

TOP 10 STEPS TO MAKING MEDIATION A SUCCESS

1. Be Patient. You didn't generate conflict in a session or two. It's very doubtful you'll resolve it in that time.
2. Focus on the Future. The past can inform us but shouldn't control us. You can nurture the hurts of the past or you can create a brighter, more peaceful future.
3. Acknowledge that the Other Side Has a Point. It's rare that any of us is right 100% of the time. When hurt and anger are most intense, we are less likely to see the full picture. Remain open to understanding the other's perspective.
4. Understand that Win-Win is Preferable. The only way you win is if the other side feels good too. Five years from now you want to look back and know that you dealt honorably with yourself AND your former spouse/co-parent.
5. Recognize that Win-Win is Possible. If you're willing to do the work, you will find your way to it.
6. Take tools from Your Mediation Session to Use in the Future. If you have children, you'll likely be grandparents someday and might encounter each other at the nursery. Be open to new tools for communicating more productively so that your conflict isn't carried on down through the ages.
7. Be Prepared. If there are documents you need to gather before the next session, gather them. Analyze options and develop alternatives with an open mind.
8. Educate Yourself. They don't teach surviving divorce in school. There are good divorces and bad divorces. Yours can be one of the good ones if you take the time to learn from those who've gone before you. Read any of the excellent books available (*Rebuilding* by Bruce Fisher, *Crazy Time* by Abigail Trafford, *The Divorce Mediation Handbook* by Paula James to name just a few).
9. Work Through www.UptoParents.org if You Have Children. This website won an American Bar Association award because it does a phenomenal job of helping parents remain focused on their most important asset: their children.
10. Understand that Even The Very Best Settlement Won't Make You Ecstatic. It's tough to split assets. It's hard to identify times you won't be with your children. It's a financial strain to support two homes on what used to support one. So don't look for the resolution that's going to make you ecstatic. Be realistic.