

Effectively Manage Your Feelings....

1. **Slow it Down:** Breathe slowly and deeply

** See *Soothing Emotion Brochure*

2. While Breathing deeply **Remind Yourself:**

“My enduring love and positive feelings for my children are infinitely greater than the current negative feelings I am having towards their Mother/Father.”*

“It is in my and my children’s interest to have a successful business partnership with their other parent.”

“I have said I would do anything for my children, so I will do this hard thing.”

3. Have you sufficiently managed your feelings so that you can **Separate Feelings from undermining Parenting Discussions?**

- Ready to be **Calm, Respectful, Business-like**

4. **Clarify** your **Goals and Priorities**. Is this an issue that needs to be addressed with the other parent?

5. Use Good **Listening and Communication Skills**. Remind yourself that you want to make a positive contribution to the working relationship. You know this is best for your children.

** See *Brochures on Communication and Conflict Resolution/Negotiation*

Effectively Share and Discuss Relevant Information with the Other Parent....

1. Have a **Routine** and a **Structure**.

- Business meeting approach
- Regular time and neutral place (or by phone or email) when children are not around to listen
- Keep it time limited

2. To accomplish the above, you **Take Responsibility** for your part and are:

- On time
- Prepared (Goal, Requests, Offers)
- Reasonable, Calm, Pleasant
- Call well in advance if you need to reschedule

3. **Information** to Relay*

- **Emergency** info first, if any
- **Positive stories** about children’s successes and how great they are!
- **Medical** (appts., medicines/dosing, symptom updates, general health)
- **School** (special events, important dates, projects, tests, homework, general academic or behavioral progress)

- **Social** (activities, sports, logistics, transport, equipment, invitations, RSVPs needed, gifts required)

*both parents should have direct access to school and team schedules, contacts, and communications

4. Discuss **Parenting Issues/Decisions/Concerns**

- Monitor your Tone (speak with humility, no parent is perfect).
- Share observations and ask the other parent their observations and opinions
- Share what you have noticed works
- Ask Questions to clarify
- Summarize and Find Common Ground

5. Make Any **Requests**

- Keep requests to a minimum and prioritize what benefits the child
- Give plenty of notice
- Treat it as a Request NOT a Demand
- Offer an alternative that is good for the other parent
- Discuss, review, and confirm any upcoming schedule changes

6. **Thank** the other parent for flexibility and new ideas or solutions.

7. **Confirm** the date/time for the next parenting check in.

- * “child” can be used interchangeably with “children”

Remember These Givens:

Each parent will be in your children's lives for your entire life.

Your children have a right to love you both freely and without fear of betraying loyalties or need to take sides.

Wanting the best for our children means having two actively involved parents who love them and make them a top priority.

Children have a better chance of adjusting well to divorce when their parents prioritize children's needs, cooperatively co-parent, and minimize conflicts.

Your children are watching how you act towards their other parent. From this, they are learning how to treat their peers, authority figures, the opposite gender, family...and ultimately how to treat YOU!!

Avoid These Forbiddens:

Saying negative things about the other parent in front of your child

Having disagreements in front of your child

Yelling, name calling, or cursing at the other parent

Using your child as a messenger to the other parent

Calling the children "my" kids and the other parent "my ex"

Information in this brochure is not a substitute for professional consultations. If you need or believe you could benefit from more assistance you may want to contact a mental health professional, health professional, mediator, and/or other legal professional.

Having Difficulty Effectively Using
These Strategies? Want more
information?

Consider other services and resources
from....

www.gabardi.com

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CO-PARENTING FOR THE SAKE OF THE KIDS

How to Get the

Job Done

Without the

Drama