

COLLABORATIVE PracticeTips

January 2022

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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Impasse or Opportunity? An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure (Part I of III)

Looking for a great topic to facilitate at your next Collaborative Practice Group meeting? There's no better way to plan ahead for potential issues that arise in our cases, than by brainstorming them with our collaborative colleagues and there's no closer resource than our own practice groups. Today's topic to bring to your next practice group discussion is "impasse" and how our collaborative teams can lean in to creative problem solving to prevent or at least work through impasse.

Be Proactive:

Impasse is defined as a situation in which no progress is possible, especially because of disagreement; a deadlock.

Perhaps we eliminate the word "impasse" when talking with collaborative clients.

In fact, predicting a point in the process where clients' might have difficulty finding an agreement can help shape their expectations for the process and prevent them from becoming alarmed and discouraged when a disagreement arises.

Set Intentions:

One way to prevent impasse is to create a process for clients to set their intentions for their meetings at the beginning of the case and/or at the beginning of each meeting:

Flesh out your client's underlying concerns so that they can be discussed with the team and an approach can be planned:

Examples:

Deepest fears and concerns

Hot button issues / triggers

How to manage reactivity

Prepare clients for listening and seeking to understand each other's perspectives and interests by creating structure for learning and practicing new communication tools:

Examples:

Listen without interruption.

Listen with an open mind, even if you think you've heard it before.

Listen for opportunities for agreement.

Coach clients to acknowledge and summarize what they've heard their spouse say before proceeding with their point of view.

At the beginning of each case, the team should discuss cues for emotional regulation when a reset is needed. Continue to review and remind team members/clients throughout the case.

Predict and prepare for reactivity so that clients/team can reset and continue to participate.

Examples:

Deep breathing

Stand and stretch

Take a break

Review / remember the BIGGER PICTURE

Repeat affirmations or mantras

Remember: Mistakes will be made. Mistakes mean that we are trying and learning. Disagreement only means there's still another solution that we have not yet found.

Stay Tuned for Part II of III in Next Month's TIPS – "Impasse or Opportunity? You Choose."

From the PEC:

We all know that the big players have the most common search terms sewed up. Your little practice website is not going to show up until the 100th page if you're hoping that anyone is going to find it with "divorce attorney in San Jose" as the search terms. Most people aren't necessarily so general in their searches, though. They're searching for answers, and many will actually just type their questions into the search box and see what shows up. This is where the title and topic of your very specific and tightly informational blog gets to the very top of the search. SO...let's think of the questions our future clients are asking in the middle of the night. One hint for Best Practices: keep a note page, in your phone or somewhere else where you can easily find it, with the questions people ask in their first meeting with you or even in that first email. Add in a few ideas that are just your guesses about what your client really wants or needs. Then, in the fifteen minutes this week that you've set aside to write your blog, call up your list and choose one. Here's a bit of a list to get your juices flowing. Don't worry about "stealing" some else's topic. It's okay if ten Collaborative pros have the same titles to one of their blogs. Knowing Collaborative pros, you'll all have something unique to share.

How Do I Get A Quick, Easy, Inexpensive Divorce?

How Can I Get Divorced if My Spouse is Refusing to Even Talk About It?

Is It Possible to Get Divorced and Still Live in the Same House?

How Do I Find Out if My Spouse Is Hiding Money?

If My Wife Has a Job, Do I Still Have to Pay Child Support?

How Much Does it Cost to Get Divorced?

Five Best Ways to Tell Your Spouse You Know They're Cheating

Five Best Ways to Protect Your Kids in Your Divorce

Do I Have to Share Custody With an Alcoholic?

Et cetera!!



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