Per Bruhn
Advokater

FAMILY & DIVORCE LAW LAWYER OF THE YEAR

Gunnar Liberoth

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"Divorce counseling – seen from the children's perspective."



Areas of Expertise

International Family Law

Child Custody

Child Support

Domestic Violence

Personality Disorders (Narcissism, Borderline, PTSD, C-PTSD etc.)

Divorce and Custody Litigation

Separation / Divorce

Spousal Support

Division of Assets and Property

Q What makes a good family lawyer?

Of course, it is necessary to possess legal expertise in family law matters and strong communication and negotiation skills; this is standard for any family lawyer. However, in my opinion, that is far from the most important ability when navigating family law issues like divorce and custody.

Number one is a deep understanding of emotional dynamics in family conflicts and understanding the client's underlying needs. The prerequisite is good chemistry between lawyer and client.

A good family lawyer not only understands that every case concerning divorce and custody has an extreme emotional impact on every client, but the lawyer also shows this by acting fast when there is news. A simple mail to the client outside regular office hours or on weekends often makes a huge difference. The client should feel that 'my lawyer is always alert, has my back, and never gives in.'

However, a good client relationship is not all that is required. The key is mentalization ability of the individual involved on the other side of the dispute, as this helps to understand the real challenges the client is facing. This is where knowledge of various personality disorders, for instance narcissistic behavior, becomes essential.

Needless to say, on top of this comes, of course, the ability to focus on what would be in the best interests of the involved children based on general research and the actual case. In custody cases, there are no winners; the children are always the losing parties.

In the 'lighter' cases, good mediation skills are required from the lawyer, where the main focus should be on de-escalating the conflict between the parties. However, agreements made between parties must have the children at their heart. No agreement should ever be made to make the parents feel equal, to the detriment of the children.

Q What differentiates Gunnar Liberoth from traditional family lawyers?

I want to emphasize that it is a prerequisite for me to be the kind of divorce lawyer that divorce lawyers are often not.

For me, it is essential always to look at what benefits the children involved and try to avoid that they are caught in the middle of the parent's conflict.

I stay very loyal to my self-invented concept - in Danish, it is called Skilsmisserådgivning i 'børnehøjde'™. When translated, it means "Divorce counseling – seen from the children's perspective."

I do not represent the children; however, I always try to make my clients work toward solutions that are best for the children based on what child psychologists would typically recommend. Custody and visitation rights should always be determined according to the best interests of the children. They are not the rights of the parents.

Q Do you offer pro bono counseling?

Philanthropy is important to me, and on a regular basis, I offer free counseling for battered women at various crisis centers.

In 2021, I started a collaboration with the Danish NGO, The Exit Circle ('Exitcirklen'), which helps mainly women who have been or are exposed to psychological violence.

Since 2022, I have been a member of the board of one of the largest women's crisis centers/shelters in Denmark, 'Bella Vista Krisecenter.'

I am not a certified psychologist or a child psychologist. However, I have met quite a few over the years and thus gained an in-depth knowledge of psychological violence and various personality disorders, including Narcissism, PTSD, C-PTSD, and Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (Borderline), etc. – knowledge that is extremely useful when dealing with counterparts and their lawyers. However, I am also aware that parties in a divorce/breakup may be under so much pressure that they may develop a behavior similar to that of a person with a personality disorder. Still, instead, this may represent 'only' a temporary crisis and grief process.

Q Who are your typical clients?

About 50% of my clients are non-Danes with some kind of interest in Denmark, say, married to a Dane or expats living with their children in Denmark.

This fact has led me to enter a more formal cooperation with The U.K. Embassy in Denmark, as well as The U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, where I appear on the embassy's list of recommended lawyers.

After several years abroad in the 90s, I also speak and write in English, French, and German; legal advice, however, is based on Danish law with in-depth knowledge of international private law.