

Family Mediation

A Case study - Rose, Nigel and Harry.

Family Mediation - A Case Study

A real life scenario



Before we start - a quick overview

What can FAMILY mediation encompass?

- Divorce and separation - negotiations re assets and children
- Single issues - eg re-location within the UK, parental responsibility, name change and fertility treatment
- Cross border and International
- Multi generational or Elder' issues

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An overview of the process

- Initial one to one meetings
- Proceed to joint mediation sessions – 10 hours in total with these clients.
- 2-4 sessions but may be more
- Agree outcomes - summary of financial proposals, separated parents agreement?
- Legal Advice - Minute of agreement

Family case study

Let's meet Rose and Nigel. The 1:1 meetings revealed....

- Rose and Nigel have been together for 8 years (4 of those married)
- They have one son Harry aged 9
- Rose disclosed that Harry has been diagnosed with “high functioning Asperger’s” and Rose has been assessed recently too and believes she has “Asperger’s”
- Rose has other complex medical issues meaning she can’t work.
- Virtually all communication has ceased & they now want to divorce
- They have sought mediation to agree a settlement which allows Rose and Harry to stay in the existing house (adapted for Harry’s needs)

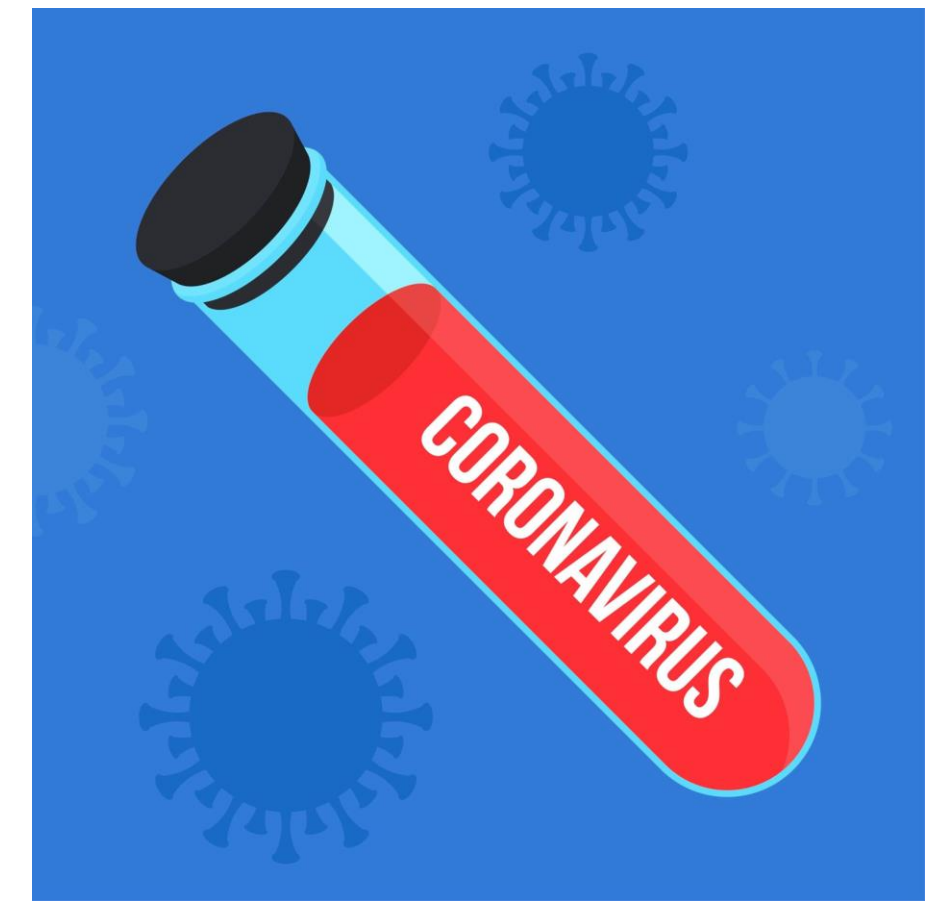
SUITABILITY

- Is mediation the right process for Nigel and Rose?

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Issues for me to consider prior to the first joint meeting

- Respect the language used by clients to describe their or a family members neurodiversity.
- From my preparation session with Nigel, do I need to consider that he may also be neurodiverse?
- The parents display very different attitudes to parenting
- Adaptations to the process given the disclosures so far?



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What happened next?

- What is their 'normal'?
- Striving for balance
- Bending the 'rules' to get to agreement

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The 3 important questions we were asked to consider

Question 1 -What did I know beforehand?

- The client's "story"
- The Neurodiversity in the family.

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Question 2 - what do I WISH I'd known beforehand?

- More about the relationship dynamics and their 'positions' regarding the split
- How difficult the financial disclosure process would be.

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Question 3 - what did I learn?

- Neurodiverse Parents in conflict are parents in conflict
- Parents of neurodivergent children may face huge additional challenges - but make no assumptions
- Be wired - try and notice everything!

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Question 4- what would I do differently next time?

- Consider Child Inclusive Mediation for Harry
- Allow time for a caucus
- Be satisfied, but not complacent!

