

GROUND RULES FOR COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

1. Address the problems and concerns at hand; do not attack each other.
2. Avoid positions; rather, express yourself in terms of needs and interests and the outcomes you would like to achieve.
3. Work for what you believe is the most constructive, acceptable agreement for both of you and for your family.
4. During the collaborative meetings, remember the following:
 - Do not interrupt when your spouse/partner or his/her attorney or other collaborative professionals are speaking. You will have a full and equal opportunity to speak on every issue presented for discussion.
 - Do not use language that blames or finds fault with the other spouse/partner. Try to use non-inflammatory words and be respectful of each other.
 - Speak for yourself, using “I” statements.
 - If you share a complaint, try to raise it as your concern and follow up with a constructive suggestion.
 - If something is not working for you, please tell your attorney or other collaborative professional so that your concern can be addressed.
 - Listen carefully and try to understand what the other person is saying without being judgmental about the speaker or the message.
 - Talk with your attorney, coach or financial professional about anything you do not understand. They can clarify issues for you.
5. Be willing to commit the time required to meet regularly and be prepared for each meeting.
6. Be patient. Delays in the process can happen even with everyone acting in good faith.

Additional Ground Rules
