

"FOR BETTER OR WORSE – BUT NOT FOR LUNCH"

How Collaborative Process Guides *SILVER* Divorce

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Can everyone see & hear?
Anything we can do to make the environment more comfortable for everyone?

W F E L O W M E

VISUAL
AUDITORY
KINESTHETIC

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Even Harold is Old....

HAROLD and the PURPLE CRAYON
by *Crockett Johnson*


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What to call it?

- Grey Divorce
- Silver Splitter
- Late Life Divorce
- Geriatric Divorce

Closer to end of earning years than beginning
Cut off age: 50/55/60/65?



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How we'll spend our time today


- I. What's unique about divorce for the 55+ population?
 - Mental health challenges
 - Financial challenges
 - Stress of change
 - Physical challenges
- II. What Collaborative tools uniquely help us navigate these issues?
- III. How can we best serve these clients?
- IV. To Zoom or not to Zoom
- V. Importance of rituals

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"Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics"

- Average length of marriage in US: 8 years
- 35% of all people getting divorced over 55
- Rate of divorce for people over 65 has more than doubled since 1990.
- Baby Boomers: born between 1946 and 1964
 - Boomers I 1946-1954 (69-77)
 - Boomers II 1955-1964 (59-68)

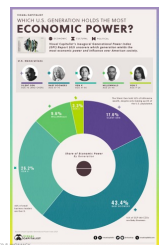


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Baby Boomer Generation

Greatest accumulation of wealth



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"We were all dead by now"

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Causes of Divorce in Long Term Marriages

- Aging – physical, emotional, financial
- Retirement
- Infidelity
- "Don't want to die next to this person"



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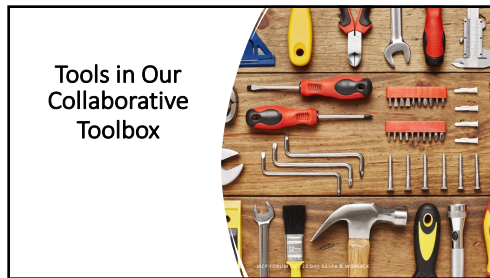
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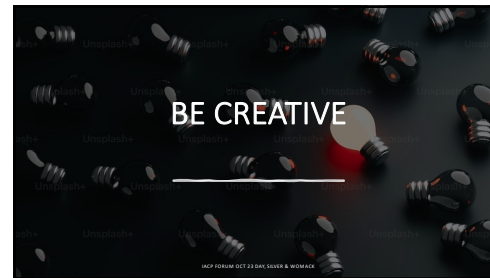
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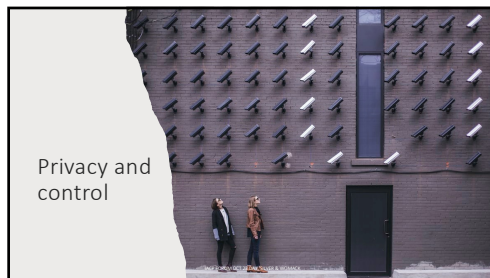
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KEEP CALM AND REMEMBER THE KIDS

wholeparentbook.com

“KIDS” OF ANY AGE

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Goals as Guideposts

R

- Capture happiness in tiny life
- doing my part
- children are doing well
- grandchildren doing well
- not a parent full time
- children's needs
- stability
- home of own

S

- I will not be able to enjoy our kids together

L

- Kids doing well
- good co parent
- job security
- financial security
- health ins
- helping to pay to full-time work
- good business rel
- maintain friendship
- take
- personal happiness
- maintain respect for ex-husband
- children of her husband in the process
- debts

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LAWYERS NEED TOOLS TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH EMOTIONALLY FRAGILE CLIENTS

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“Can Never Step in the Same River Twice”, Heraclitus

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Case Study One: B & B

Bill:

- Sole earner
- Physically healthy
- New partner

Barb:

- Never worked
- Emotionally & physically fragile
- Only child in role of emotional caregiver

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Case Study Two: J & J

Jay

- “Self made” business man; real estate investor;
- New romantic partner;
- Adult children still in need of support
- Worry about “spendthrift” spouse

Jane

- Addiction issues
- Little financial understanding
- Adult child from prior marriage in addition to children of this marriage

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**Case Study
Three
R & R**

Roy:
came out as gay after long term marriage, children and grandchildren; professional, partner in firm; family businesses, artwork with emotional value


Rose:
employed, would like to retire, still living in home where raised children

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"When a case flounders...the culprit is almost always (with a few... exceptions, e.g., active substance abuse or severe mental illness) problems among the personalities of the professional team members, not the difficult behavior of the clients—even when the clients are very high conflict..... In other words, we are not dependent on our clients for good outcomes, they are dependent on us."


Kate Scharff & Lisa Herrick,
Mastering Crucial Moments in Separation & Divorce
(2016)



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"Feeling control over our destinies is the best indicator of good health. It helps us imagine a more hopeful future."



Christopher Bailey
Arts and Health Coordinator
World Health Organization

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CLOSING RITUALS (or not)



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Three best "take aways"?

- BE KIND & PATIENT
- BE REALISTIC & OPTIMISTIC
- EMBRACE CHANGE

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Pauline Tessler's vision:
Hold the family safely in our hands

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