



# F.A.I.R. Solutions

Family Advocate for Individual Responsibility  
Mediation – Insert – Just Not Working

## When Things Just Aren't Working In Your Relationship ... How Does Mediation Work?

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Every relationship has its ups and downs. Sometimes you might feel like there are more downs than ups. Sometimes you feel like you just can't take it anymore. What do you do? Where do you turn?

**Mediation to Repair/Reconcile.** Some couples who still love each other want to repair and reconcile despite the hurts that lie underneath most anger. Some couples want to become the couple they once were – or even better. In the rush and busy and stress of our lives, some couples just get “stuck” and need an unbiased third party to help facilitate their communication to find a win-win and help make sure each person feels heard and understood. Regaining mutual respect and appreciation takes effort, but for those who want to save their marriage, mediation is an option. While some chose counseling, mediation is not counseling. Mediation is not about fixing or changing or psychoanalyzing anyone; mediation is about communication. It's about facilitating and bringing out the best in each of you, so you are better able to get your individual needs met, your relationship needs met, and help you make sure the other person's needs are met, so you can both be the best you for each other. While forgiveness is a critical component, so are new skills. Mediation can teach new skills and new ways of communicating that will enhance the relationship and enable you to have the skills and confidence to resolve conflicts in a new way. In order to repair and reconcile your issues, both parties must be willing to grow and change, let go of trying to “control” the outcome, and most importantly, listen.

**Divorce Mediation.** Some couples (one or both parties) who have weeded through so much baggage, resistance, betrayal, unforgiveness, hurt feelings, and have totally lost any desire to communicate find that divorce is the only next step because one or both of you no longer want to try work things out. Mediation can be used to help you determine your new future in an amicable way. Mediation can be used to write your future by mediating an agreement, or divorce settlement. The law allows you to arrive at your own terms. You are not restricted to the limitations of the letter of the law. Using mediation you can avoid the enormous expense and excess conflict often created by attorneys.

**Family Reconciliation Mediation or Maybe You Are Not Sure.** Using mediation, you are in charge of the process. But honesty is critical. If you are not sure whether: a) you want to work to save your relationship, or b) it's too late, and you want to end the relationship as painlessly and equitably as possible, this can be discussed with your mediator. You might consider first trying to repair and reconcile. You can always proceed to divorce mediation later, after you have exhausted attempts to repair/reconcile.

**“We Just Can’t Communicate”:** This is one of the most common problems. Communication goes two ways. Those who fail to communicate properly act out of their (often fear-based) assumptions with disastrous consequences. Every day, people just plain misunderstand each other. Nowhere do we learn to communicate.

For those willing to learn, mediation can teach new communication skills that will enhance and deepen all relationships in a more meaningful way, with dignity and respect.

Some people just get out of the habit of talking through their differences because they think if they just forget about it, and leave it alone, it will pass. Instead, the conflict can fester.

Others find in today’s busy world of high-tech communication options, it’s too easy to try resolve conflict solely using email or text or other electronic means. While these methods serve their purpose and *can be* a part of healthy communication, no persistently irritating marital conflict can be resolved by text or email; and usually, all conflict is made worse. Mediation gives you another way.

The mediator can help facilitate meaningful face-to-face dialogue that will de-escalate the conflict and empower each of you to find a solution that will get your needs met while making sure the other person feels heard and understood.

No matter how hopeless your circumstances may appear, if you are open to change and willing to grow, these difficult times can be transformed into something positive in your life.