

REGINA NUNNALLY ENTITLEMENT

DON'T MAKE IT HARDER FOR YOUR ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT YOU



Anyone can be a defendant or accused of a crime. No one is exempt. However, if you find yourself defending with an attorney, remember gratitude as a virtue. There is a sense of entitlement that each client has when it comes to his or her case. You are entitled to competent representation. You are entitled to a fair trial. You are entitled to confront your accusers. You are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. However, somewhere along the way there's been a miscommunication or misunderstanding of an attorney's role. You are not entitled to talk to the lawyer everyday on the same issue. You are not entitled to force the lawyer to file frivolous paperwork. You are not entitled to curse out the judge, lawyer or office staff when you don't get the answer you want. There's an old saying, "Don't make it hard for the preacher to pray for you." Well, that old saying fits here as well, "Don't make it hard for your lawyer to represent you."

Entitlement is a sign of immaturity... children feel entitled. They feel the world revolves around them and the parent's only existence is to please them. Parents dare not say no or not now or never. Parents feed the entitlement and yield by giving in to their child's demands. Debt, lay-a-way, and in some cases, theft, are the fruits of entitlement. Many attorneys do the best they can and still their client feels cheated. They were entitled to an outcome but had to settle for something other than what they wanted. Sometimes the lawyer can pull a rabbit out of a hat but cannot turn water into wine! In many cases the victim is in the driver seat. If the victim

cooperates with the prosecution, then the case will not go away easily. "What! This case is interrupting my life. Going to court is interrupting my employment," the client will say. However, the wheels of justice grind slowly and some cases take time to work out. You are not in the position to make demands all the time. How it works out depends on what is discovered along the way.

It's easy to make demands and go home. The hard part is making demands you know full well are not possible and still expect the demands to be met. This happens all the time with clients that has violated probation more than once and still wants to be placed back on probation. There's always a baby on the way, grandma needs my help or I just started a new job. Although our judicial circuit is thankfully changing its approach to these types of cases, you cannot legislate a person's heart. You cannot order someone not to "want" something or someone. The innate urge to crave and to be satisfied is part of our natural make up. Rules temper this drive and thus problems arise. Rules keep your attorney from receiving. Procedure chumps their desires to satisfy your entitlement. Order instead of chaos...not fun...but necessary.

Entitlement causes us to be impatient and ungrateful. The blessing is apparent to everyone but us. It's not what I wanted and so I reject it. The truth is: no one knows what they want. That's why it's best not to lean on your own understanding. Don't let your feelings be your guide. It's better to get wise counsel so that our steps can be directed. Once you've received guidance, then you can make an informed choice. So, let's do ourselves a favor: train our children to be appreciative and patient so that when the "it's all about me" attitude arises, they have a precept to keep it in check.