



Dr. Susannah Smith

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- Clinical & Forensic Psychologist, Mediation, Parenting Evaluations & Plans
- Business & Systems Consulting; Mergers; Culture; Handbooks
- Executive Coaching, Equine Therapy/Learning
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Mediation Preparation

Mediation will be more successful if you come prepared.

- Describe the scope of work you want me to address in this mediation: parenting plan: time with each parent; decision making; property settlement; child support, etc
- Please email me any documents ahead of time that will help me understand your situation and the elements of the negotiation
- Make a list of your primary concerns, and consider what solutions would be acceptable or ease your mind if you are worried about something
- Have your documents ready to prove what you are saying, just as you would for court
- Describe in detail the final outcome you would like. Keep in mind that you could agree to one or several different scenarios; it would be helpful if you thought this through beforehand, and wrote down a few options that you would consider
- Who will be at the mediation: If you want your attorneys involved, let me know ahead of time. I do suggest that your attorneys be available for you to call by phone should you want to ask them questions during the mediation
- Determine if you want to meet together or separately. Due to the pandemic of covid-19, I am not mediating in person. I use a HIPAA compliant telehealth platform, and can have several people join if appropriate. We would be able to all hear one another. Likewise, I can have you both on separate calls, and negotiate separately (you would not be able to see and hear each other, but I would).
- The Circuit Mediation Office from the US Court of Appeals suggests you ask yourselves these questions:
 - As you think back on the dispute, what is the heart of the matter for you?
 - How do you think the events that gave rise to the dispute looked to the other people involved? What would you have done in their shoes? What would help you understand their perspectives better?
 - What factors beyond the control of the parties to the case contributed to the dispute?
 - What might you have done differently if you had the opportunity to go back and relive the relevant events.
 - Assuming anything is possible, what would you like to talk about at the mediation? What do you think the other participants would want to discuss?

- What are the practical concerns that inform your perspective on settlement?
- What other concerns are relevant to your thinking about settlement?
- What would it feel like to have the dispute over? What would a fair resolution of the dispute look like to you?
- What would it feel like to have the case proceed? And end favorably to you? Unfavorably?
- I look forward to meeting with you. I will take notes and type them up as we proceed through and end each session. Be prepared to make decisions and sign an Agreement at any of the mediation sessions.

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