

The collaborative process is for couples who want a civilized, respectful end to their marriage for the sake of all family members. Collaborative law could be the best process if you:

SAY

- **NO to filing inflammatory court papers**
- **NO to taking hard line emotionally based positions that diminish one another's dignity and self esteem**
- **NO to drawing the children into the nightmare of seemingly endless conflict**
- **NO to belief that going to court is just another way to resolve divorce issues**
- **NO to focusing on the past**
- **NO to the arbitrary constraints of a legal framework**
- **NO to resolving disputes through the lens of what a Judge may do**
- **NO to intolerable emotional and social costs**

SAY

- **YES to a process whereby both partners and their team commit themselves to resolving differences justly and equitably out of court**
- **YES to using their best efforts to reach agreements that meet the fundamental needs of both parties**
- **YES to keeping at the forefront integrity, civility, and the long-term well being of all involved as important financial and child-related concerns are resolved**
- **YES to focusing on the future rather than the past**
- **YES to financial advice coming from a financial expert and parenting advice to come from mental health professionals**
- **YES to lawyers who help you reach a well-considered resolution**
- **YES to focusing on how your children are really doing and how the two of you can help them move through the divorce with the least harm**
- **YES to maintaining maximum privacy, creativity and self-determination in your divorce**

Collaborative divorce is a cost-effective negotiation process for handling all divorce related issues entirely outside the court system using a specially trained team of professionals including lawyers, mental health and financial professionals. Mental health professionals and financial professionals are less expensive than lawyers on an hourly basis and bring specific skills and training to the process. Emotions can be obstacles to negotiation or a great asset. Emotions convey information to you about the relative importance of your concerns. Ignoring emotions is not an option.

I will provide advice and support through all stages of working towards a resolution of the matters between you and your spouse. The length of the negotiation process depends on your needs, the complexity of your case, the level of conflict between you and your spouse, and how long it takes you to move to finality. The best way to achieve your goals in the shortest amount of time and cost effectively is to work with an experienced team of professionals who understand the parties, the issues and their roles.

One of the assumptions of the collaborative divorce process is this: since about 96% of family matters settle without a trial, it does not make sense, financially or emotionally, for those people who are able to settle their matters to have to start in a adversarial court process.

Protecting privacy is a significant benefit of the collaborative divorce process. Divorce can be a public affair. Information in the court process is often part of the public record.

Not only do my clients benefit from working in the Collaborative Model, but it is life affirming and inspirational for me as well. Peacemaking is my life's work and working with other like-minded Collaborative Professionals makes me want to run to the office in the morning, even though I have practiced over 40 years. My Collaborative Colleagues are respectful to my clients and treat them with dignity and respect.

Collaborative Lawyers try to be generous and selfless in the way that we work together. There are very few if any power or control struggles between lawyers. Actually, we try to make each other) act as our "best selves" throughout the Collaborative Process to model this positive behavior for both parties.

One example of such generosity of spirit is Ken Rempell of Milburn, New Jersey. A leader in the Collaborative Movement in that state, Ken has given me permission to utilize and adapt his thoughtful presentation about Collaborative Law for this part of my website.