

“Divorces cost too much, financially and emotionally. Let us explain divorce mediation, why it might be a good alternative for you. and why we might just be the mediators for you.”

What is divorce mediation?

It is, for many people, the better way to achieve a divorce settlement, in which the spouses jointly employ a neutral third party to assist them in reaching agreement on the issues that must be settled in the process of divorce.

What are the qualifications of a divorce mediator?

He or she should have a thorough knowledge of divorce, property and tax laws and be trained in mediation techniques. Some mediators are certified by the Supreme Court of Virginia. Nan Joseph and Don Caruthers are state certified family law mediators.

What does a divorce mediator do?

His or her functions are: 1) to inform the parties of the issues they need to resolve 2) to inform them of the laws pertaining to those issues 3) to suggest alternative ways to resolve those issues 4) to assist in the communication between the parties 5) when agreement is reached, to draft a complete settlement agreement ready for incorporation into a divorce decree.

What is the difference between mediation and arbitration?

An arbitrator is a private judge. After listening to both sides, the arbitrator then decides how the issues are resolved. In contrast the mediator makes no decisions on the issues at all. The mediator's job is to assist the parties to reach voluntary agreements on all issues to be decided.

Does a lawyer/mediator represent either party?

No. The mediator is not in an attorney/client relationship with either party.

Our Credentials

NAN JOSEPH

- credential/degree
- years experience
- credential/degree
- certification/board
- credential/degree

DON CARUTHERS

- years experience
- credential/degree
- certification/board
- years experience
- credential/degree

CHRIS CHAMBLIN

- years experience
- credential/degree
- certification/board
- years experience



CHRIS CHAMBLIN
Financial Planner

NAN JOSEPH
Attorney

DON CARUTHERS
Mediator

Does the mediator meet with the parties separately or together?

Together is the preferred way. In rare cases, separate sessions have to be arranged, with the understanding that all communications with one spouse will be disclosed to the other spouse.

Once mediation starts, under what circumstances can it be stopped?

Either party, or the mediator can terminate the process at any time.

How does divorce mediation differ from the traditional two-lawyer process?

In the traditional process, each spouse retains an attorney. The attorneys then attempt to negotiate a settlement, usually by mail, telephone and email.

The parties must, of course, both approve any settlement reached.

If a settlement is not reached, litigation ensues. The court must decide the issues through litigation. Frequently, litigation and negotiation proceed simultaneously, at considerable expense to both clients.

But in mediation the parties themselves negotiate their agreement with the help of the mediator. The parties may consult separate attorneys during the mediation process if they wish.

What are the advantages of mediation over the traditional approach?

1) **Communication is vastly superior.** In the traditional process the parties communicate through their lawyers. This can cause delay and distortion and allow for the personalities of the parties to color the communication.

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The advantages of mediation, continued

In mediation, each party hears what the other says instantly and simultaneously. The mediator can draw out and clarify the positions of both. Misunderstandings can be resolved on the spot. This speeds up the process and improves the chance of success.

2) **Mediation is almost always less expensive** than the two-lawyer process and much less expensive than litigation.

3) **Traditional adversary negotiation/litigation encourages aggressive positions and attitudes.** Mediation discourages these, thus improving the chances of out-of-court settlements, and for maintaining a civil relationship between the parties after divorce.

4) **Mediated settlements tend to hold up** over the years far better than those imposed by courts or other., because mediated settlements are a product of the parties themselves.

What does Divorce Mediation Plus bring to the table?

The key part of our name is Plus, which refers to the additional elements we bring to the process: legal expertise, legal information, financial analysis and planning, and drafting your divorce agreement. One of our consulting attorneys is also a Certified Financial Planner, and another is also a Certified Public Accountant. We use the latest financial software to analyze your current situation and plan for the future. Your life is taking a new direction, and we can help you plan for it.

Will you take the next step with us?

Your next step doesn't have to be expensive, contentious or uncivil. We invite you to call us at 703-777-4400. We'll arrange a no-cost orientation visit at our offices in Leesburg. We look forward to meeting you.

*Yours truly,
Nan Joseph
Don Caruthers
and Chris Chamblin*

A few words from our clients...

"The mediation process allowed us a greater level of communication than we ever enjoyed before."

-- L.E., Sterling, Va

"They presented us with a clear view of mediation and made me feel empowered in a situation which could have easily slid the other way. They truly sat as an unbiased third party, acting in both our best interests. They assisted us in resolving all our issues in such a way that we each feel we were treated fairly."

-- D.K.E., Leesburg, Va

"They assisted in conflict resolution without taking sides and provided effective alternatives in areas of dispute. I would recommend Divorce Mediation Plus to any couple interested in mediation services."

-- S.A.H., Reston, Va

"They were able to calmly talk us through the disagreements we encountered. Their calm and controlled manner helped us through some difficult areas regarding property settlement when tempers could have gotten out of control."

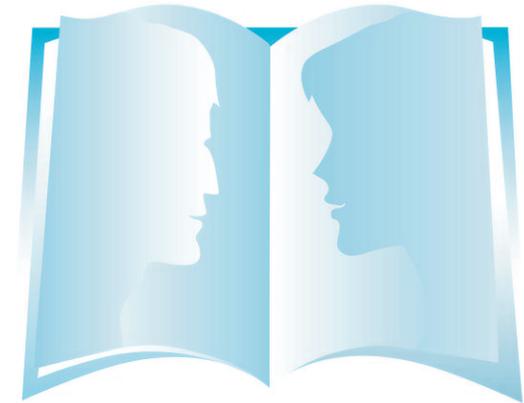
—G.M.S., Purcellville, Va



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*We can get everyone
on the same page
with professionalism,
empathy and civility.*



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