LEGAL COMPASS (CONTINUED)

Peter Bryniczka Schoonmaker George Colin Blomberg Bryniczka & Welsh, P.C.

WLM: What should you/should you not tell the kids?

Peter: "Ideally parents can agree, perhaps with advice of a therapist, to tell the children together in an age appropriate way that a divorce will be happening and emphasize that 'Mom and Dad love you children more than anything and are committed to continuing to be great parents.' *Don't say negative things about the other parent*, don't discuss particulars nor issues related to the divorce with them or let them know anything they don't need to know. Protect them from the process. Let them be happy when spending time with your ex. Divorces end and how you conduct yourself in the divorce will affect your relationship with your spouse and children and your financials. Maintain dignity and protect your kids from the process. Every decision you make in the process can add to or detract from this."

WLM: What should you/should you not say to your spouse?

PB: "Divorce is not a fun nor happy process, but spouses control what sort of divorce they have. Learn and agree on how to disagree. You never get in trouble for what you don't say, so try to be the bigger person. A 10 second statement can set you back 10 years."

WLM: What are some of the biggest mistakes clients make?

PB: "People are hurt by factors leading up to divorce and want to approach the process as a way to exact punishment or vengeance upon the spouse. People have every right to be devastated, but I need them to understand how it will or will not factor in from a legal stand-point. But divorce doesn't happen in criminal court; it's civil. Judges seek equity, not punishment."

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