

COLLABORATIVE Practice Tips

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A monthly bulletin from the CP Cal Practice Excellence Committee

The Practice Excellence Committee is pleased to offer tips to help you increase your Collaborative cases and achieve *practice excellence*.

Please send us your comments and questions!
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Rolling Into the New Normal

Doing a Collaborative Case in person vs. Zoom?

Consider the following:

1. Assess your risk first. This is like putting on your oxygen mask before assisting someone else. If you aren't comfortable meeting in person, don't.
2. Assess the risk/comfort level of your staff. Comply with local/state guidelines in returning your staff to the office.
3. Is it necessary to meet with a client(s) in person?
 - One thing we all seem to have learned is that most of our clients do not need in person meetings. Even clients who were resistant at first, have come to like their Zoom meetings. They save time by not driving to the office. They take less time off work, don't need a sitter,

etc. While they are on the same Zoom call with the other client, they aren't in the same room, which so far seems to keep everyone calmer.

4. In a Collaborative Case, assess the risk to each team member.

- Get the team on the same page.
- What if some people are low risk and comfortable meeting in person?
- Is anyone on the team at higher risk? Because of their own age/health? Because of where else they work?
- What if one or more team members are higher risk?
- Come up with a Team Plan and offer the clients the options the Team agrees to.

5. If an in person meeting is agreed to, what is required?

- First, consider local/state public health rules and guidelines.
- Who has an appropriate space for social distancing, the more people the bigger the space.
- What else is needed? Masks, cleaning, hand sanitizer, separate rooms
- Are clients in a high risk category? Because of their own age/health? Because of where else they work? Is a client a ER Doc, a nurse, other essential worker? Are they following guidelines in their daily lives? How do you know?
- Be sure to make your own assessment and don't rely on the judgment of the client or pressure from the client to meet in person.

From the PEC:

We can all agree that there are many challenges with moving our Collaborative practices online. Taking some time to acknowledge our frustration, our worry, and our grief about the loss of the world the way it used to be is important. And then...look up. Look outward. Embrace the change. Here are the things I believe to be true about moving forward in this new world:

Collaborative is needed more than ever. The courts were already impacted. They are going to be severely overloaded...maybe for years. And people who are sheltering in place in dysfunctional families truly need a way to separate as soon as possible, and, (we hope) with dignity, respect, and in the best interests of the children.

Taking Collaborative online means that it's available EVERYWHERE. There are no physical boundaries. Nobody has to commute. Spouses who have already moved across the country can still have a collaborative team.

The early reports are in, and working a collaborative case online turns out to be...surprisingly better in many ways. Who knew? Somehow the distance involved in negotiating through screens actually seems to help people to not get triggered and to stay in "problem-solving mode." This equals a more efficient and cost-effective divorce. Yay!

What does this all mean for marketing your practice? For one thing, it's time to give up on all of your inhibitions about engaging with the public online. This is where they are. We are not taking any strangers out to lunch or meeting with them in person for classes for the foreseeable future. Set up a comfortable computer area with good lighting and maybe an external mic, and dive in. Offer a class. Take a class. Send others referrals. Read others' blogs and comment and share. Join communities like Facebook and Meetup Groups. Engage with your collaborative colleagues around the country and around the world. Email your buddies on LinkedIn. And, when they ask, talk about your passion for Collaborative, and the benefits of the process right now (see above).



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