



Photo by Ronaldo SM

I slumped over in my chair in the Family Law office waiting area of the courthouse. I started sobbing uncontrollably—not with sadness, I’ve had several bouts of that the last almost 2 years now in private, but this time in public with relief.

My ex wife’s attorney informed me with less than 2 hours to respond that she was going to file a motion for emergency temporary custody. The motion was filled with the types of accusations that would make any parent physically sick—in graphic detail about how my child reported my inappropriately touching them, how they were scared to visit with me, and that they sobbed and begged their mother not to make them go with me. I drafted my very first (as I doubt it will NOT be last—I have run out of money for legal representation & must go on pro se) response motion and ran down to the courthouse, no time to let the horror of the accusations sink in. I had to get the paperwork filed and get it to the clerk so that the judge could read it after reading their accusations.

I sat there, waiting. Neither party was allowed to go into the courtroom, they had to wait outside and get the news. My ex and her lawyer weren’t in the same room, thank goodness.

I kept looking over my copy of their motion. This was the type of motion that, if granted, would mean my child would not see me at all until an undetermined time in the future when the 4th (yes the 4th) psychologist involved submitted a report to disprove a negative yet again and a hearing got scheduled in the backed up overloaded court system. More time for my ex to have 100% of the time to continue to give negative reinforcement for any sign of affection or longing from our our child towards their father and positive reinforcement for wild accusations. It read like it were a case study for Dr. [Childress](#)’s books. More time to make it worse so they could show the judge how much my child didn’t want to see me at all anymore. The strategy was so clear, and it had been building for a long time.

Then the clerk came in and said those 4 magic words, “He denied their motion”. I recognize this is big in that it means the judge may be getting an idea that something isn’t right. That my child has only been saying these things when with my ex and not with any of the professionals my child has been forced to see during the last almost 2 years.

I realize how lucky I am to have the type of support I’ve had. Friends with some legal knowledge, friends with good common sense who have told me over and over to stay focused on the objective in any given interaction with my ex or her I suspect personality

disordered attorney to NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, get caught up in the rabbit holes they try and get me to go down.

They are always trying to get me to emote, do something stupid or talk too much so I can help muddy the waters and make it easier for them to point at irrelevant stuff while they remain singularly focused on winning.

No regard for the destruction of my child. Just winning.

Today I stayed focused. Today I have not lost my child completely but remain with the 5% of the time I currently have until we get to a temporary custody hearing where it could change, provided this latest report comes back OK. Today the order to show cause / contempt for the withheld visitations over the weekend will still remain in the stack of motions needing the overworked judge's attention. I will hope he will grant it so at least I can enforce the tiny amount of time my child gets with their father.

And yet I am concerned as to how much manipulation my ex was able to exercise over the therapist doing this latest evaluation and how much coaching she did with my child that the therapist will believe is real. She (the therapist) is unfortunately a Psy.D. who seems to know what she knows and does not seem to want any other information because she already knows it all. Dr. Childress refers to this as operating outside the bounds of professional competence. I am seeing more and more how many people in mental health are like this.

More to come. It is clear this paradigm must shift and I am becoming very actively involved in that process but for today, a small victory.