

Be Your Best Advocate-

You may have a outstanding attorney, a highly qualified therapist and a great support system, but nobody can advocate for you like you do. If you have a good and trusting relationship with your attorney, heed his or her advice on what to do, how to look, what to say, and, probably most importantly, what not to say.

You must advocate for yourself. You cannot simply hand over your eroding marital relationship to your attorney and expect him or her to rewind time back to the beginning and recreate your life. It probably took you a few years to get into the situation that you are currently in. Likewise, its is going to take your attorney some time to work you out of it. Prepare yourself and work along side your attorney, to fight the battle to your freedom.

Tips to advocate for yourself-

1. Be prepared to meet with your attorney by having a list of questions that you would like answered.
2. Provide your attorney with relevant events and information in the form of a summary of your marriage and/or custody issues. Try bullet points without a lot of emotional commentary so that your attorney does not have to weed through the summary to find the pertinent information he or she needs to aid in your representation.
3. When you provide information and documents to your attorney, make sure that they are organized and legible.
4. Keep venting to a minimum- use your therapist and your insurance plan and not your attorney. Your attorney will advocate best for you if you are concise, specific and to the point regarding legal issues.
5. Do your own homework- locate witnesses, documents, and information to save yourself money and to save your attorney time so that he or she can focus on preparing your case for trial.
6. Focus your energy on bettering yourself. Empower yourself by participating in activities that make you strong physically and emotionally: exercise, eat right, read, enjoy your children, attend therapy, anything that you enjoy which brings you peace and relaxation- so long as it won't come back to haunt you in court!. A better you is a better client.
7. Don't do or say anything which you would not want a Judge or Guardian *Ad Litem* to see or hear- EVER.
8. Be careful what you put in writing, unless you are comfortable with it being admitted as Exhibit A.
9. Don't post a picture of yourself in a black teddy on My Space or Face Book- or any social networking sight - because you can bet a Judge will see it!
10. Be patient - Divorce and Custody battles take time.