COLLABORATIVE PracticeTips

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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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Impasse or Opportunity? I'm Possible! (Part III of III)

You have done your best to prepare yourselves, your clients and your professional team for a cooperative and productive meeting; and then it can all go sideways. It is always possible that the dynamics between our clients can raise their ugly heads and create impasse, which is frustrating to the clients and to the professionals.

How to Reboot When an Issue or Case Feels at Impasse:

Review Parts I and II in this Series.

As a team, establish a code word or gesture for needing a break:

Examples:

- Ask for a bathroom break.
- Take glasses off and lay them down on the table.
- Gently tap each other on the ankle under the table.

Examples for break time activities:

- Suggest getting up and moving about and/or stretching to

Suggest getting up and moving about and/or stretching to reboot.

- Get a snack - consider a walk to a local store or snack area.
- Talk a walk.
- Go to breakout rooms to diffuse the tension.

Options to flesh out impasse:

Evaluate the couple's dynamics that seem to be contributing to impasse.

Consider how the team might interrupt old patterns of interaction and redirect towards more positive and/or productive communication.

For in-person meetings, consider use of flip charts, whiteboard or ipad where you can write and draw with stylus to outline the issue(s), concerns and options.

For Zoom meetings use screen share in real time to outline the issue(s), concerns and options.

Together or separately, review the couple's BIGGER PICTURE, shared goals and/or values that have been established earlier in the case.

Write out some questions around what clients can do to meet their goals.

Take notes and give action items to the clients after the meeting.

Consider breakout meetings and/or separate meetings between the client, attorney and coach to allow venting, calm tension, and creatively problem solve:

Review perspectives.

Identify underlying blocking issues.

Identify the client's interests, needs and values.

What is your client's perspective on what is important to her/his spouse?

Consider return to brainstorming and gathering more information.

Ask your client if there is any value in resolving an issue that is stalling progress (i.e. being done, saving money, moving on, having more time)?

Ask your client what happens if we can't resolve this today? Next week? Next month?

It is not uncommon for there to be challenges and delays during the divorce process and in reaching agreement. The key is to predict, prepare and plan for these difficulties. Developing strategies paves the way to changing your perspective and embracing "impasse" as an opportunity and not the end of the process. Disagreement only means there's still another solution that we have not yet found. Remember to think logically AND creatively by using our imaginations to re-imagine what is possible.

From the PEC:

Repetition is the Key to Building Referral Relationships

So, the annoying thing about marketing is that you can't just do it once. Even something like your website, which seems so permanent, need to be updated constantly. Why? Because if you aren't constantly adding and changing and reaching out your potential clients are going to think you're not in business anymore. Or, worse, they aren't going to think of you at all.

What this means is that you need a schedule and a reminder system. What you do and how you do it is going to depend on your referral sources. Do you get all of your referrals through other collaborative colleagues? Showing up at meetings monthly is going to satisfy the repeat marketing requirement...and even better if you show up more frequently for committee meetings and take some leadership positions. And "like" and comment on their social media posts and blogs. Are your referrals through your website? A weekly blog and newsletter are going to be key. Do couples therapists send you the most clients? Weekly social media posts, targeted e-newsletters, etc are a way to reach out.

Don't have anything to say so frequently? No worries! CPCal has your back. Just advertising your practice group's Divorce Options Class once a month on LinkedIn is a wonderful way to be in touch with your referral sources monthly. AND...how special that we're doing Divorce With Respect Week again! You can mention that several times!

Remember that all of your "touches" are NOT about you. They're about being helpful to your referral sources and their clients...who might also become yours!

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE CALIFORNIA

Join the Conversation #CPCAL

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