



### **Toolkit for Divorcing with Dignity**

#### **Tip Sheet #3: High conflict divorce**

Conflict can run high among many ex-spouses, as arguments arise over things like money, parenting styles, power, new relationships, and unresolved feelings. Here are several tips to minimize conflict when interacting with your ex-spouse:

1. Take care of yourself and any unresolved feelings. This might include practicing some of the coping skills from Reflection Activity #2: Reflecting on self-care, or perhaps, it is simply taking time to do something for yourself that you enjoy. It is more difficult to be patient and calm with others in a stressful situation if you aren't taking proper care of yourself.
2. Keep a list of talking points. If there are several things you need to address with your ex-spouse and conflict is high, it may be easy to lose sight of the original purpose for communication. Consider keeping a list to be sure those logistical needs are met when interacting with your ex-spouse.
3. Take responsibility for ways in which you might be contributing to conflict. This is a difficult part to face, but consider ways in which you are in control of your actions rather than putting all blame on your ex-spouse. You may not be able to control your situation, but you can control how you respond to your situation.
4. Stick to the commitments you make when you can reach an agreement with your ex-spouse.
5. If possible, avoid high conflict interactions with your ex-spouse when your children are present.