

Creating A Mission Statement for Separating/Divorcing/Co-parenting Couples -- Worksheet --

One of the best ways to ensure your separation/divorce/co-parenting work is effective is to create a Mission Statement that reflects your Highest Intentions and Values about how you want to conduct yourselves. Ideally, you and your previous partner will compare notes and co-create a statement that feels right to you both. Your Mission Statement describes how you intend to apply your values as your approach any challenging tasks you face together, such as how you approach your separation/divorce matters, divide property, work together as co-parents, consider the well-being of your children, etc. The Mission Statement defines the Spirit and Tone of the work ahead. *It is understood that you will each need to increase your skills to be able to behave in ways that align with your values during this stressful time.* When you don't, your coaches are there to bring you back to your values, the intentions in your Mission Statement.

Here are examples of actual Mission Statements that give you ideas about how *yours* might work. Each will be different, based on your values, personal challenges, and circumstances. Expect your coaches to provide guidance / support with this task.

Examples:

(Co-parenting AND Divorcing) "We agree to commit: to work together to end the marriage with grace and good will, to be amicable with one another, and communicate respectfully. As co-parents, we commit to protect our children from our differences, to support their relationships with each other, and to work together to put our boys' needs first as we support their growth and development."

(Co-parenting) "We intend to build a co-parenting relationship characterized by working together respectfully and fruitfully for the benefit of our children. We will commit to focusing on building the skills we need to communicate effectively about our children, so our co-parenting relationship sets the tone for *their* future relationships and milestones. We commit to keeping (names of children)'s best interests foremost."

(Divorcing) "We commit to end our marriage and going through our divorce process respectfully, with open and honest communication. We agree to be transparent and forthcoming with all our financial information, and to deal honorably and equitably with one another."

Begin by writing down some words and phrases that reflect your most cherished values and ideals as you imagine working collaboratively with your previous partner:

Now, try putting those values and ideas into 1-2 sentences that you are willing to share with your former partner/co-parent. Use "I" for now. Even if you are unable to co-create this Mission Statement immediately with your partner, you will have your own Statement of Highest Intentions to refer to and live by, with your coach's/therapist's support. This can be very reassuring and grounding as you proceed.
