

Expectations of Clients and Professionals

1. Be respectful of everyone in the meeting.
2. Attack the problems and concerns at hand. Do not blame or insult each other.
3. Speak for yourself. Make "I" statements.
4. Listen carefully and try to understand what the other person is saying, without judging the person or the message.
5. Use first names for each other and both attorneys. Avoid "he" or "she."
6. Express yourself in terms of what is important to you, what your concerns are, and what you want to talk about. Avoid positions, black-and-white thinking, and rigidity.
7. Be ready to work for what you believe is the most constructive and acceptable agreement for both of you and your family.
8. Do not interrupt when another person is speaking. You will have a full and equal opportunity to speak about everything that is important to you.
9. If you have a complaint, raise it as your concern and follow it up with a constructive suggestion about how it might be resolved.
10. If something is not working for you, please tell your attorney so that your concern can be addressed. Talk with your attorney about anything you do not understand. Your attorney can clarify matters for you.
11. Be willing to commit time to meet regularly.
12. Be prepared for each meeting.
13. Be patient with each other and with your attorneys. Delays in Collaboration can happen, even when everyone is acting in good faith.
14. Remain positive and optimistic about the likelihood of a satisfactory settlement.