

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! Email us at info@cpcal.com

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Divorce With Respect Week (“DWRW”) Consultation Tips:

For all divorce professionals volunteering for DWRW who want to make the most of your 30-minute consults! Initial conversations are about listening to the person in front of you. You cannot cover all divorce details in 30 minutes; do not expect to. Clients set the agenda for your conversation as soon as they start speaking. Once they ask their questions or express their fears you can then provide a well-tailored explanation of how the collaborative process is designed to address their strongest fears and most urgent concerns.

Here are 5 tips for your initial DWRW consultations that you can tailor to each consult:

1. Share housekeeping details:

- It is a 30-minute meeting.
- Address confidentiality or privilege issues.
- Clarify consultation limits and that they can follow-up for an in-depth personalized conversation with a divorce professional, that can be you.
 - Would Divorce Options workshop be helpful?
- 5 to 10 minutes prior to ending the consult, provide reminder of

time remaining, reframe what you've heard and discussed and next steps for him/her/them to follow up.

2. Make this meeting all about your potential client – include reflective listening:

- Ask what questions they have.
- Ask what his/her/their goals are for the end-result for this divorce process and moving forward.
- Normalize and validate their fears and/or concerns AND guide towards hope and formulating goals for cooperation with each other and co-parenting into their children's futures.
 - 5 years after the divorce is completed, what would make you feel proud of how you and your spouse handled it?
 - Imagine your child's high school graduation / wedding – what do you want your children to observe in terms of your relationship to their other parent? Are you sitting together or at opposite sides of the stadium / reception?
- Explain how the collaborative team process is uniquely designed to address their concerns.

3. Provide specific details about how the team process and roles are designed to address the fears and concerns they raised – select all that apply to each consult:

- Who are team members' and what are their roles?
 - Differences in communication and shared goals: Coach's role – communication skills, defining divorce process and future goals, facilitation of parenting plans and problem-solving strategies to help with decision-making;
 - Parenting concerns: Child specialist role, a valued team member who can be your child's voice in the process and assess how they are adjusting to the divorce;
 - Distrust of spouse with financial issues: The financial neutral oversees data collection for financial disclosures to help with full disclosure.
- Explain the meeting structures: (pod versus full team versus coaching meetings).
- Transparent process means open and honest communication among whole team.
- Disqualification clause is what makes a divorce collaborative. Why do we do it?
- Highlight process aspects that best address the concerns you heard from your client. Watch client's reaction. Does that raise more questions? Relieve anxiety?

4. Give them some ideas of when their fears will be addressed without going to solutions prematurely, for example:

- Availability of cash to meet day-to-day needs can be addressed in the first meeting.
- Other urgent financial issues: e.g., property tax payments can be agreed upon outside of a meeting or we can add it to the meeting agenda if there is no agreement.
- Concerns regarding a child's recent school behavior can be raised in a coaching meeting.

in a coaching meeting.

5. Explain how the flexible process helps us meet families where they are:

- Normalize that we might need to revisit interests or other aspects: perhaps a job change means we need to reexamine income sharing.
- Our coaches can deal with strong emotions often making resolution happen more quickly than if those feelings are suppressed or if they get in the way of productive discussions.
- The team approach makes us much more responsive than a typical court process.
- Agreements are far more durable when made by the individuals creating them.

These consults are a time for people to be heard. Remember to listen, connect and to reflect what you've heard; then outline their potential next steps.

Divorce with Respect Week - Professionals [Sign Up Here!](#)

From the PEC:

Does your network know about Divorce With Respect Week? Do they know you'll be attending IACP and hobnobbing with your colleagues about how to support couples to divorce with wisdom and in the best interests of their children? No? Let's get cracking then! This is a 10 minute activity! Let's do it in five minutes today and another five minutes next week. Just post on Facebook and/or LinkedIn that you're participating, and add a link. OR, include a short newsy bit in your firm's e-newsletter. While you're on social media, look and see if any of your collaborative buddies have posted on these topics, and "like," "comment" and "share."

Yes, sigh, we do know that Facebook is Evil. Well, what we really know is that people use Facebook in a kinda evil way. How refreshing, and what a wonderful thing we are doing for the benefit of mankind that we are using it for Good!



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