

Keeping it Real

“This is probably one of the most difficult challenges any parent could face— learning to love the other parent enough to make the children first.” -lylana Vanzant

This quote rang true for me this week as I listened to John talk to another attorney about a case which involved a child in crisis. John hung up the phone and said “He hates his ex-wife more than he loves his son.” That hit me hard. I haven’t experienced that kind of hatred. I’ve been through two divorces and mourned both, but that hatred is foreign to me. Now, I feel to some extent human nature happens, right? When you get divorced, you are hurt, angry, sad, disappointed, embarrassed, etc. Those negative feelings are easier to act on rather than positive and loving feelings towards this person that may have caused the hurt, but who is also your child’s father or mother. I am blessed that my ex-husband is my best friend. The feelings we have about each other are strong, but the love we have for our son prevails. We both make an active decision to put our son first every single day.

And it is an active decision. I see people reacting to anger with anger every day in our business. And people let that anger trump the love for their kids. They are not making the active decision to love, they are

simply reacting and thinking about their own personal feelings. Their egos are larger than the love for their child.

My suggestion: Check your ego at the door. In that moment in which you are dwelling over infidelity, dishonesty, or disloyalty, change your mind. Change the way you think. Our kids are sponges, and they soak up not only words, but our emotions. Choose to put that energy towards loving your child instead of hating your ex.

Our children (for the most part) look at us as superheroes, right? We feed, nurture, support, love, hug, and teach them everything they know from the day they are born. We tell them and show them that they are the most important thing in our life. Why should that change because of a divorce? In my humble, yet accurate, opinion the only thing that should change is that we step our game up at this time. Our kids need to know that despite all the change and turmoil, they remain number one. And if you focus your energy on that, there is no energy left to taint your child’s heart or mind about the other parent. All they should know is LOVE. And that you, above everything and everyone else, put them first. Every. Single. Day.



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About Chantel Chaney

Chantel graduated from College of St. Mary with a Bachelor’s degree in Paralegal Studies in 1999. She hit the ground running and began working in the County Attorney’s office Domestic Violence Unit in its very early years. She devoted her career to fighting for victims of domestic violence. She has experience in family law, criminal law, estate planning, personal injury, social security disability and VA disability. Chantel has two kids and enjoys trying to keep up with them. She is a die-hard Iowa State fan. You can take the girl out of Iowa, but you can’t take the Iowa State out of the girl!



Picture by: Kaitlyn Zemunsky