

SACRAMENTO COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE GROUP

GROUND RULES FOR THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

(EXPECTATIONS OF CLIENTS AND ATTORNEYS)

1. Attack the problems and concerns at hand. Do not attack each other.
2. Avoid positions; instead, express yourself in terms of needs and interests and the outcomes you would like to realize.
3. Work for what you believe is the most constructive and fairest agreement for both of you and your family.
4. During meetings all Collaborative team members and participants should remember the following:
 1. Do not interrupt when either of us or any Collaborative Team Member is speaking. You will have a full and equal opportunity to speak on every issue presented for discussion.
 2. Do not use language that blames or finds fault with the other. Use non-inflammatory words. Be respectful of others.
 3. Speak for yourself; make “ I” statements. Use each other’ s first names and avoid “ he” or “ she” .
 4. If you share (express) a complaint, raise it as your concern and follow it up with a constructive suggestion as to how it might be resolved.
 5. If something is not working for you, please tell your attorney so your concern can be addressed.
 6. Listen carefully and try to understand what the other is saying without being judgmental about the person or the message.
 7. Talk with your attorney about anything you do not understand. Your attorney can clarify issues for you.
5. Be willing to commit the time required to meet regularly. Be prepared for each meeting.
6. Be patient - delays in the process can happen, even when everyone is acting in good faith.