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JANUARY 2018



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Survive or Thrive?

As an author, a family law attorney and the founder of LaMonaca Law, Gregory P. LaMonaca strives to make a lasting difference in the lives of people struggling to move forward.

by BILL DONAHUE

For as long as he can remember, Gregory P. LaMonaca has had something inside him—an internal driver, of sorts—that made him want to compete, to win, to thrive. It's what compelled him to become a family law attorney, and to found his own legal practice, LaMonaca Law, in 1994. It's what compels him to rise well before dawn each day, not only to answer urgent client emails and prepare for the day ahead, but also to write, to exercise and otherwise to stay true to his mantra: "Never stop growing."

The same compulsion makes him want to help others prosper. He strives to do this on a daily basis, through the legal counsel and representation he provides, as well as through his inspiring insights on life and family that he hopes will leave "an indelible mark for many generations long after I leave this planet."

Getting Brutally Honest

As the founder of his own Media-based law firm, Mr. LaMonaca has been steering clients through divorces, custody disputes and other family law issues for nearly 25 years. The ever-growing practice now in-

cludes 19 individuals, each committed to serving the needs of clients throughout the Main Line, as well as the Greater Philadelphia Area and beyond. He and his fellow attorneys are admitted in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the Federal Courts, as well as various Appellate Courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

LaMonaca Law's attorneys have gained a reputation for being among the best in their field. For example, Mr. LaMonaca has earned numerous accolades from respected media companies and other organizations, such as being named "Top Attorney" in Family Law and Divorce by

Suburban Life every year since 2010, "Top Lawyer" for Divorce and Custody by *Main Line Today* 11 times dating back to 2004, and "Top 100 Family Law Attorneys in Pennsylvania" by the American Society of Legal Advocates.

He credits such praise to the firm's decades of experience, unlimited passion and a team-based approach that "goes beyond the basic representation a client may find at another firm," he says. He also credits the "Brutally Honest" system, which he co-created with a former custody client to help clients navigate the complexities of family law. The three-phase



Photography courtesy of LaMonaca Law

process helps clients to assess their past and analyze their present as a way to determine current goals, and then create a plan for the future.

While every client becomes familiar with his signature Brutally Honest system, Mr. LaMonaca has worked to share his wisdom with a much broader audience. In 2009, for example, he co-authored the *Brutally Honest Life Management Journal*. The book takes the reader on a self-guided journey to reconnect with the things that matter most in his or her life and to find the empowerment needed to take positive steps forward.

A follow-up book, the *Brutally Honest Pennsylvania Divorce & Custody Survival Guide*, aims to help readers visualize the path to a healthier future while in the middle of divorce or a custody dispute—in other words, situations that can be mentally draining and emotionally crippling. Mr. LaMonaca has made the book available for free download through his firm's newly redesigned website, LaMonacaLaw.com, as a way to "give people the power to make better decisions" at an incredibly vulnerable time.

Mr. LaMonaca recently completed a new book, *The Brutally Honest Guide to Sur-Thriving Generation "Now."* Having spent the past few years fine-tuning the work, he has teamed with a publisher and is in the process of putting the finishing touches on the book. Mr. LaMonaca says the book's central lessons apply to anyone looking to make improvements in his or her life, so as to allow the individual to "thrive" in this fast-paced, complex world. Chapter titles include "Stay Positive," "Have a Compelling Vision," "Debt Reduction," "Savings and Investment" and "Don't Be Afraid of Failure." He anticipates an April or May release.

"The goal of the book is to teach people how to, not just survive, but thrive in life," he says. "The book has specific references and examples that can help people get to the other side of a divorce or custody issue. That said, the examples I use in every chapter come from my own life, they have actually worked, and can be helpful for anybody looking to improve his or her life.

"I have a 'bull's-eye theory' on life, and in the book's first chapter, 'Family First,' I explain how the center of my bull's-eye is my family, my wife and two children," he adds. "For me, everything revolves around them, but everyone's bull's-eye may be something different. The point is: regardless of how chaotic life can become, you have to stay centered on what matters most."

A Genuine Desire to Help

The book also speaks to the importance of staying true to one's core values. This may offer some insight into what motivates Mr. LaMonaca, both as an attorney and as a person.

"Everything you say and do in the courtroom has to come from a place of being genuine—and a genuine desire to help people," he says. "Helping people is what fuels me. Through my work in family law, through my books and writing, through what I put out on social media—the opportunity to share the tools and techniques that can help people get to a better place in their lives is what gets me out of bed every day."

time, genuinely being there for them, talking to them, even for five minutes—that can make a world of difference in a person's life.

"Without empathy and compassion in family law, it just doesn't work," he continues. "As an attorney, you can read all the statutes, know the rules in and out, and be an excellent communicator, but if you lose sight of the real person sitting in front of you, the one who's wrestling with some very big, very real problems, I think you cannot properly represent that individual. That's at the top of the list of everything we do here." ■



Thanks to decades of experience, unlimited passion and a team-based approach, LaMonaca Law's attorneys have gained a reputation for being among the best in their field.

Unsurprisingly, Mr. LaMonaca says empathy and compassion serve as the foundation for everything he and his fellow attorneys do, in and out of the courtroom.

"Every one of our team meetings focuses on understanding what our clients are going through," he says. "Think back to the winter holidays. You had some people who were all alone, sitting in a dark room without their children, depressed or upset about what's going on in their families. A simple call or email at the right

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