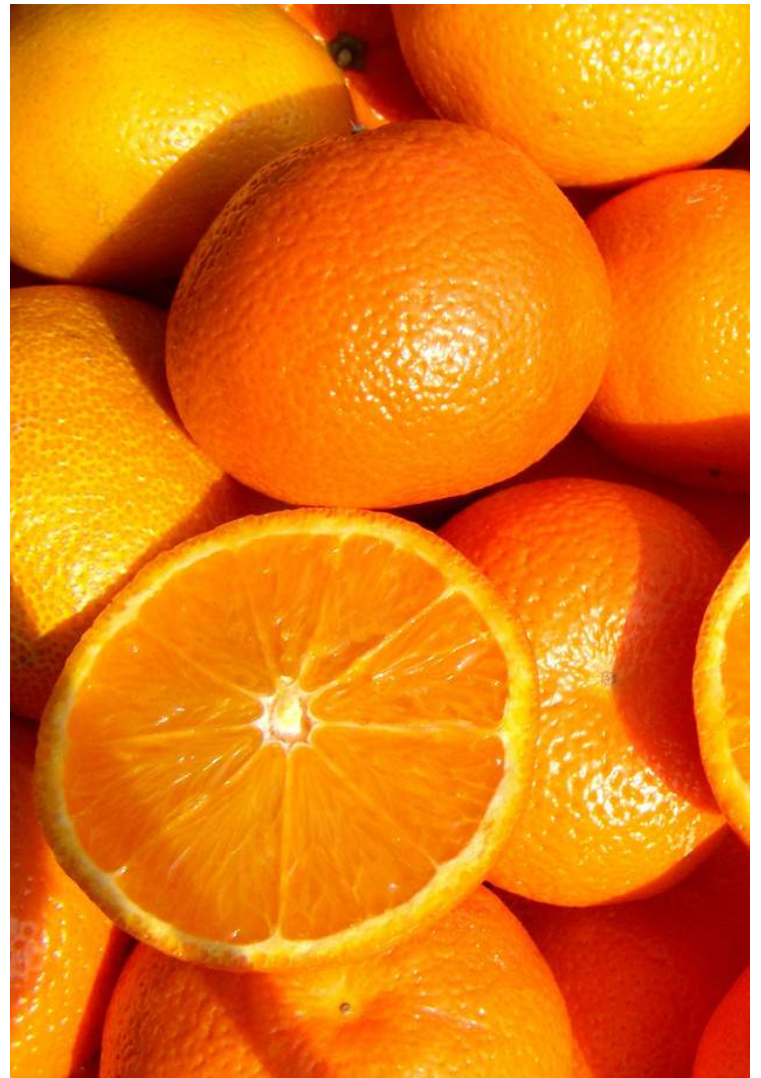


# MY CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK I

**For Parents  
Inclined to  
PROBLEM SOLVE  
AND  
COLLABORATE**



# **COPARENTING HANDBOOK**

## **MISSION**

Apples and Oranges. We are all different in the way we manage conflict. Conflict can be defined as simple misunderstandings or deeply entrenched conflict.

Communication is key in determining exactly what type of conflict do you face.

16607 Blanco #707, San Antonio, Texas 78232  
+1-210-224-1667 / [mattsossi@bsossi.com](mailto:mattsossi@bsossi.com)

# CONTENTS

**Collaborate: work jointly on an activity, to produce or create something.**



Jessica Wilde  
shares how to  
overcome  
writer's block.  
*Story on p. 20*

**2 Editor's Note**

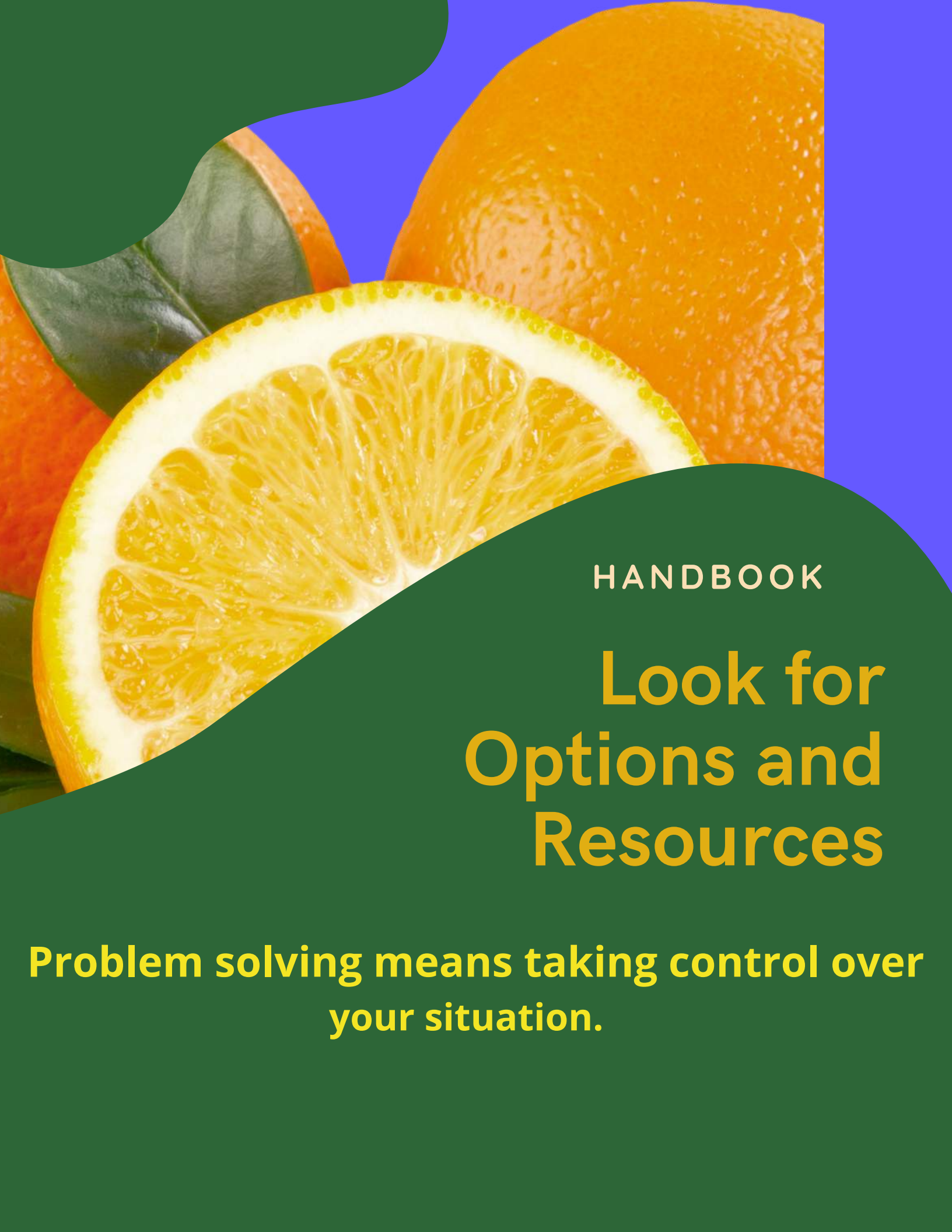
**4 Options and Resources**

**11. Meeting Your Attorney**

**13  
Establishing  
Communication**

**14.  
Using BIFF style of  
communication**

**18. Directing a challenging  
Conversation**



HANDBOOK

# Look for Options and Resources

**Problem solving means taking control over  
your situation.**



**Individual  
Resource**

**Find a  
Licensed  
Counselor**

**Nothing is more  
traumatic than a  
divorce. Working  
through a licensed  
counselor may help  
focus.**



# Bereavement Counseling

**Joint  
Resource**

**Answers Questions:  
Can we reconcile?  
How should we  
co-parent after  
separation?**



**Individual  
Resource**

**Divorce  
Coach**

**Your own resource  
to help you make  
life and co-parenting  
decisions.**



**Joint  
Resource**

**Agree  
Upon a  
Child  
Therapist**

**The entire family is  
effected by divorce.  
Give your child a  
resource to rely upon**





Ask  
Questions

**Teachers**

**Pediatrician**

**Therapist**

**Psychologist**

**Family**

**Friends**

# MEET WITH YOUR FAMILY LAW ATTORNEY

At this point you selected a family law attorney. You did so based upon their experience and reputation. You want to let your attorney know exactly what your goals are walking into their office. You want to rely heavily upon your attorney's knowledge their opinion on where the think your case should go.

Your attorney needs to be aware that you are wanting to take a problem solving approach to your divorce. You will need to follow your attorney's advice completely to navigate your way through what can be an extremely adversarial system.

# AFTER THE MEETING

## Modified Expectations

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# AFTER THE MEETING

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES MOVING FORWARD

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# **COMMUNICATE DURING THE DIVORCE PROCESS**

## **BUILDING THE BRIDGE**

**Starting to communicate is your first step to co-parenting. At this point you will want to learn the BIFF style of communication authored by Bill Eddy. Before you continue read Bill Eddy's Book: **BIFF for Co-Parent Communication:****



# Facing an **ADVERSARIAL** Situation?

## **RECORD YOUR CONVERSATIONS**

Learning BFF provides you a method to communicate during the legal process. The next step is to create the means by which communication can be monitored, downloaded and shared.

There are various apps that allow parents to communicate and share information. Communicate with your attorney as to which smart apps are typically used by your Family law judge. Sign on the app and ask your attorney to reach out to your ex-spouse's counsel to start communication through your selected app.

# ENGAGE MORE RELATE LESS

---

It is extremely difficult for many parents during the divorce to STOP relating to their child's other parent as their spouse rather than as a co-parent.

Engage your ex as if you were performing a task at your place of work. When discussing your child's needs take a child first approach - making sure your kids needs are met and then finish the conversation.



# TAKE YOUR FIRST STEPS AS A CO-PARENT

In following Bill Eddy's BIFF approach, apply that style when you engage your ex. Be to the point when relaying information. Avoid unnecessary interactions that may lead to increased conflict.

# DIRECTING A CHALLENGING CONVERSATION

## Engage

You may have to communicate with your ex on issues that you see as problematic or that have the potential for conflict.

Before you speak to your ex think about how he or she will react to what you have to say.

Should you be the one initiating conversation? Would a member or third-party be better?



Speak  
ing  
all  
s  
t



# CHECKLIST

## DIRECT CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

- Is this conversation necessary?
- Who is best person to initiate conversation

## BEFORE YOU RESPOND

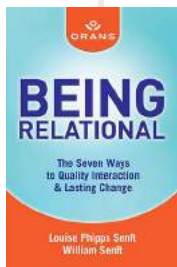
- Make sure to ask what information your ex is relying upon.
- Attempt to obtain options and resources to work through the problem.
- Do the best you can to have your ex see that you are working through the problem together.

- How will your spouse react to this conversation
- Have you considered that your spouse may have a different point of view based upon information you do not?

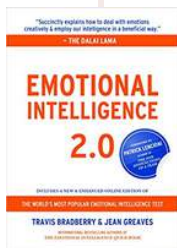
# SUGGESTED READINGS



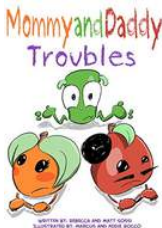
Bill EDDY'S BIFF BOOK FOR CO-PARENTS. AVAILABLE ON AMAZON



BEING RELATIONAL: LUIS SFENT - AVAILABLE ON AMAZON



BEMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE 2.0 - AVAILABLE ON AMAZON.



MOMMY AND DADDY TROUBLES - MATT SOSSI - A STORY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN TO UNDERSTAND LIFE IN SEPARATE HOMES.

# About the Authors

Matt Sossi is a family law attorney in San Antonio, Texas. Matt Sossi is an amicus attorney, parent facilitator, parent coordinator, and family law mediator. Trained as a collaborative family law attorney, Matt Sossi has been helping to divorce families in San Antonio, Texas since 1995..

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**MY  
CO-PARENTING  
HANDBOOK II  
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT  
TRAINING**

Available on  
Amazon

**MY  
CO-PARENTING  
HANDBOOK II  
PRE-MEDIATION  
TRAINING**

# MY CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK II

HANDBOOK II

**A  
RESOURCE  
FOR THE  
DIVORCING  
FAMILY**

BY: MATT SOSSI, J.D.  
JOY CURBOW

# **Conflict Management Handbook for Co-parents**



**THERE IS NOTHING MORE  
POWERFUL THAN A PERSON  
ARMED WITH INFORMATION  
AND OPTIONS**

# Handbook

J U N E 2 0 2 1

## MISSION

Our job has been and will continue to be to help parents reach solutions, avoid court, and to co-parent. By definition it is my job to help parents define their conflict, learn basic communication skills with the goal of ensuring that the parents have the skills not only to manage present conflict but future conflict as well. Regardless of where you are in the process, it's not too late to turn things around and begin the co-parenting process!

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+1-210-224-1667 / mattsossi@bsossi.com

[WWW.SAMEDIATERIGHT.COM](http://WWW.SAMEDIATERIGHT.COM)

# On Apples and Oranges

You have fundamental differences. Take that for granted. All that matters to a co-parent is how you work together to achieve a solution.



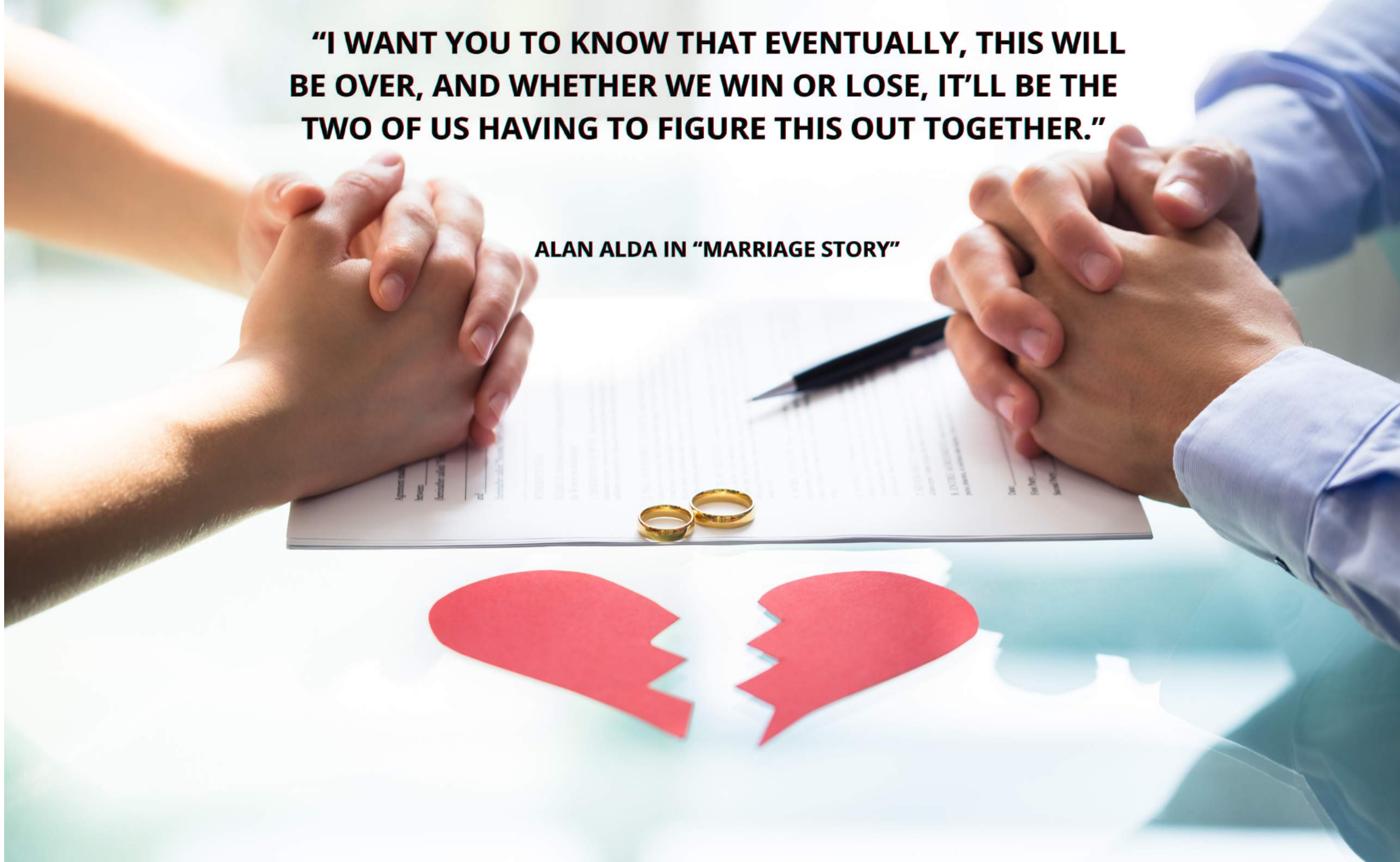


# CONTENTS

- 6.** CO-PARENTING BEFORE DIVORCE
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- 11** TELLING THE KIDS
- 14** MEDIATE LITIGATE COLLABORATE
- 18** PLANNING A BUDGET
- 20** CO-PARENTING DURING YOUR DIVORCE
- 24** TEAM BASED APPROACH
- 29** CO-PARENTING AFTER THE DIVORCE

**"I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT EVENTUALLY, THIS WILL BE OVER, AND WHETHER WE WIN OR LOSE, IT'LL BE THE TWO OF US HAVING TO FIGURE THIS OUT TOGETHER."**

**ALAN ALDA IN "MARRIAGE STORY"**



# COPARENTING

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## Before You Consider Court

You have yet to file your divorce. For many parents the question at this point is how to resolve disputes and begin the process of co-parenting.

The question is how?

Without skills, your plans to co-parent will fail at some point and you will be in court. How are you planning to resolve not only your present conflict but your future conflict as well?

# Are you Ready?

At present, there are now online sites and online forms to help parents file their petitions for divorce.

The issue arises when the parents have a dispute. Overcoming conflict during the divorce process may seem like an insurmountable process.

*The last place divorcing parents want to be is before a family law judge hearing their case.*

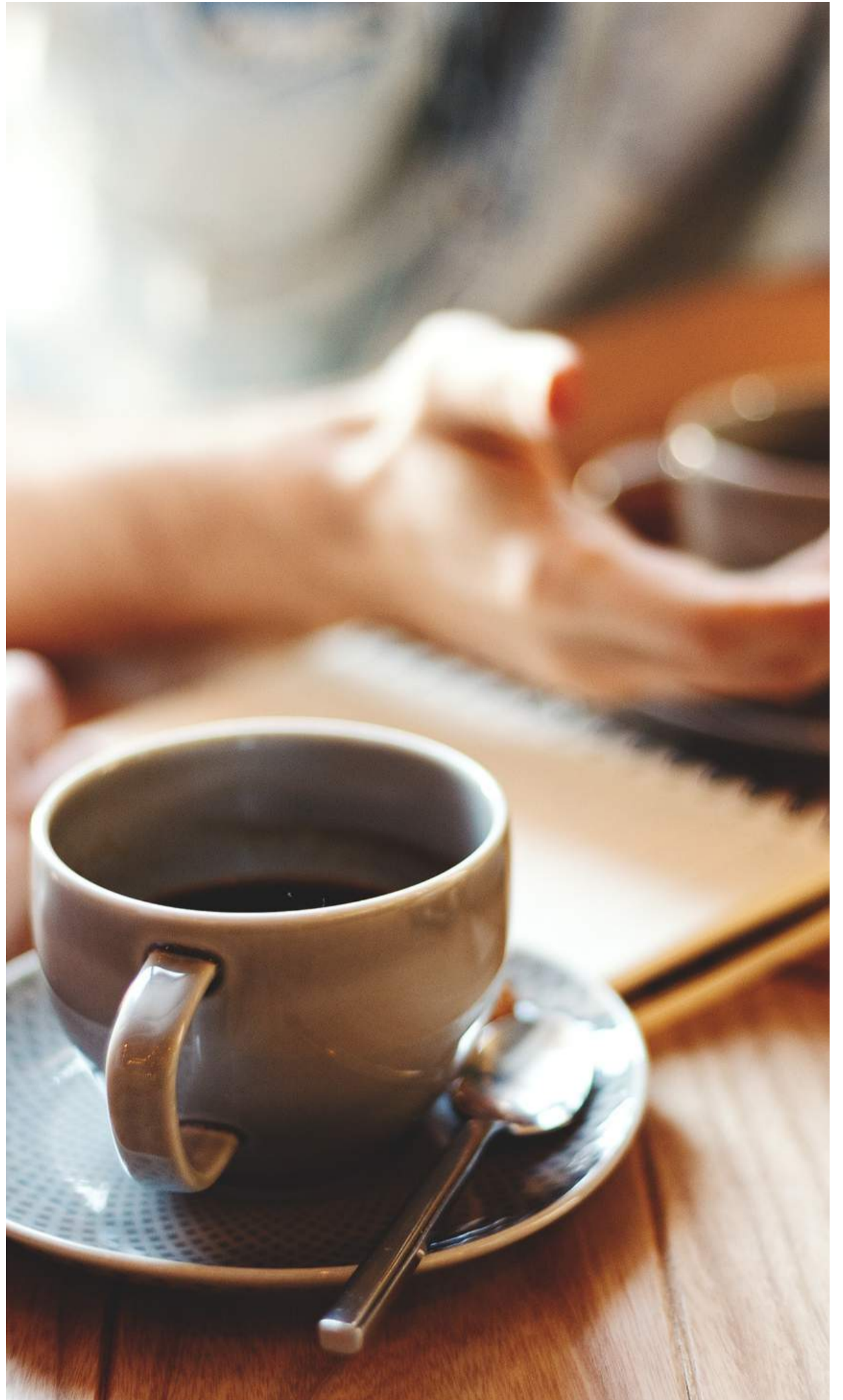


# COMMUNICATION STARTS NOW

For co-parents, the divorce process should be all about transitioning, ending your relationship as husband and wife, and beginning your journey as co-parents.

Co-parenting is going to mean reframing the manner in which you interact with your spouse.

You relate with your spouse on an emotional level. Co-parents communicate with each other as though they were employees working a task on a job.



## Resources:

Book: Amazon and purchase Bill Eddy's BIFF for co-parent communication. Practice the BIFF method in all of your communications!

# Bereavement Counseling

It can be hard to transition through the divorce process when your ex (or perhaps yourself) is not ready to end the divorce.

Bereavement counseling is to help divorced couples who feel lost in the trauma of divorce.

Bereavement counseling helps couples answer some basic questions troubling divorcing parents.

Can we stay married?

What happens next?

Bereavement counseling is an excellent way for a mental health professional to intervene and assist among divorcing parents, helping them to continue to communicate.



# TELLING THE KIDS

Talking to your child separately may be your only option, but can you agree with me that it is not your best option? Dad may say one thing to the kids and providing one reason for the divorce, Mom saying another. Your **INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS** are not going to provide the best recipe to reduce anxiety and stress for your children.

Moms and Dads who intend to co-parent after divorce should together plan how to discuss the news with their children.

Thinking through **HOW** to talk to the children most likely will mean visiting a third-party professional, such as a child therapist, who can provide a guideline of what and what not to say.



# ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVES

Talking to the kids may have just changed your approach to your divorce.

- Rather than litigating and placing your children in a high conflict situation, the parties focus on meeting the needs of their children and not introducing conflict over each parent's needs.





# Telling the kids

**What will you  
tell your kids  
when they ask.**

**Was this my fault?**

---

**Can I still love (my  
other parent)?**

---

**Why is this happening?**

---

**Where am I going to  
live?**

---

**Am I still going to see  
my friends?**

---

# Checklist



# Do We Mediate Litigate or Collaborate?

Most parents hire a litigation attorney when they file for divorce. Why?

While litigation may be necessary you need to explore your options.

Simply put do you litigate, mediate or choose collaborative divorce?

## Litigation Costs!

Litigation is the most expensive election you can make. There are not just the initial retainers paid to your lawyer, retainers will be expended, and billable hours will continue. There are court reporter fees, there are deposition costs, videographers, etc. The more litigious you want to be the higher your costs.



**Mediation costs are significantly lower than litigation or electing a collaborative divorce.**

# Have You Defined Your Conflict?

Conflict is defined in one of two ways, one as a misunderstanding, the other is defined as an entrenched battle.

**Defining Your Conflict Helps Answer the question.**

Litigation is designed to resolve deeply entrenched conflict.

Mediation may be a better path to work through the problem.

Electing a Collaborative approach may be necessary depending on the complexity of your divorce.



# Engage, Listen, Understand and Respond

- Identify Your Goals
  - State Your Differences
  - Actively listen
  - Define Your Conflict
- 

- Talk to a Family Law Attorney, Mediator and Collaborative Family Practitioner

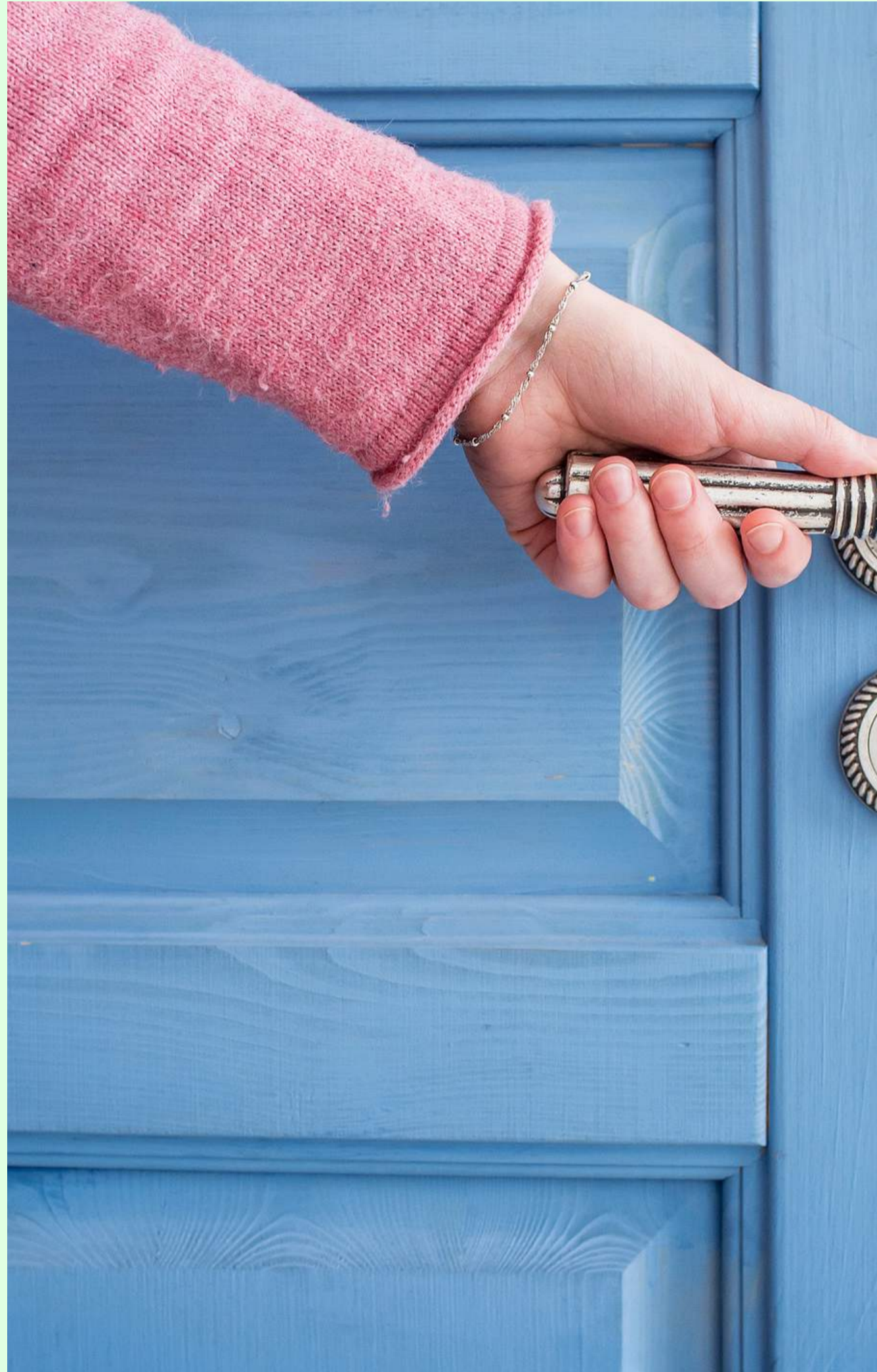
**HAVE THE TALK**

**Mediate  
Litigate  
or  
Collaborate**

**Checklist**

# THE POSITIVES

- You expressed your goals and concerns to your ex.
- You Defined your Conflict
- You empowered yourself and attempted to direct how conflict should be managed.
- Succeed or fail you and your spouse found a new way, a problem-solving way, to work through your problems.



# THE MONEY TALK

**Divorce costs no matter what.**

**If you are not careful you will lose control over how money is spent along the process.**

**As you manage your finances during your marriage you will need to budget during your divorce.**

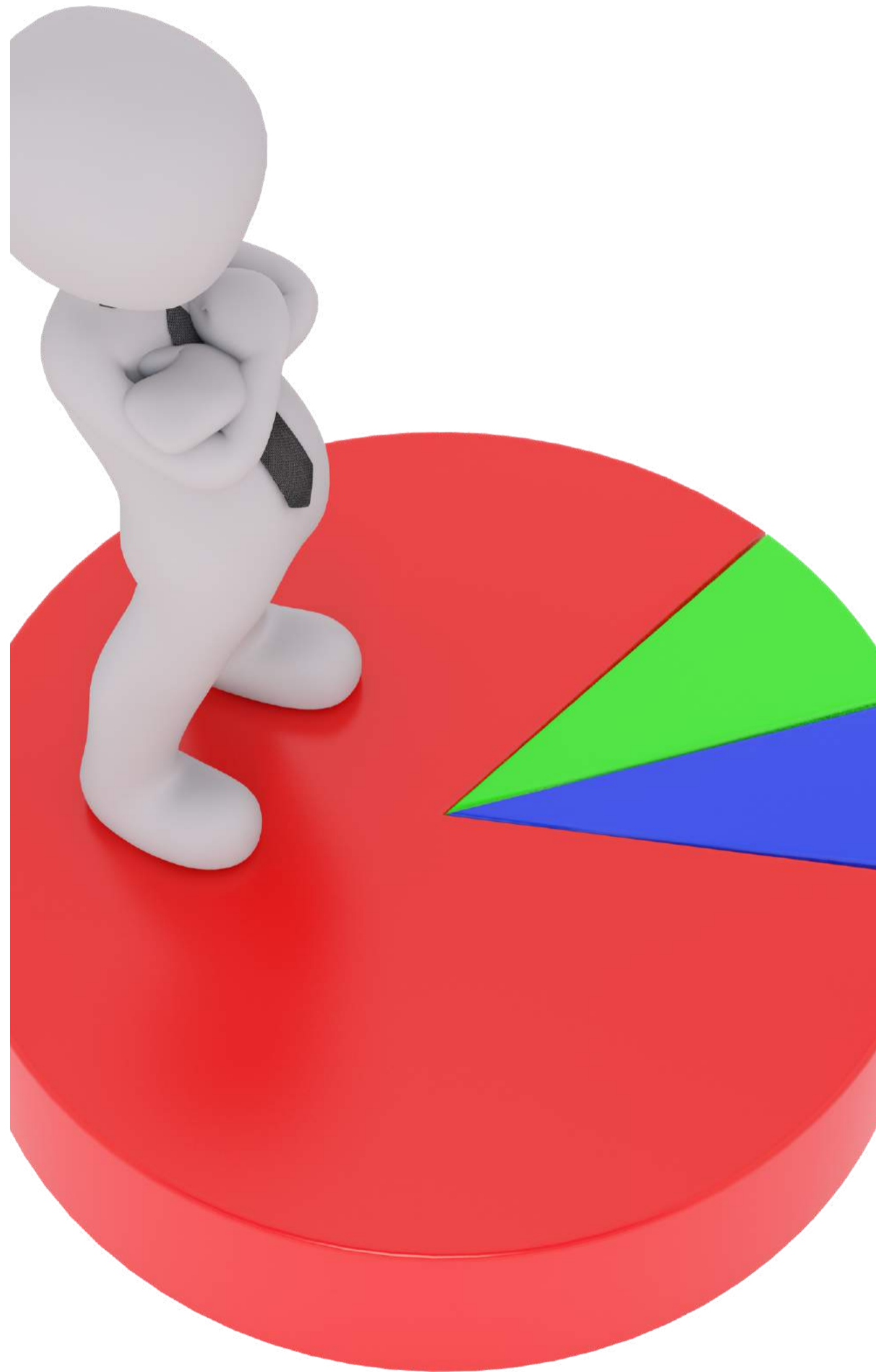
**Things to consider;**

**Consolidate existing loans**

**Pay minimum payments on credit cards**

**Obtain forbearance on mortgage or car loans**

**Find affordable solutions:  
Stay with Family, share furniture as best as you can, do not get into further long-term debt.**



# CREATING YOUR BUDGET

The average price of a contested divorce is approximately \$20,000.00 when custody is at issue.

The cost does not include child custody evaluation reports, amicus fees, etc.

Courts may have to be involved if you can not figure out how to cover present expenses. Parties who can come up with agreements as to who will pay what expense can save thousands of dollars in attorneys fees.





TRANSITION TO  
**COPARENTING**

---

**During The Court  
Process**

You've filed for divorce, perhaps been to court. You are in an adversarial process. The judge is asking you to co-parent at this point.

How?

# WHY ARE YOU LITIGATING YOUR DIVORCE?

## MAIN FACTORS

**Inability to Communicate with Ex During Divorce**

**The presumption that Divorce has to be an adversary process.**

**Lack of information on alternate processes**

**Fear that collaborative divorces can be Expensive and Unproductive**

**Mediation Resolves 99% of all Disputes.**





# Are you Ready?

At present, there are now online sites and online forms to help parents file their petitions for divorce.

The issue arises when the parents have a dispute. Overcoming conflict during the divorce process may seem like an insurmountable process.

*The last place divorcing parents want to be is before a family law judge hearing their case.*



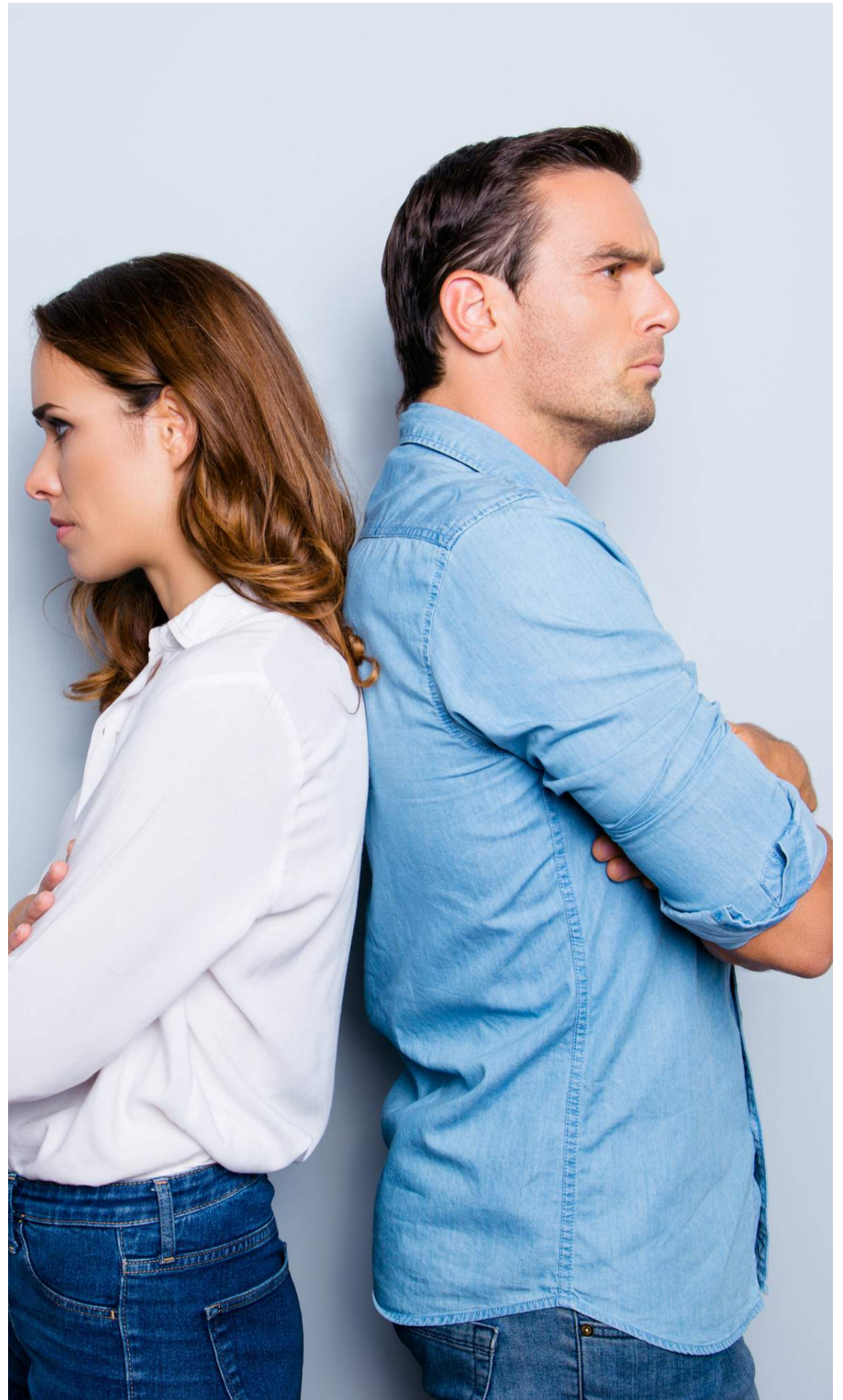
# RELAY INFORMATION

During the litigation process relay information - rely on the BIFF method. Be brief, informative factual, and forceful. You are in an adversarial setting hoping that you can transition from litigant to co-parent.

## Resources:

Book: Amazon and purchase Bill Eddy's BIFF for co-parent communication. Practice the BIFF method in all of your communications!

App Close/OFW: Apps that allow you and your ex to communicate in a more focused setting.



# TEAM MEMBERS

---

**TEAM BASED  
APPROACH**

---

**COURT REFERRED**

---

**PARENT  
RESOURCES**

---





## CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK

# USING A TEAM BASED APPROACH (TBA)



A team-based approach (TBA) is defined as parents working with neutral professionals after they agree to the existence of a problem.

Using a TBA is not about right and wrong. The TBA approach is about finding a solution to the problem.

## Steps to TBA

1. State the Problem without taking a position
2. Agree to a referral to a neutral professional
3. Allow time for each parent to communicate with the professional.
4. Professional to provide options and resources to parents.
5. Parents and professionals come up with a team-based response to the problem.



A group of people are sitting in a circle in a meeting room, engaged in a discussion. The room has a bookshelf in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

**1.**

## **PARENT COORDINATOR**

**PARENT COORDINATORS** engage the parents in a confidential setting to help parents work through the process and determine what issues are in conflict.

**2**

## **PARENT FACILITATOR**

**PARENT COORDINATORS** engage the parents in a non-confidential setting to help parents learn how to communicate and work through certain designated issues are in conflict.

3

## THERAPISTS - MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Mental health professionals are assigned particular roles in your case. Examples of appointed therapist would include the following:

Child Therapist

Family Therapist

Reunification Therapist

Bereavement Counseling

Individual Therapy

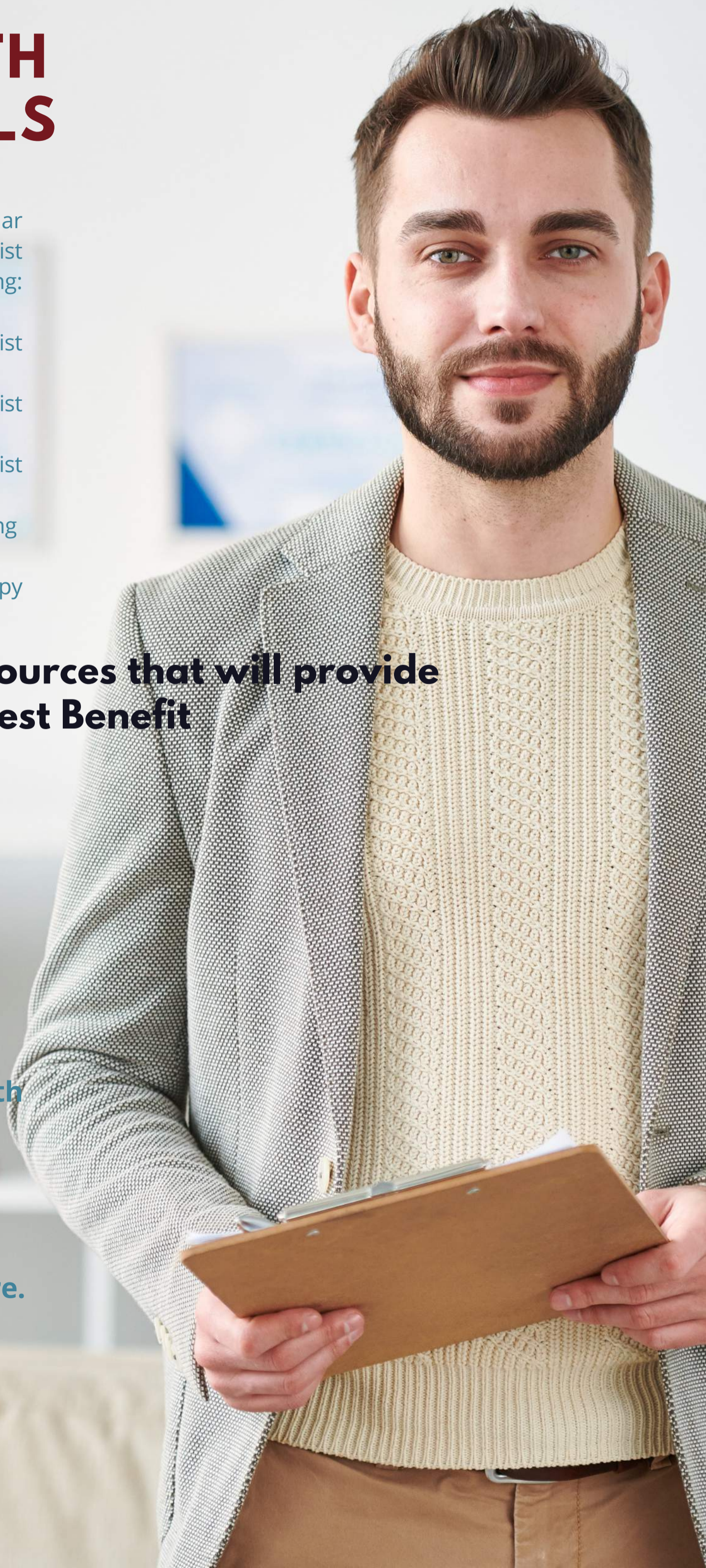
**Allocate Your Resources that will provide  
the Best Benefit**

4

## PSYCHOLOGIST/ PSYCHIATRISTS

- When there are issues of mental health at hand a psychiatrist or psychologist may be needed.

Psychologists may be needed to help parents who are high conflict in nature. Psychiatrist may be needed to help diagnose parents with mental health issues and even, at times, prescribe treatments.



# OPERATION CO-PARENT

**Educate Yourself  
on potential team  
members, roles  
and duties.**

**Pick members  
wisely.**

**Use a cost-benefit  
approach when  
possible.**



# Transition to Co-parenting

You've learned the principles of BIFF and you worked through the process

You have used the team-based approach and did the best you can to resolve conflict to benefit your kids.







# TRANSITION TO COPARENTING

---

## After the Divorce

You are on the road to co-parenting. Co-parenting at this point is more about the journey than the destination.

- I. Maintain Communication
- II. Apply Skills Learned
- III. Direct Challenging Conversations

# MAINTAIN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Don't forget what you learned from the divorce process.

Maintain communication using the BIFF approach.

IF possible schedule co-parenting meetings once or twice a year - stay on the same page about goals, desires, and objectives that you and your children have.

When times get tough, feel free to use App Close or Our FamilyWizard (Smart Apps) to continue communication.



## Resources:

Book: Amazon and purchase Bill Eddy's BIFF for co-parent communication.

Smart Apps: OFW and App Close.

## When its Time for A One on One Conversation...

### Plan Your Meeting

You may want to communicate with your ex on issues that you see as problematic or that have the potential for conflict. Think about what you're going to say before you say it. Think about how he or she will react to what you have to say.

.

### DON'T FORGET TO LISTEN

Actively listen when you hear your ex speak actively listen. Could you be seeing things incorrectly? Do you have all the information that you need? Does your ex have all the information that they need?

### UNDERSTAND

You and your ex will each have your own viewpoints as to why you believe you are right. Viewpoints are lenses. Lenses can be based on your prior experiences, values, belief system. |

In preparing for this conversation ask yourself basic questions: How will your ex respond? Are you prepared for the response? Is there a better way to present the issue you are facing? Would using TBA be beneficial in this situation.

### RESPOND

Can you agree at this point? Do you believe collaboration is necessary to solve your dispute?



CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK

# CONTINUE THE TBA APPROACH

During the divorce process, you may have used a team-based approach with court-assigned professionals such as parent facilitators or parent coordinators. After the divorce process, you can use the TBA approach with any neutral person you believe can provide options and resources to the table when confronted with a co-parenting problem.

Team Members could include:

- a. Psychologists
- b. Licensed Professional Counselors
- c. Dentists
- d. Teachers
- e. Doctors or Nurses
- f. Coaches

Never allow a conflict to develop when options and resources are available to solve the problem.

# Co-Parenting Handbook

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Matt Sossi is a family law attorney in San Antonio, Texas. Matt Sossi is an amicus attorney, parent facilitator, parent coordinator, and family law mediator. Trained as a collaborative family law attorney, Matt Sossi has been helping to divorce families in San Antonio, Texas since 1995.

Joy Curbow is a family law mediator in San Antonio, Texas. Joy Curbow's background is in social work. Joy Curbow is a member of AFCC and has received training through Cornell University in conflict management.

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[WWW.SAMEDIATERIGHT.COM](http://WWW.SAMEDIATERIGHT.COM)



# Mission Statements

**My job has been and will continue to be to help parents reach solutions, avoid court, and to co-parent.**

**Matt Sossi**

**My goal is to empower parents with options and resources and guide them towards a healthy transition to co-parenting.**

**There is no more powerful advocate than a person armed with information and options.**

**Joy Curbow**

**Thanks for  
Reading!**

**MY  
CO-PARENTING  
HANDBOOK I**

**COLLABORATIVE  
APPROACH**

Available on  
Amazon

**MY  
CO-PARENTING  
HANDBOOK II**

**PRE-MEDIATION  
TRAINING**

# MY CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK III



**PREPARE FOR**

**MEDIATION**



# Mediation

**By working themselves to identify solutions.....  
parties become empowered.**

**Bush and Folger  
"The Promise of Mediation"**



# Handbook

## MISSION

It is my goal to offer communication and conflict management skills to divorcing parents so that they can successfully engage as co-parents. Preparing for mediation is essential as it not only paves the way for how you will resolve the conflict at hand but future conflicts as well.

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**28 NEGOTIATE**

**36 EVALUATE**

**Are You  
Ready?**

**Co-Parenting  
Pre-Mediation  
Handbook**



**CO-PARENTING  
GUIDE**



## PREPARE FOR THE DAY

Every step you've taken to this point has been to get past your current conflict. Mediation may not only define how you resolve your present conflict but any future conflict as well. Preparing for mediation is one of the most important underlooked and undervalued events in the divorce process. e .

# MEDIATION:

## To Do List

1-

**Be Prepared**

2-

**Be Ready to Work**

3-

**Show up on Time**

4-

**Use the Mediator's Time  
Wisely**

5-

**Have the Right Attitude**



# YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED CONFLICT EVERY DAY

You resolve conflict every day without the need for court intervention. You separate simple disagreements with deep entrenched conflict. You collaborate, accommodate, avoid and compromise. We take these basic skills into the mediation room. .



# **SKILLS YOU NEED TO CONTINUE TO RELY UPON**

**MAINTAIN A WORK-LIKE ORIENTED  
APPROACH**

**RELY ON A TEAM-BASED APPROACH TO  
RESOLVE CONFLICT**

**BE READY TO ENGAGE IN CHALLENGING  
CONVERSATIONS**





# Maintain Rules Engagement

- 1. Maintain BIFF-engage like you would at work**
- 2. Allow Your Mediator to provide options to work through the obstacles you and your ex have in reaching agreements.**
- 3. Always be ready to LISTEN UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO YOUR EX.**



A person wearing a white dress shirt and a dark tie is holding a piece of brown cardboard. The background is blurred, showing vertical lines. A red rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, and a red inverted triangle is overlaid on the bottom right. A white horizontal line is positioned above the cardboard.

**DURING  
MEDIATION  
IDENTIFY  
YOUR  
CONFLICT**

**Communicate  
Negotiate  
Evaluate**

# Begin to Communicate

## Co-Parenting Pre-Mediation Handbook

**FORM-1**



**STATE BASICS  
AGREEMENTS**

---



**DON'T WASTE  
TIME AT  
MEDIATION.**

## **LIST BASIC AGREEMENTS**

There are certain basic agreements that can be listed out prior to the mediation beginning. .

Not everything is a fight or to be used as part of a negotiated settlement.


Providing a list of agreements reached at the beginning of the mediation

- entices parents to move forward and engage with one another during the mediation process
- helps the mediator to focus the parties on the genuine issues the parties have in dispute



# Basic Agreement

## Property Form - 1a

Agreed Division of Accounts Life Insurance and Vehicle	Agreed Division of Accounts Life Insurance and Vehicle	



[Image CAPTION] Write a caption that will clearly explain what this image is about and how it relates to the story.

### Agreed Valuation of Assets and Debts




# Basic Agreement

## Parenting Plan -2

CONSERVATORSHIP  
RIGHTS AND DUTIES

CONSERVATORSHIP  
RIGHTS AND DUTIES



[ Image CAPTION ] Write a caption that will clearly explain what this Image is about and how it relates to the study

**SCHOOL  
HOLIDAYS  
BIRTHDAYS  
SUMMER SCHEDULE**

[ CAPTION ] GRAPHS ARE GREAT IN HELPING MAKE NUMBERS EASIER TO UNDERSTAND

PICK UP AND RETURN  
LOCATIONS

TELEPHONIC  
COMMUNICATIONS







# Co-Parents

Communicate

## Co-Parenting Pre-Mediation Handbook



**AGREE ON THE  
BASICS**

**BEGIN TO  
COLLABORATE**



## FOCUS ON THE ISSUES USING A TEAM BASED APPROACH



Taking a problem centered approach helps communication continue throughout the mediation.

Exploring options to the problems at hand allows the parents to think through the problem, collaborate and put their signature trademark on the agreement reached.



# NEVER START A CONVERSATION BY TAKING A POSITION



## PRESENT YOUR GOALS LIST YOUR ISSUES STATE YOUR CONCERNS

Studies show that parents who can listen, understand and respond to one another have the best chance to resolve conflict.

Begin to list goals issues and concerns. Share this list with your ex, compare notes.

1. See where you share similar goals and concerns.
2. Where are your differences forming?
3. Where are there simple misunderstandings- where are their genuine disputes?

# LIST

Goals	Issues	Concerns
-	-	-
	-	-
-	-	-

**WHICH GOALS, ISSUES AND CONCERNS ARE SHARED?**

**WHICH GOALS ISSUES AND CONCERNS ARE DIFFERENT?**


# Collaborative - List

<b>PROBLEM Encountered</b>	<b>Professional Involved Resource Used</b>	<b>Possible SOLUTION</b>

**Professional Involved Resource Used**

**Ask Your Attorney for Possible Resources to Solve Problem**







**Co-Parents**

**Co-Parenting  
Pre-Mediation  
Handbook**



**NEGOTIATE**



CO-PARENTING HANDBOOK

## When Collaboration Fails....



**Stating basic agreements and collaborating helps the parties start communicating during the mediation. When collaboration breaks down communication may continue between the parties simply focusing on alternative ways every day people resolve conflict.**

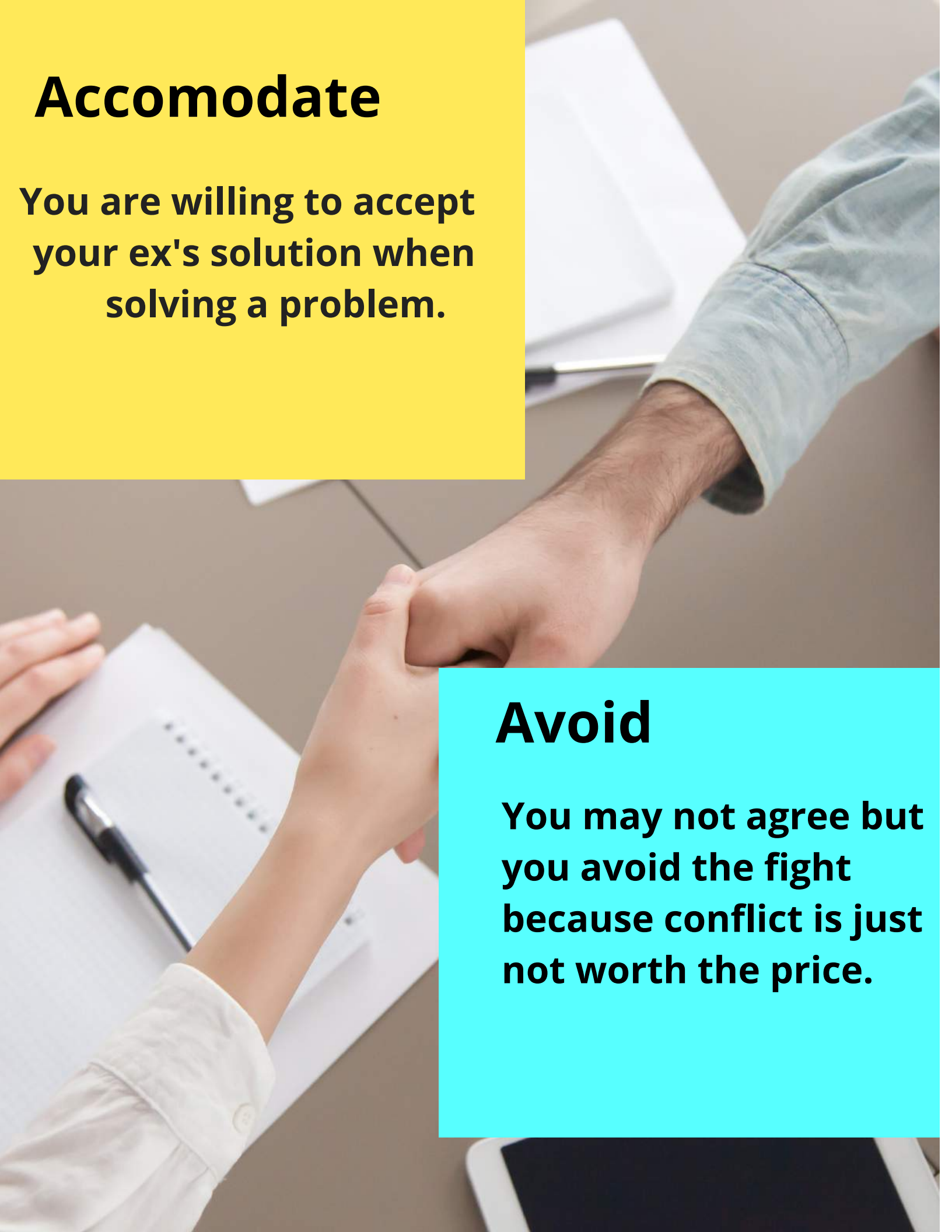


# Accommodate

**You are willing to accept your ex's solution when solving a problem.**

# Avoid

**You may not agree but you avoid the fight because conflict is just not worth the price.**



# **Compromise**

**Coming up with a midpoint settlement so each side benefits.**

# **Compete**

**When Communication ends and Positioning begins.**



# Negotiation Chart

## Remaining Issues

I WON'T AGREE ON:

A large red circle with horizontal lines inside, intended for writing issues that the user will not agree on.

I'M WILLING TO AVOID CONFLICT AND AGREE TO:

A large cyan circle with horizontal lines inside, intended for writing issues that the user is willing to avoid conflict and agree to.



I WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCOMMODATE

A large yellow circle with horizontal lines inside, intended for writing issues that the user would be willing to accommodate.

I WOULD BE WILLING TO COMPROMISE

A large green circle with horizontal lines inside, intended for writing issues that the user would be willing to compromise on.



## DEFINED CONFLICT

**BEFORE YOU END THE  
NEGOTIATION PROCESS  
ALLOW THE MEDIATOR THE  
OFFER A HAND!**

**Your mediator is a skilled professional who  
has done his or her share of successfully  
negotiating agreements. Don't stop  
communicating!**







# Co-Parents

## Co-Parenting Pre-Mediation Handbook

**Evaluate**



# WHEN COMMUNICATION FAILS

**You've listed your basic agreements, problem solved and negotiated. By this point there may be a few issues outstanding that just can not be agreed upon.**

**At this point the mediator will begin to challenge the parties legal positions, legal theories and ability to present an effective case at trial.**

**What would be the cost for pursuing a jury trial, as to attorney's fees and witness fees.**

**What additional expert's would need to be hired to present this case at time of trial?**

**How long would it take to get this case on the trial docket.**

When the matter is resolved it may result an outcome that neither party is happy with.

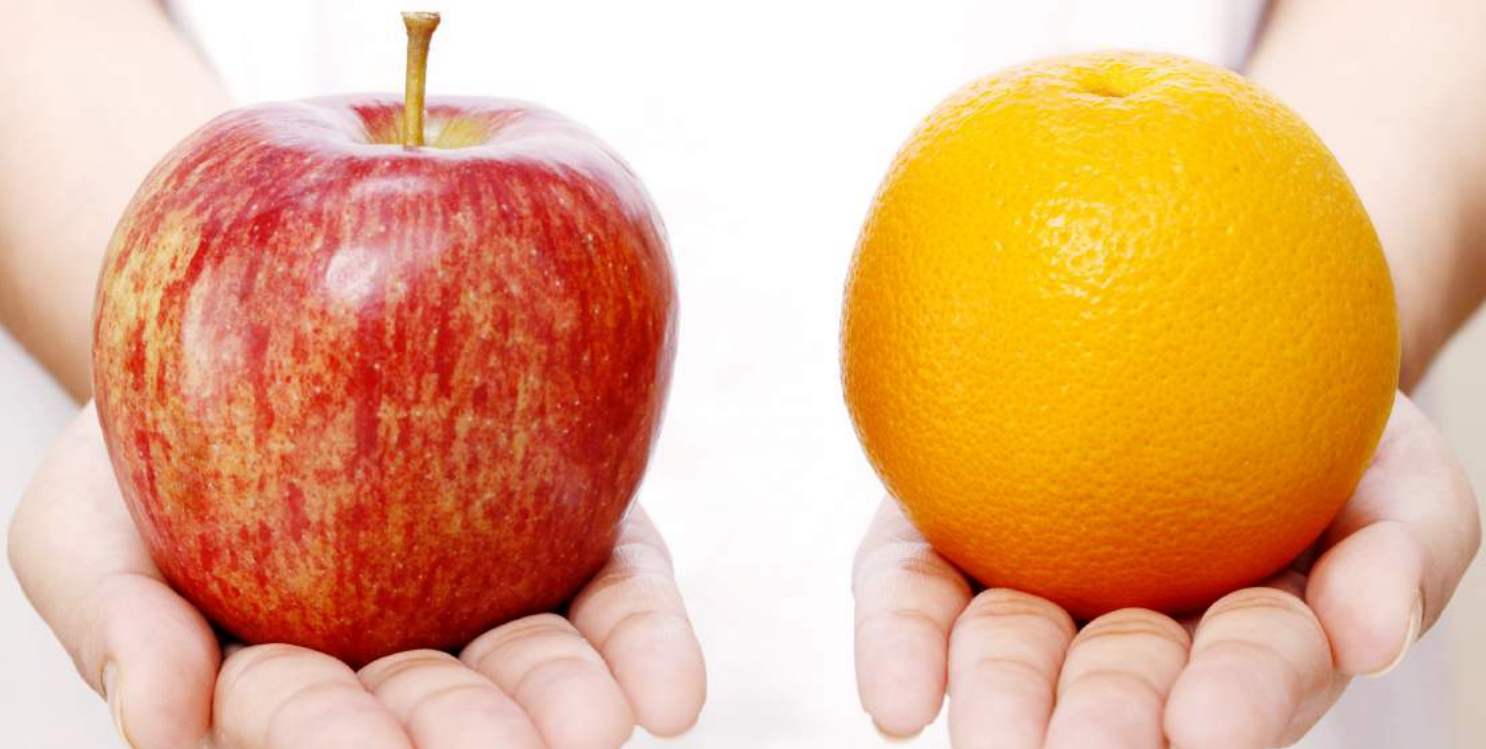
There may be points of law that require an evaluation of the parties positions.

Regardless, do the best you can to limit the issues that need to be evaluated by the mediator.

# About the Authors

Matt Sossi is a family law attorney in San Antonio, Texas. Matt Sossi is an amicus attorney, parent facilitator, parent coordinator, and family law mediator. Trained as a collaborative family law attorney, Matt Sossi has been helping to divorce families in San Antonio, Texas since 1995..

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**MEDIATIONS  
SETTLE 90%  
OF  
ALL DISPUTES**

**STATE BASIC AGREEMENTS**

**IDENTIFY YOUR PROBLEMS**

**DEFINE YOUR DISPUTES**

**COLLABORATE**

**NEGOTIATE**

**EVALUATE**

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