

## Carolyn Mirabile Speaks to Haverford Rotary Club on Proven Tactics for Resolving Marital Conflicts

Carolyn Mirabile, partner in the Norristown office of Weber Gallagher and member of the firm's Family Law practice group, recently spoke to the Rotary Club of Haverford Township about proven tactics for resolving marital conflicts.

Ms. Mirabile's presentation focused on the most common issues married couples face - and how to successfully resolve them before they become catalysts for divorce. The top issues and resolution tactics include:

**Finance:** How often is one spouse completely unaware of much the other spouse earns? You would be surprised. One of the most hot-button issues for marital discord is that of finance. Mirabile suggests that all couples should have a basic financial discussion at least once a year: How much money are we saving for retirement? Are we saving for college costs? Where do we see ourselves financially in 5, 10, 20 years?

**Communication:** One of the most important components to a successful marriage is good communication skills. According to Mirabile, this means using positive communication, even when there are negative issues to address. Acknowledge your spouse for the things that make you happy, and engage in open conversation about the things that you need to work on together. The ultimate key: mutual respect.

**Work/Life Balance:** Many married couples work at a nearly 24/7 pace. While working long hours may be required to keep up with today's myriad economic challenges, it can come as a huge expense to the family. Mirabile's advice? Each spouse needs to closely examine the percentage of time he/she spends on family activities vs. work activities. No one family is going to be the same, and that's OK. What's important is having time set aside each day or week to spend quality time with the entire family - whether it's Sunday dinners at home, date/movie night or even regular "staycations."

**Healthy Lifestyle:** Everyone remembers how they looked on their wedding day. Their hair was coiffed; their make-up was spotless; their outfit was carefully chosen and pressed to perfection. But what typically happens when the wedding is over? People get lazy, and physical laziness often translates into depression and unhappiness in a marriage. Mirabile stresses of staying active throughout the duration of a marriage - even just walking around the block every night after dinner can be a fun activity that fosters communication and helps keeps couples physically fit.

**Children:** Many of Mirabile's clients have gotten so involved in their children's activities that they have lost sight of their spouse. They become so involved with their children that they end up living vicariously through them - to the exclusion of the rest of their family. As one can imagine, this is not a good recipe for a happy marriage. As a parent, it's important to spend quality time with every person in the family, not just the soccer star or budding actress, and to maintain a separate identity beyond those of your children.

Carolyn Mirabile concentrates her practice in the area of Family Law, including divorce, support, custody, property distribution and the drafting of marital settlement agreements. In addition to her litigation practice, she has served as a court appointed custody mediator for more than a decade. Mirabile has also presented several mediation training courses and conducts mediation in the area of divorce.

She currently serves on the Programming and Executive Committees of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's (PBA) Family Law section and is a 1988 graduate of Villanova University. She earned her J.D. at the Villanova University School of Law in 1991.