

## Transcript

0:01

hi my name is Manny Alvarez and I've

0:04

been a Coline employee for over 20 years

0:07

this video is for our clients our

0:09

colleagues and the broader string

0:10

instrument community i'm making this

0:12

with a heavy heart and with a deep

0:14

respect for those who have supported

0:16

Colestein throughout the decades i want

0:18

to be clear I'm limited in what I can

0:20

say due to ongoing legal proceedings but

0:23

everything I do share here is truthful

0:26

this isn't speculation

0:28

this is my lived

0:30

experience filming this is incredibly

0:32

difficult for me barry Coloulstein the

0:35

man who was on paper the former owner

0:37

was not just my boss he was a mentor he

0:40

was like family and yet despite that

0:42

connection he has taken actions that

0:44

have put the company and many lives

0:46

connected to it in serious jeopardy

0:49

there's more to the story than what you

0:51

have may have heard you may not realize

0:54

it but when the media reports on a

0:55

situation like this they sometimes give

0:58

just a few hours to respond i've been

1:00

giving 2 hours before a story goes live

1:03

not much time to explain or defend

1:05

yourself meanwhile the word allegedly is

1:08

tossed around and even though it's meant

1:10

to protect the press it doesn't protect

1:12

those of us affected it still causes

1:14

damage so I've reached a point where I

1:17

can't stay quiet i need to speak

1:19

honestly about what's been happening not

1:22

just for myself but for the legacy of

1:24

this company and the truth in 2019 I

1:27

believed I was being honored with the

1:29

opportunity to purchase the business and

1:31

carry forward its legacy but that dream

1:34

was short-lived just 2 months after the

1:36

sale Barry's wife a kind and beautiful

1:39

soul passed away unexpectedly he said

1:43

many times that he coped with his grief

1:44

by throwing himself even more into work

1:47

but what that looked like was him

1:50

continuing to act as if he still owned

1:52

the business he kept calling the shots

1:55

he refused to step back he continued

1:57

managing major sales communicating with

2:00

clients through his private accounts and

2:03

overriding me at every turn despite the

2:07

contract stating I now owned the company

2:09

I asked him again and again to allow the

2:12

office and the staff to take over to

2:14

follow through with what we had agreed

2:16

on but instead I was met with yelling

2:18

profanity threats and emotional abuse he

2:22

told me if I didn't comply he'd destroy

2:24

the company and he tried i found myself

2:27

in a position where I had the title but

2:30

none of the control i lived in fear not

2:32

just for my own well-being but for the

2:35

stability of everyone who worked there

2:37

the work environment became toxic and

2:40

mentally exhausting as I stepped further

2:42

into leadership I discovered practices I

2:45

couldn't

2:45

condone professors pushing students

2:48

towards higherpriced instruments to

2:50

increase their own commissions

2:52

instruments advertised as handcrafted by

2:55

Barry Colestein that were actually made

2:57

in other shops and documents signed

3:00

using digital versions of my signature

3:02

without my permission these were just

3:05

ethical these weren't just ethical

3:07

concerns they were betrayals and I

3:09

wasn't alone in noticing longtime staff

3:12

began to leave barbara Hadim Barry's

3:14

personal secretary of over 35 years left

3:17

and later wrote a book the damage was

3:19

rippling i confid it in people I trusted

3:22

and respected figures in our community

3:24

like Rufus and Doris Reed Nicholas

3:26

Walker people I hoped that would help me

3:28

navigate what had become an impossible

3:31

situation but even that was hard many of

3:34

these individuals had long histories

3:36

with Barry and speaking up felt

3:38

isolating a lot of rumors have swirled

3:40

around our various locations Baldwin the

3:43

mall New York City Florida but the

3:45

reasons for those moves are simpler than

3:47

they seem some were out of necessities

3:50

others were attempts to escape the

3:51

hostility and build something new every

3:54

decision was made with survival in mind

3:56

for the company for the instruments for

3:59

the people who rely on both in 2024

4:02

Barry pushed to re negotiate our

4:05

original agreement he wanted more money

4:08

more control and an extension of the

4:10

payment timeline all while actively

4:13

sabotaging the business he sold

4:15

inventory to competitors talked down the

4:17

company publicly and offered his

4:19

services independently for free using

4:21

company resources he told me more than

4:24

once that he'd rather watch a company go

4:26

down in flames than see it succeed in my

4:28

hands despite everything I continued to

4:31

pay him hundreds of thousands of dollars

4:34

because I feared that what would happen

4:36

if I didn't he made it clear if I

4:39

complied he reward me with business if

4:41

not he cut it off eventually I said no i

4:45

drew the line and he retaliated on March

4:48

31st of 2025 we filed a counter suit one

4:51

that exposes how Barry never truly gave

4:54

up control acted in bad faith and

4:56

damaged the business that he claimed to

4:58

love just three hours later his own

5:01

attorney filed another suit this time

5:03

with two people that he was close with

5:05

and ran to the press but I'm not staying

5:08

silent anymore my voice which I've kept

5:11

quiet for far too long is speaking up

5:13

now i know the advice is to save it all

5:15

for court and we will we have documents

5:18

photos videos and testimonies that we

5:20

will show there but I'm also here to

5:23

tell my story because silence is what

5:25

allowed this abuse to continue i now see

5:29

that what he wanted was a scapegoat

5:32

someone to take the fall for anything

5:34

and everything from the past i didn't

5:36

know it then but I see it clearly now

5:39

there's more to share and I will i'll be

5:42

addressing rumors and blog posts and the

5:44

misinformation that's circulating but

5:46

for now I want to say this if you're

5:49

experiencing abuse manipulation or fear

5:52

in any part of your life speak up even

5:56

if you're scared even if they once

5:58

treated you kindly those nice moments

6:00

don't cancel out the control and damage

6:02

they're causing my attorney and I are

6:06

prepared to fight this in court and we

6:08

are confident that the truth will come

6:09

out in the meantime I ask for your

6:12

patience for your grace as we work to

6:15

find a new sense of normal to everyone

6:18

that I've ever met with and connected

6:20

with over the years thank you your

6:22

support has meant more than you know and

6:25

please when something doesn't feel right

6:28

when it seems like there's more to this

6:31

story trust that feeling you might be

6:34

closer to the truth than you realize

6:37

thank you for watching