

Good Faith Commitment to the Collaborative Process

Both clients' commitment to the process is essential for a positive and collaborative outcome. As a participant in the collaborative process, you agree to negotiate in a respectful, constructive, and cooperative manner, and participate in good-faith in mutually scheduled discussions and conferences for the purpose of reaching a settlement of all issues. This means:

1. Taking turns speaking; don't interrupt.
2. Calling each other by first names, not "he" or "she."
3. Exhibiting a willingness to be open and not hold a fixed position; be flexible.
4. Expressing yourselves in terms of your personal needs and interests, and the outcomes you wish to realize.
5. Listening respectfully and sincerely trying to understand the other person's needs and interests. Asking questions of each other is solely for the purpose of gaining clarity and understanding, not to accuse or attack.
6. Disclosing errors arising from inconsistencies, misstatements or miscalculations; not taking advantage of such errors; and making every effort to have such errors corrected.
7. If something is not working for you, tell your attorney or coach so your concern can be addressed.
8. Taking a reasoned approach on all disputed matters and, where such approaches differ, to seek out and consider alternative solutions for resolution. This means:
 - a. Recognizing that, even if you do not agree, each client is entitled to his or her own perspective.
 - b. Focusing on the future you would like to create, rather than dwelling on things that did not work in the past.
 - c. Making a conscious, sincere effort to refrain from unproductive arguing, venting or narration, and to use your time to work toward what you perceive to be the fairest and most constructive agreement possible.
 - d. Being patient - delays in the process can happen with everyone acting in good faith.

These qualities are fundamental to the collaborative law process. Please speak with your attorney *early in the process* if you have concerns about anything included on this list.