

Share Your Divorce

By Liz Wertman

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In most marriages there is a higher wage earner that has the main responsibilities of the money and a lower wage earner that has the main responsibilities of the children. It's a sharing of the household. When it comes to a divorce, the higher wage earner has the most control, which gives them financial advantages. But they also feel they have the most to lose. The lower wage earner does not have any financial control, so they don't have any financial advantages. But they have the most to gain.

This is because of the equalization process. They must fill out a financial disclosure, which takes into account everything the spouse's earn and owe separately. When adding it up, if one spouse has a higher dollar value, that amount get split between the two of them.

This is the reason why some higher income earners hide assets. At this point they feel they earned this money and the other spouse is not entitled to it. But the law states otherwise so they are exceptionally creative depending on the assets and money involved. They will resort to numerable tactics to keep what they feel is "theirs". The financial disclosure just might be "missing" a few figures, a few assets.

The other spouse has to be equally creative to counter attempts to "hide" assets and money. If the higher income earner initiated the divorce they have had the extra time that the other spouse didn't know about. This time was surely put to "creative" use. While it is possible to uncover these hidden assets and money it will definitely take work on the part of that spouse.

On the other hand, the lower wage earner is usually primary caretaker for the children. This spouse is the most likely to get either custody or primary custody. The law states the time should be shared between the parents. At this point this spouse feels that they have devoted all of their time and energy to the children and the other is not entitled to them. As devious as one spouse is about access to the money is as devious as the other spouse is about access to the children.

This dance can go on forever. The main verbal exchange is "do what I say and I will give you money" or "do what I say and I will let you see the children:" Both want control of the divorce, both want to win. No one wins.

The courts will only try and control the situation if the case is presented in court. This involves more legal fees and court costs which the spouses either don't have or don't want to spend. They also don't want to take the chance of losing control over their half of the situation.

The lower wage earner has to appreciate that in order for the higher wage earner to earn that money they had to make sacrifices. These sacrifices include not being able to be around as often for the children. They deserve fair share of time with the children. The higher wage earner has to appreciate that the lower wage earner has made sacrifices that include earning less income in order to raise their wonderful children. They deserve fair share of assets and money.

When looked at this way, perhaps they can understand the other person's point of view. Hopefully they will then realize that each spouse has made a valuable contribution to the marriage. Control will not solve their problem. Neither will lawyers or courts. So what will?

A basic lesson that all parents teach their children.

Sharing!

Liz Wertman

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