



Toolkit for Divorcing with Dignity
Conversation Starters #1: Communicating with my ex-partner

There are many conversations that may take place as you move into this transition with your ex-partner. Here are several ways to mediate some of those discussions so that your communication is effective and meaningful.

1. Lay some ground rules. It is often helpful to establish general expectations (“Please do not interrupt” or “I need to finish my thought before I can address your response”) for the interaction, so communicate those expectations as you are able.
2. Recognize when to end the discussion. If the conversation becomes too intense or you begin to feel unsafe, walk away as you are able. If you recognize that you and your ex-partner are both too emotional to engage in a productive discussion, make the decision to end it and revisit it at a later time.
3. Stay on topic. It is likely that the topic of conversation will be uncomfortable but necessary. Try to remain on topic so that you can remain focused on accomplishing your end goal for the discussion.
4. Consider using a counselor as a mediator. If you find you are unable to engage in effective dialogue with your partner, perhaps a mediator might be helpful. See (TIP SHEET FOR FINDING COUPLES COUNSELOR IN GREENSBORO) for additional information.