

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS - THE HELP LIST

1. View your “ex” as a negotiation problem-solving partner who can actively and positively participate in resolving the issues created by your separation.
2. Be effective – say and do those things which will further your goals consistent with the principle of interest-based negotiations.
3. Take responsibility for your feelings and try to stay in the present. When you stay in the past you are unable to focus your attention on what will be most helpful in the future.
4. Avoid using inflammatory language. “Blaming and shaming” are unproductive conversations. When you catch yourself reacting or others point out that you are reacting in that way, use that awareness as a tool for understanding yourself and your needs.
5. Speak for yourself, not for your partner. Make “I statements” that express your underlying concerns and feelings, not what you think the other is doing or feeling.
6. You have the right to say “no” at any time and you have the freedom to consider options without feeling coerced to choose among them.
7. Be creative. Be willing to develop as many options as possible before choosing solutions.
8. Respect the difference between yourself and your partner – one of you may have already dealt with the emotional impact of the separation while the other hasn’t. Also, people process information in different ways and at different speeds.
9. Listen carefully to your partner’s expressed feelings and interests, try to understand them, and demonstrate that understanding. Understanding doesn’t mean that you agree, but agreements are much easier to reach when they are based on understanding.
10. Be optimistic! Even the most difficult problems can be solved when there is the intention to do so.