronicle almost every day on this show, there are all kinds of problems, there are bad people, there's ignorance, and I'm trying to counter that with knowledge and goodness and the best stuff that I can do. But that doesn't mean that I have to let this absolutely take me over, because if I do, if I just have nothing but despair, then, so to speak, "the terrorists have won." And I refuse to allow that. Now, having said all that, this still might sound a little bit Pollyanna-ish to some people, like we're a little bit too optimistic. So give me some specifics here. When we think about our situation today and we see that basically the political candidates don't really have a whole lot to say that's sensible, why shouldn't I be overcome with pessimism and what is still within my own grasp to do in my own life? I mean, give me some specific things, reasons that I shouldn't be overcome with despair.

COLEMAN: Absolutely. So first we should be precise in how we define what it means to not be overcome with despair. I'm not preaching a philosophy of delusion. I'm not here to say you should be dishonest with yourself about how screwed up things are. I think the real point here is that you can be honest about that without treating those facts as if they are the end of the world. So optimism is not the denial of all the bad stuff that's happening, but it's the refusal to use bad stuff as an excuse to stop creating good stuff.

So one of my favorite examples of this in history is Frederick Douglass, and Frederick Douglass was a slave, and his slave master's wife had begun to teach him the basics of how to read, and when his slave master discovered that this was going on, he chastised her for doing so and made it clear that this was not something that was supposed to happen, because of course, as Frederick Douglass said, "Knowledge makes a man unfit to be a slave," and he didn't want him to start to believe in his own power. So Frederick Douglass had to come up with a creative way to teach himself how to read in an environment where he was physically enslaved and where he risked his life by trying to learn how to read. So one of the things he did, and I found this to be a very interesting story, is he would take his small little portion of bread that the slaves were allowed to have – it was already a despicably small amount – and he would sneak out into the streets and he would find young white boys that were willing to trade him a few minutes of reading lessons in exchange for his bread. And he gradually taught himself how to read by doing that.

Now, here's what's interesting: if you and I were to do a *Back to the Future* routine, get into a time machine and drive back to those days and tell Frederick Douglass, hey, Frederick, you need to innovate around this system of oppression, because the political changes are going to take too long, you and I would be in the headlines. We would be treated as bigots. We would be treated as these privileged people who don't have a clue. We would be treated as these delusional optimists who don't understand

the systemic problems of that time. But the reality is the political changes that were to contribute to abolishing slavery significantly benefitted from Frederick Douglass' work, and that benefit could not have been possible if he didn't commit to innovating around the system of oppression that he was in. Had he adopted an attitude that said, well, you know, I don't want to deny the fact that I am being manipulated and that I am being enslaved and just sort of sat in a corner and accepted it as final, we wouldn't be where we are today and he would not have had the impact that he had.

So I think we have to follow that same tradition. I think wherever political changes have occurred, they have been a lagging indicator of the creativity of the people. They have always been a reaction to what ordinary people like you and I do every day to make our lives better. One of the things that's interesting about things like personal development and professional development, because I gave a talk one time and I made some people squirm by saying you can have as much influence if not more on the freedom of this country by showing up to the gym and making changes in your diet as you can by voting for the next president. And you know, people say, well, how can you say that sort of thing, and people just sort of assume that when you talk about self actualization and personal development you're just sort of mimicking Tony Robbins and just saying a bunch of motivational fluff.

But when you really think about it, Tom, at the core of all forms of tyranny is belief in our own powerlessness. It's the failure to take our power seriously. We do not get into the kind of situation that we're in merely because there are deceivers out there trying to manipulate people. There will always be people who try to rise to power by promising free goodies and things of that sort. The reason we get into this situation is because when people don't believe in their own power, they begin to look for a savior. So one of the greatest things we can do is we can invest in developing a vocabulary of personal power that extends beyond political activity, and we can do that by working on ourselves, to become superior versions of ourselves and inspiring others to do the same. Does that make sense?

WOODS: It does, and I hope you'll forgive me if I make one small digression, just because I saw a post over at your blog that I just want to make sure – I have a terrible memory these days; if I don't mention this now, I'll forget it forever. You have a post called "Seriousness Has Its Limitations," and I just want to point out the brilliance of this post, because you're saying that we need to be able to laugh at the people who rule over us, and there's such wisdom in that, because the people who rule over us really actually don't like to be laughed at, because they want us to have frankly a kind of a – they want to be encased in an aura of awe and invincibility, and laughter cuts right through that.

So you'll recall in the *V for Vendetta* movie, there's a scene where the comedian winds up being killed because he's made fun of the rulers. Or over in, when I had Michael Malice on to talk about North Korea and the movie *The Interview*, well, the *The Interview* of course was meant to lampoon the North Korean leader, and that's not done. That is not to be done. The idea that he would be laughed at, as opposed – when the idea is to project the idea the North Korean leadership as being feared

around the world and respected, laughter absolutely cuts that right out, so just that small one blog post has actually got more truth packed into it than, well, let's just say a lot of the other blog posts I read. (laughing) Let's just put it that way.

All right, but look, I'm going to actually just — I want to move ahead, because I can't help asking, I mean, when we talk about things that an individual can do and all is not lost, I do want to say something about entrepreneurship, and I'll tell you something, as soon as you and I stop talking, I'm going to listen to the recent episode of *The Isaac Morehouse Podcast* that you were on, because I look at the topics you cover; I want to know about all these things. So I am going to ask you to say something about how you got to know Isaac and how it is that the idea for Praxis came about. Now, my listeners at this point have heard about Praxis a number of times, but they don't mind, because it's totally in line with everything we believe. We love hearing about it.

COLEMAN: Absolutely. So Isaac Morehouse and I go way back. We've been really close friends for well over a decade. We first met in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where we both went to college, and we would just get together and talk about philosophy and all sorts of things. And he's always been one of those go-to guys for me. Whenever I had a creative idea for a startup or a problem, he'd be one of those guys I'd bounce ideas off of and vice versa. We never suspected that we'd end up working together some day. We just sort of enjoyed one another's friendship.

But Isaac grew up in the homeschooling community, and he's always had a vision for creating educational alternatives in higher ed. One of the things that's always troubled him is this reality where people who do homeschooling, unschooling, and other approaches to alternative ed, they boast these innovative approaches to learning, but when it comes to what we do with that knowledge, we tend to all become the same again. We still tend to treat education as if its primary purpose is to get kids into college. And once you get kids into college, college will take care of them, it'll answer all the questions; it'll prepare them for the real world, and they will be fine. But you know, we still measure success by college; it's just that maybe in the homeschool community we brag about getting to college earlier, but college is still the goal post.

And so what we wanted to do was criticize by creating. We wanted to give people another option. We didn't want to make them feel bad about that option, because people choose based on what's available to them. But Isaac was inspired to create a system that would allow people to think about education and to experience the knowledge they acquire in a way that not only was cheaper and more efficient than the traditional path, but in a way that cut to the chase and helped them more directly pursue their goals.

So when he first brought the idea to me just as a friend, I looked through things, I helped him out with some ideas, and then there came a point where I said I have to be involved with this, this is perfect for me, because my life mission has always been to convince as many people as possible that they have the permission and the power to be the predominant creative forces in their own lives. I've always been interested in helping convince people that they have more possibilities than they can conceive. But

I want to go beyond giving people pep talks, motivational speeches, and inspirational quotes. I wanted to actually create a system that would allow people to develop a robust idea of what they can do practically to create a freer society, to liberate themselves individual from the various things that make them feel restricted and oppressed.

And so Praxis was just the perfect fit for me. Isaac's philosophy was perfect for me, and so I told him, I said, hey, I have to be a part of this, man. I have to be. And so I worked my way in, and now I'm the education director for the program, and I have the privilege of contributing to the real world by helping young people all over not only learn the principles of creating financial independence, but learn the importance of being their own mapmakers in an ever-changing world, learning the importance of picking themselves and not merely facing reality but creating reality, not merely waiting for work but creating work. And it's the most awesome thing in the world. I love what we do.

WOODS: Tell me something about your own college experience and the extent to which you think it prepared you for what you're doing now – or not.

COLEMAN: Absolutely. You know, my memories of college are pretty pleasant. Most of the lessons I learned in college were social lessons. It was the first time in, my life growing up in a pretty sheltered home – my dad is a pastor. I grew up in a very religious, very conservative home, and college was the first time where I dated anyone; it was the first time where I went to a movie, all these sorts of, like, non-conservative things. And, you know, I grew up there, and probably the most valuable lesson I learned was just to be an adult, to make mistakes, to experiment, and to explore myself. I have nothing whatsoever against my college experience. In fact, I loved college so much that I want to do college a favor by incentivizing it to do what it does best by creating a system that competes with it.

WOODS: All right, on the Praxis front, I'm curious to know how many of the people – not that this would invalidate it, but how many of the people, yourself included, have experience either in the business world or in entrepreneurship, so that you're not just saying to people, you know, hey, go on into the business world; we're right behind you.

COLEMAN: Mm hmm.

WOODS: You know? I mean, what has been the experience of people who actually work in Praxis? Do they have experience in that world?

COLEMAN: Ah, man, this is a really, really great question, because it gives me the opportunity to say – first of all, before we even get to that, it's important for you to know that Praxis is not a business class or it's not a business school. It's not a place where you come to sit down and listen to Isaac Morehouse, T.K. Coleman, and crew pontificate about how you ought to live your life. It's an apprenticeship. I describe it as an academically infused apprenticeship, because we take the liberal arts very

seriously and we challenge our participants to study things like philosophy, history, economics, and so forth. But it's an apprenticeship, where people learn primarily by doing. So they are spending 30 hours a week working with actual entrepreneurs, and they're spending that time getting a mentorship experience, getting comprehensive business experience, so it's not about reading my blogs or listening to me talk; it's about going with someone that's running a business in an area that you're interested in, and you're learning on the ground. And in addition to that, you're spending some time with me or part of my staff every week, having coaching sessions where we not only review your performance and we talk about your goals and we help you achieve the things you want to achieve outside of your work with your business partner by doing professional development projects and so forth. So I just want to make that part clear.

But as far as the business experience, the staff, I mean, starting with myself, I have entrepreneurial failure, which I consider to be more important than the success, as well as success in my background. I've run a couple of startups, and every dream I've wanted to pursue in my life, I've gone after it. You hear a lot of motivational speakers today tell kids, "Follow your dreams," and then when you ask those speakers, well, what have you done in your personal life, they say, well, I made a lot of money by telling people to follow their dreams.

WOODS: Exactly.

COLEMAN: You know, I never wanted to be that guy, and so whether it was going on *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?*, auditioning for *American Idol*, losing \$50,000 of my own money in my first startup, working with my friends to build an independent film production company and making a horror movie, everything that I've ever wanted to pursue, I've gone after my dreams. Sometimes I've fallen on my face and embarrassed myself; sometimes I've succeeded. But when I encourage young people to think critically about following their dreams – and I encourage them to follow their priorities, not just their passion – I speak from a place of experience, and I know the same for Isaac and all of the guys. One of the things I'm proud about with my team the most is that everyone is in the process of practicing what they preach by actively building a brand. If you look at anybody on my team, from Zack Slayback to Isaac to myself to Derek Magill, all of these guys have websites; they have products that they're putting out there; they have ways that they're serving the world, creating value for society outside of just doing Praxis.

WOODS: All right, now look, it's your fault, not mine. You mentioned it; I didn't bring it up.

COLEMAN: (laughing)

WOODS: So now that you mention it, I want you to tell me about your experience auditioning for *American Idol*. It's too late; now you've got to do it.

COLEMAN: Oh man, you know, it was a totally wild experience. I mean, obviously I didn't succeed, because, had I succeeded, you would know about me (laughing). You know, I would be a lot more popular. But it was an awesome experience, man. It started off with a friend of mine trying to convince me that I should do it, and me being afraid and saying no, I'm probably not going to win anyway, and after a bunch of pep talks and just sort of reviewing my life and thinking about things, I decided to do it.

Now, interestingly enough, the person who convinced me to really go after it is a woman by the name of Sylvia Colt, who, she's passed away now, but she was a philosophy professor at Western Michigan University at that time. And one of the things she said to me – she saw my struggle. I was in grad school at this time, and I wanted to go audition for *American Idol*, but I also wanted to stay focused on my studies and not set myself up for heartbreak. And she said to me – she goes, T.K., this world has enough influential adults who tell young people how to live their lives without knowing what it's like to pursue their own dreams. We have enough people like that. If you want to be a good philosopher, if you want to be a good educator, if you want to be a good leader, sit the books down for a minute and know what it's like to chase after something that you really want. Go get your answers and speak from the wisdom of experience. And that really moved me, and I decided to go for it and do it.

So the way the audition works, it's a little bit different than what you see on TV. When you watch it on television, you usually see the three celebrity judges, and they've changed over the years, but at this time it was Randy, Paula, and Simon. And those three judges are at that little desk, and you walk in, and you sing, and you either win or not. But before you even get to that, you are in this jam-packed stadium. We were at the stadium where I believe the San Jose Sharks play, and it's just thousands and thousands of people. It's like an NBA finals game, it's so packed in there.

And they have, like, several tables of producers lined up next to each other, and they call, like, 30 people at a time, you go stand in front of that table, and each person moves forward and they sing for about, like, 30 seconds. You've got, like, 30 seconds to do your thing, man. And the door on the left means you go home. You're done. Sorry, you're not what we're looking for. The door on the right means either you have a chance to win because you're such a good singer, or you're really interesting to watch because you're so horrifically bad, and they send you to the door on the right, at which point you go on to audition for the main show. And when I sang, oh my gosh, I was trembling in fear. I sang, and they pointed me to the door on the left. And it was a heartbreaking experience. I was really sad, because there were a lot of inspiring things that happened before that that made me feel like, oh, this is my moment, this is fate, this is all going to work out for me.

But that experience has been more valuable to me than anything else, because I followed a dream that I was really afraid to follow that a lot of people told me was ridiculous and silly and irresponsible, and I didn't die. I survived. I discovered that on the other side of fear is something that is so much more valuable than being safe and

secure. It's finding a superior version of yourself. And when you follow your dreams, you go after the things that are important to you, even if you fail you become a wise, more courageous, more funny version of yourself. And that's really the pearl of great price. I think the real reason for following a dream, and I discovered this through following the *American Idol* experience, it's not to achieve the dream, but it's to realize the best possible version of yourself. So that's a little bit about my story. You can feel free to ask me any specific questions, but that's sort of the *Reader's Digest* version.

WOODS: So you did that, and then you were actually on *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader*?

COLEMAN: Oh, man. Yeah (laughing).

WOODS: So wait, wait, wait. You don't have to tell me – were you one of the fifth graders, or were you one of the contestants?

COLEMAN: No, I was one of the contestants (laughing).

WOODS: Oh, no (laughing).

COLEMAN: Yeah, and Tom, this is really bad, too, man. This is really bad, because, you know, I got the first question wrong, and I'm pretty lucky – I'm pretty lucky that the kid, his name was Cody, that I picked, he saved me, and I was able to continue on the show for a while. But I got the first question wrong, and I wish I could tell you, I wish with all my heart that I can tell you that it was some sort of sophisticated question that would make you go, oh, I understand, T.K.; I probably would have gotten that one wrong. But you want to know what the question was?

WOODS: Oh, no. Let me just say, whatever happened could have happened to anyone. Any one of us, it could have happened to. All right, what was the question?

COLEMAN: You know what? I'll take it for what it is, man, without even putting a positive spin on it. It was "How many faces are on a cube?" And I, you know, I looked at the lights and all the people around me, and it was quiet, and the room started to spin, and I got so nervous, I just, I thought about a square and then four sides, and you know, I just multiplied that by two and said eight, and see –

WOODS: You know what? I was going to guess that if you gave the wrong answer it would be eight, because if I were nervous I would have said the same thing.

COLEMAN: Oh man, I got it wrong. And what's really awesome about this – what's really awesome about this is, I don't know if it's still up there, because you know how these networks take things down for copyright and so forth, but there's actually a video on YouTube of me getting that question wrong. They don't show the entire show, but it's like, maybe like a 30-second clip or something where I get it wrong. And the best part is the comments, where people are saying, like, the meanest stuff in the

world. They're like, "This guy is everything that's wrong with our country." "Look at this guy – "

WOODS: (laughing) Oh, that's terrible.

COLEMAN: It's absolutely terrible. But here's why I love it: because so many people are afraid to do interesting and unconventional things precisely because of what they think the consequences are going to do them, because they exaggerate the power of fear.

WOODS: Right.

COLEMAN: And so when I talk about things like being creative and following your dreams, I talk about it as a man who has actually lived the life that people are afraid to live.

WOODS: Yeah.

COLEMAN: I'm not telling you something that I just read about in a book and I have this sort of naive, hunky-dory view of reality. Like, no. I'm saying you should do the things you're most passionate about in life, not because you'll succeed but you'll probably get your butt kicked in ways that you can't imagine. But you'll discover something far more important than any of that. You'll discover that you have far more resilience and possibility within you that you can't imagine, as well.

WOODS: All right, I'm going to make sure and link to TKColeman.com at – here we go, TomWoods.com/666.

COLEMAN: Ha ha.

WOODS: We're going to link to that; we'll link to your Twitter, which you told me you use every day, so we'll – *Tom Woods Show* people, I want you to go follow T.K. on Twitter. We'll have that up at TomWoods.com/666. Do you have one of those Twitter handles with an underscore in it?

COLEMAN: I do; it's @TK_Coleman.

WOODS: Okay, so @TK_Coleman. Follow him there. Give me a last bit of wisdom for my audience before we say goodbye for today. I'm putting you on the spot here.

COLEMAN: Oh, man, it's all good. This is fun. So I would give you a bit of wisdom from the character Morpheus in the movie *The Matrix*. He's talking with Neo about this system of oppression in which they live, and these powerful agents whose primary job is to perpetuate the system of oppression. And he says the following to Neo: he says, "I have seen an agent punch through a concrete wall. Men have emptied entire clips at them and hit nothing but air, yet their strength and their speed are still based in a

world that is built on rules. Because of that, they will never be as strong or as fast as you can be."

I believe that is an accurate description of the world in which we live. Politics by its very nature is coercive. No matter how good a politician is, no matter how nice he or she is, they cannot produce results apart from using various forms of manipulation that inevitably produce negative externalities. The one thing they cannot do is they cannot create. They have great strength, because with coercion comes the power to really inconvenience people like you and I. But their strength is also their weakness, because the one thing that they can't do is the one thing that we can do. Governments can coerce, but they can't create, and that is why we have beaten them every time in history, and that's why we'll beat them again. It's not the end of the world, because creativity always trumps coercion in the end – always *trumps* coercion in the end.

WOODS: All right, there you go. T.K. Coleman, check him out at TKColeman.com. It's been fun chatting. I don't know if there's anybody else who works at Praxis. If there is, send them over here, but (laughing) –

COLEMAN: (laughing)

WOODS: But I've enjoyed talking to everybody I've talked to over there. I'm really glad you're doing what you're doing, and each one of you has a unique story. I mean, I'm pretty sure – I think, you know – I'm pretty sure you're the only one who's done those two particular things in the end. That's for darn sure. But I like the way you reflect on that, though, that yeah, look, it's not easy to have that YouTube up there with everybody in the world looking at you at your most vulnerable, most difficult challenging moment of your life –

COLEMAN: Mm hmm.

WOODS: – but that gives you credibility, because you did that. You did that. You came out on the other side, and you're fine. Look at you. You're extremely successful. You're doing great. You know, big deal. That – you've got – let's just say – it's a family show, so I'll just say you've got a lot of guts there, and I really appreciate and respect that.

COLEMAN: Hey, Tom, by the way, I won \$50,000 on that show. I went on to get the next four or five questions right. I won \$50,000 –

WOODS: Oh!

COLEMAN: Uh huh, and in addition to that, my mom received so many phone calls that day, like, "Oh my gosh! I saw T.K. on TV!" I got so much love. I crossed making it on national TV off my bucket list and had some money to put in my pocket, and I was able to use that money to buy a really nice engagement ring to propose to my wife, whom I'm going to have been married to for five years this weekend. Isn't that awesome?

WOODS: Okay, all right, that's – okay, look, I obviously didn't know enough about how the show – I thought that meant that you lost.

COLEMAN: No, man.

WOODS: All right, now look. Time out now.

COLEMAN: (laughing)

WOODS: Look, I'm going to give you – this is absolutely for free. You don't have to pay me a thing. I'm going to give you, T.K. Coleman, some personal coaching right now. You ready?

COLEMAN: I'm ready.

WOODS: Here is how you handle all those comments. You say, "Well, you know, you guys are making me cry from embarrassment here. I guess I'll have to spend some of my \$50,000 on tissues to help dry my tears." You know? That shuts them up forever. And I know it's childish, but doggone it, you're on *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?* I think you're entitled to one childish comeback.

COLEMAN: (laughing) That's awesome, man. I love it. Thank you.

WOODS: All right, great. Okay, we'll talk again soon. Thanks a lot.

COLEMAN: Cheers.