

How Mediation can Help You During Your Divorce

If you are contemplating a divorce consider using mediation ...a non-adversarial and cost-effective alternative. With mediation, an impartial mediator helps you and your spouse make decisions that can affect you for the rest of your lives.

Mediation allows the divorcing couple to be the only ones who decide how agreements are reached. The mediator's main responsibility is to assist the couple in reaching an agreed resolution-not to convey their own opinion. One of the mediator's roles is to aid in defusing emotions as well as guide the couple through the difficult issues that accompany a divorce.

If you take the traditional route - two opposing attorneys with two angry parties - and go before a judge, decisions are based on law. He or she can't know all of your extenuating circumstances about you and your children.

Keep in mind, divorce mediation is not marriage counseling. It will not help you save your marriage. During the initial consultation, most mediators detail what must be accomplished in order for the couple to reach an uncontested divorce agreement. Sometimes one of the parties reconsiders their desire to divorce and will seek counseling to save the marriage. Some mediators even have a list of therapists who can work with the couple.

When Divorce is the Answer

When there is no hope of saving the marriage, a divorce mediator can:

- ✓ Provide creative solutions to problems that parties may have considered impossible to resolve
- ✓ Provide extensive knowledge of distribution of property and debts
- ✓ Offer sensitivity about child custody, support issues and spousal support
- ✓ Have an office setting rather than a public court for personal and confidential issues
- ✓ Be less expensive than divorce attorneys battling out a settlement on your behalf
- ✓ Help avoid destructive battles, which have negative impacts on the children and other family members.

Mediation offers Positive Outcomes

Research has shown that when you compare couples who have mediated their divorce with couples who go through an adversarial/litigated divorce, mediating couples are more likely to be satisfied with the process and the results. In addition, mediation is likely to take less time, save thousands of dollars, and have these agreements honored more often than those decided by an attorney or judge. Once the divorce has occurred, spouses have a quicker recovery time and are able to move on with their lives.

Characteristics of a Good Mediator

Divorce mediators come from many different professions. Yet, all receive special training in the skills necessary to assist parties in avoiding contested/litigated divorces. In the end, it doesn't matter how educated the divorce mediator is, he or she must be able to work with couples and be able to resolve conflicts in order to reach an agreement.

Still, before you hire a divorce mediator ask how much experience the individual has. You also need to know how much time the mediator is spending in a daily basis of working with couples.

A divorce mediator will listen to everything you and your spouse have to say, and the result will be a win/win for both parties. Best of all, this divorce agreement will be uncontested in court.

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