

Annette and son, Jonah



A New Approach to An Old Problem

Annette and daughter, Lia



The field of law is traditionally viewed as a very serious profession with many less-than-honest lawyers. It's refreshing to find an ethical down-to-earth attorney who adopts a holistic approach. "I knew that I wanted to be a lawyer at a young age," Annette says. She boldly landed her first job while attending law school. "A judge came to speak to one of our classes. I approached him after class and asked if I could clerk for him." He agreed and from there Annette learned what she calls her "best lesson." She saw that behind the scenes, people are just people, even the ones in black robes. That lesson is what gives her the confidence she needs in the courtroom. Another unconventional request for a job gave her the opportunity to practice family law. She followed a "creative and entertaining" attorney out of the chambers while clerking and he hired her on the spot. This eventually led her to her to create her own unique firm.

She speaks of taking responsibility as the biggest lesson she would like to impress on her children. "I hope that they say to me, 'I screwed up, but I'm owning it and moving on.'" This philosophy carries over into her practice. She often refers her clients to a counselor so they can take a step back and put everything into perspective. It can be difficult to accept blame for your actions but avoiding responsibility is more likely to result in an undesirable outcome. "It leads to unnecessary litigation," Annette explains. "It can cause conflict about irrelevant matters, which in turn affects the strategy for what is important. Accepting responsibility is huge. We need to learn from our mistakes so that we don't repeat them and can continue moving forward. If you let it go, you don't carry all those emotions with you," Annette says. "Then you can grow as a person."

For more information, visit Annette Benson's website at www.Bensonfamilylaw.com or call 248-646-2600.

Mary Sitto
Metro You Magazine

Mitch, Jonah, Annette and Lia

Annette Benson, founder of the family law firm Annette J. Benson and Associates, P.C., is not your typical attorney. Her uncompromising principles and ambition to go beyond what is expected put her in an uncommon category. She is genuine. Annette takes a "no drama" approach to overcoming life's stressful situations. "I'm just keeping it real, no need to fluff," says Annette. She doesn't like to talk to her clients in lawyer lingo but prefers to "solve the problem and try to bring some humor to it."

Annette is an animated beauty, humorous, rich with passion and overflowing with stories. She has a talent for assimilating stories and then networking. "Once I know someone is a good, trustworthy person, I'm comfortable referring," Annette says. "I connect everybody with everybody. It might be matchmaking or a client who needs a real estate broker." She's even connected clients with similar experiences in hopes that they gain knowledge and benefit from their related situations.

Her interest in networking and desire to assist people with their needs prompted Annette to establish "Conversation Circles," a monthly get-together with guest speakers and casual conversation about numerous divorce topics. Attendees learn what to expect during the divorce process and can associate with others who are dealing with the same issues. Those who have lost pieces of themselves in a difficult divorce tend to find a renewed strength. "It connects good people," Annette says. "Divorce is such a serious, life-changing process, but you have to keep yourself whole."

Annette acknowledges the importance of knowing the history and dynamics of personalities when a couple is pursuing a divorce. "It's very relevant to me so that I can address and package something properly." She adds, "I know how to phrase things so I can connect with the spouse." This helps the spouse to make sense of the situation rather than be defensive and allows for a more successful resolution. "That's why I love this area [of law], it's about working with and relating to people and I think that I'm good at assessing personalities."

Annette is passionate about doing the right thing, especially when children are involved. As a parent herself, she understands how important it is to keep the children's best interest a priority. Annette has a 10 year-old daughter named Lia, and her son, Jonah, is 12. She stayed at home for two years after her daughter was born. "I don't think I showered for three days at a time. It was the hardest job ever," Annette says. "I have a lot of respect for stay-at-home moms."

