



IN SIGHT for Oregon Lawyers

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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FAMILY ROLES

A child raised in a highly stressed or problematic household often adapts by assuming specific family roles. Frequently, the child then carries aspects of these roles into adulthood as coping mechanisms.

Lawyers who were raised in highly stressed or problematic families, commonly labeled “dysfunctional” families, most often played the role of the family fixer. Stephanie Covington, author of *Leaving the Enchanted Forest: The Path from Relationship Addiction to Intimacy* (HarperSan Francisco, 1988), uses the term “family hero” and describes these characteristics:

independent	leadership qualities	low self-esteem
meets goals	high achiever	unable to label feelings
powerful and in control	survivor	feelings of inadequacy
focused	loyal	fear of failure
attentive	motivates self and others	guilt
generous with praise	fear of rejection	procrastination
organized	avoidance of risk taking	fear of confrontation
responsible	perfectionism	drive to produce
successful	unable to get personal needs met	unreasonably high expectations of others

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