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How Estate Planning Can Bring Blended Families Closer

Yours, mine and ours ... in today's modern family, it's oh so common. The blended family is the product of 2nd (or more) marriages, in which one or more of the parties comes with children from a prior marriage. And then, they may even go on to have children together.

If you have or are part of a blended family, it's important to understand how estate planning could be exactly what you need to keep your family out of conflict and in love, both during life, in the event of incapacity, and when one or more of the senior generation (read: parents) dies.

Let's begin with understanding where potential conflicts could arise when you have a blended family.

Consider the ones you love

If you have children from a prior marriage, and you become incapacitated or die, leaving everything to your new spouse or partner, there is almost certain to be some conflict (whether spoken or not) between your children and new spouse. Your children may feel unloved, forgotten or resentful.

You may think that this can be avoided by leaving everything to your new spouse or partner, and then on their death, to your children. But this too could set up a scenario where your children feel the need to monitor your spouse/partner's use of your assets, during their life. And that may not be what you want.

Conversely, you may have a partner or spouse that you have not legally planned for, who you would want to inherit some or all of your assets. But, as things stand right now, your entire estate may go to your children from a prior marriage. This could create a reality where your current partner even gets kicked out of the house you share if something happens to you before your plan is updated.

You can avoid all of this (and even use the estate planning process to build stronger bonds with those you love) by having clear planning in place that has been discussed with your children and your new spouse or partner. We facilitate this as part of the planning process for all blended families.

If you are the child of a parent who has remarried or re-partnered, after a divorce or death, of your other parent, you may want to bring these issues to your parent's attention.

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If you are ready to create a well-thought-out estate plan for your blended family, start by sitting down with us, your Personal Family Lawyer®. During your Family Wealth Planning Session™, we can help you plan for the needs of your unique family and ensure everything and everyone you love is protected and provided for as you wish - including you. Our estate planning process guides you to protect and preserve what matters most. Before the session, we'll send you a Family Wealth Inventory and Assessment to complete that will support your thinking on what you own, what's most important to you, and what you can do to ensure your family is taken care of. You can schedule your Family Wealth Planning Session™ online with us or give us a call if you have any questions. We're happy to help!

This article is a service of Saeed & Little, LLP. We don't just draft documents; we ensure you make informed and empowered decisions about life and death, for yourself and the people you love. That's why we offer a Family Wealth Planning Session,™ during which you will get more financially organized than you've ever been before, and make all the best choices for the people you love. You can begin by calling our office today to schedule a Family Wealth Planning Session and mention this article to find out how to get this \$750 session at no charge.

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