

## Collaborative Divorce and Extended Family



Whether you want it to or not, divorce has a ripple effect on your family. The immediate nuclear family is typically the first concern, but once agreements have been made and paperwork signed, you may find yourself wondering where you stand with your former spouse's extended family. Oftentimes strong, familial bonds have been established, and it can feel like you are an entire part of your village, not just your partner. If you value and have forged strong connections with loved ones through marriage, you may want to consider the possibility of a collaborative divorce.

In collaborative divorce, you and your partner make a decision to work together, not against each other, as you go your separate ways. This can have a profound effect on everyone the divorce reaches, alleviating the need for people to "pick a side" that they might feel in a more contentious, traditional divorce process. Open communication with parents, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews can be encouraged, letting them know that although you will no longer be together, you still see each other's family as your family. This is especially important if there are children involved; letting them know that all of their relatives still love them and aren't going away is an important part of alleviating the stress that children may feel during this life changing event.

Just because a marriage hasn't worked out in the way you were originally hoping doesn't mean you need to walk away from important relationships you have built over the years. While there will always be difficult decisions and conversations during a divorce, you can choose to keep the health and happiness of your family, both nuclear and extended, at the center of all you do. At the Law Offices of Julia Brungess, we want to be a part of your solution, not your problem. You and your partner can decide how to best proceed together, and we will be there to support it.