



TC Mediation

Facilitating Negotiation and Communication

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DIVORCE STAGES

Most couples arrive at the Mediation office at two different points in the process. One is often further down the divorce road than the other, so communication and negotiations are not on even soil at the beginning. We would like for you to understand 3 important stages.

- **STAGE ONE**

In this Stage, one or both parties start mentioning the need to divorce by sharing they are no longer in love, the marriage is not working, they are not happy anymore, they were never in love, or they found someone else. The deception and lies about feelings, money, addictions, and affairs are brought into light. From this point, the couple is faced with many choices such as: to live in denial, seek counseling or relationship coaching, and to separate and/or divorce. During this stage anger is often displayed through name calling, assigning blame, threats to do this and that, using the children as manipulative pawns, bullying and insulting one another. The process may become nasty at this point and this stage often sets the foundation for the next two stages.

- **STAGE TWO**

In this Stage the adults choose the process in which they will dissolve the marriage partnership. Will they litigate, mediate, or use another method to resolve the different components of the marriage union (children, property, and finances). We have found that Stage Three (healing and moving forward) does not really have a chance to begin until Stage Two has been completed or at least near completion. We provide a Divorce Action Plan Notebook (**DAPN**) as a tool to help you manage Stage Two so you are not so alone and confused. Limbo can be debilitating for families.

- **STAGE THREE**

In this Stage everyone begins "Life After Divorce." By everyone, we mean **Husband, Wife, Children, Extended Family Members, and Friends**. This chapter is one that you get to write. Will it be a life of bitterness, grudges, resentment, or a life of new beginnings? Beginnings that have understandings of your past, and parts that you choose to take with you into your new future and parts that you choose to leave behind. Beginnings that say, YES, there was pain, hurt, and disappointment, but I choose to grow through and beyond my divorce into the life that is waiting for me to live it.