

# suburbanlife



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# Source of Strength

**Charles J. Meyer of Hofstein Weiner & Meyer, P.C.,** takes a calm, direct approach to helping clients resolve the complexities surrounding the economic issues related to divorce, custody matters and other family law disputes.

by **PHIL GIANFICARO** | photos by **JODY ROBINSON**

Over the course of his more than 30-year career as a family law attorney, Charles J. Meyer has amassed a tremendous amount of knowledge for the benefit of his clients. Perhaps the most important lesson he has learned along the way is this: Resolve the matter out of court whenever possible.

"I was a prosecutor, and I know my way around a courtroom," says Meyer, managing shareholder of Hofstein Weiner & Meyer, P.C., a boutique law firm devoted exclusively to resolving complex family law matters. "However, I also recognize that, in most cases, it is in the client's best interests to resolve the matter, whether economic or custody, so that they don't have a third party—a hearing officer or judge—making decisions that may have long-term consequences for the client or their children."

Meyer's clients come from all walks of life. He has represented professional athletes and entertainers, as well as doctors, lawyers and business leaders, and their spouses. With his partners, David Hofstein, Ellen Goldberg Weiner, and Scott Finger, and associate, Alex Bondy, their practice is limited to navigating and resolving the oftentimes complex aspects of domestic relations law. No matter the client or the circumstance, Meyer's first order of business is to set realistic expectations.

"I'm very upfront with clients from the start," he says. "Many are in an emotional state. I lay out the process for them and explain what they can reasonably expect to happen at each step of their case. When clients have unrealistic or unreasonable 'wants,' I do my best to guide them. In most situations, when the other party is represented by another experienced family lawyer, we know where cases should settle, and that it is in both clients' best interests to do so. But if the case can't be settled, I am comfortable in the courtroom. In the end, I am a trial lawyer."

Having practiced family law in the five-county Philadelphia area for decades, Meyer has an invaluable understanding of all aspects of family law.

"This is all we do," he says. "We don't do car accident cases and I don't draft wills. I know how cases should be resolved, and that there is a value to closure, not just from a financial standpoint, but also from an emotional





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—CHARLES J. MEYER, HOFSTEIN WEINER & MEYER, P.C.

one. I like to think that I assist my clients in moving toward the next stage in their lives, which hopefully will be happier.”

Meyer’s experience extends beyond his professional life. Having gone through a divorce of his own, he has an intimate understanding of the process. He has since remarried, and has children from his first marriage, stepchildren, and children from his second marriage (six in all), so he “gets” what his clients are going through.

“When I do an initial consultation with a client, and there are minor children, the first thing we talk about is the kids, and how the custody laws will be applied in their case,” he adds. “I hope that my clients will put their children first. I had 50-50 custody of my two children from my first marriage. I know the effort it takes, and the balancing that has to be done between work and raising kids. Because I went through the process, I not only sympathize with my clients and what they are going through, I also can empathize. I think that I’m a better lawyer given my life experience.”

Given his success, he has the luxury of choosing not to represent certain clients, per-

haps because they are unnecessarily vindictive or do not recognize the impact their actions have on their children. There is no reason to “be mean for the sake of being mean.”

“I have represented people who just want to hurt the other party, maybe by hurting their spouse’s career or destroying property that is important to their spouse for sentimental reasons,” he says. “They are blinded by their emotions. And then there are people who don’t see what their behavior is doing to their children. So often, the kids are caught in the middle. For me, it comes down to this fact: If you are not willing to do your best by your kids, I can’t represent you.”

Upon graduation from college, Meyer worked in the overnight camp business. One of the owners encouraged him to go to law school. Of course, the law has worked out rather well for him.

“After my time as a prosecutor in the Manhattan DA’s office, I knew I wanted to represent individuals, not companies,” he says. “To succeed in family law, you have to be somebody who wants to help people. I want to help people.” ■

#### About Charles J. Meyer

Creative and compassionate, Charles J. Meyer has earned his reputation as a powerful advocate for his clients, whether negotiating an out of court settlement or litigating in court. He also devotes his time to advancing the practice of family law, both in the Philadelphia area and across the country.

A fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML), he served as president of the Pennsylvania Chapter in 2016. On the national level, he chaired the National Test Committee for the AAML for many years and presently serves on the academy’s Board of Governors.

In 2019, he was admitted as a diplomate to the American College of Family Trial Lawyers. The organization represents a select group of 100 of the top family law trial lawyers from across the United States practicing sophisticated and complex family law and matrimonial matters.



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