

The Power of Language in Divorce

Words are powerful. Whether they are harsh and painful or encouraging and uplifting, the words of our loved ones tend to stick with us. When you are going through a divorce, it can be easy to let your former life partner have it – the marriage is over anyway, so why not say what you really feel? The reality is that even though things are over, odds are that your lives will still be connected after the divorce, whether through mutual friends and family, or even more



importantly, children. By resolving to speak with kindness whenever possible during your divorce proceedings, you not only set a good example for your children, but you can begin to lay the groundwork for a respectful relationship in the future.

Speaking kindly is not always an easy task, as divorce can be a frustrating and emotional process. By agreeing on using positive language whenever possible ahead of time, you and your spouse can ensure that you are both working to foster a healthy environment for both you and your children and extended family. Here are some ideas on where to start:

- 1) **Avoid accusations.** Instead of accusing your former partner of bad behavior, focus on how you feel instead. Instead of, “You are selfish!” try “I don’t feel like you are considering my needs right now.”
- 2) **Leave the past in the past.** This can be difficult, but whenever possible, leave past transgressions behind you. You have already made the decision to move on, so try focusing on the present and future.
- 3) **Stick to business.** If you find that your emotions are running too high to stay calm and kind, agree to limit communication to practical matters only. By using restraint, you create space for an opportunity to build a cooperative relationship with your spouse in the future.
- 4) **Avoid negative talk in front of your children.** If you have to argue or find yourself unable to speak kindly, avoid confrontations in front of your children. Divorce is difficult for them to process, but by modeling kindness towards your spouse, you can reassure them that their parents still respect and love each other.



Words can build the listener up or break him or her down. If you can make a commitment to use kind language during a difficult transition, you are taking an important step towards resolution in your divorce, and more importantly, your life afterwards. Here at the Law Offices of Julia Ann Brungess, our collaborative divorce methods are built around cooperation, understanding, and mutual respect. To learn more about collaborative divorce and how it can work for your family, contact us today at (559) 226-4008.