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SEPARATION

# ***When One Parent Wants To Co-Parent But The Other Doesn't***

How to stay calm, take control, and put your child first  
—even when your co-parent won't cooperate



# How to stay calm, take control, and put your child first —even when your co-parent won't cooperate.

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Co-parenting is rarely easy, especially when emotions are running high during or after a custody case. But one of the most powerful things a parent can do—for both their child and themselves—is to foster open, respectful communication with the other parent. The reality is that while one parent may be ready and willing to cooperate, the other may be reluctant or unwilling to do the same. This imbalance can be frustrating, disheartening, and exhausting. However, your consistent efforts still matter.

# Demonstrating Willingness Matters —Especially in Court

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Courts generally favour parents who are open to co-parenting and who encourage a positive relationship between the child and the other parent. Even if the other parent is being uncooperative or difficult, your commitment to healthy communication and cooperation reflects maturity, responsibility, and a child-centred focus. These are qualities the court often takes seriously when making decisions about custody and parenting time.

# Stay Calm—Even When It's Hard



One of the most effective tools in your co-parenting toolbox is emotional regulation. Communication becomes far more productive when you can manage your emotional reactions. When you stay calm, you stay in control—and when you're in control, you hold the power in the situation.

Let's look at a simple example:

Your co-parent says, "I would like the children for Christmas."

An emotionally charged reaction might be: "You're not allowed to have them on Christmas!"

But a more regulated, thoughtful response could be: "Can you share why that's important to you?"

The second response opens the door for dialogue, mutual understanding, and problem-solving. It also helps de-escalate any potential conflict before it gains momentum.

# Guard Against Emotional Manipulation



It's unfortunate but true: some co-parents may try to provoke you intentionally to regain control, shift blame, or paint you in a negative light—especially during legal proceedings. The more you can control your emotional responses, the less power these tactics have over you.

Staying grounded allows you to lead by example, remain focused on your child's best interests, and respond in ways that align with your values—even when the other parent doesn't.

# Final Thoughts

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Co-parenting with someone who refuses to collaborate can be incredibly challenging. But by maintaining your integrity, regulating your emotions, and committing to respectful communication, you're doing your part to create a stable and supportive environment for your child.

Remember: You can't control the other parent's behaviour, but you *\*can\** control how you show up—and that can make all the difference.

# Ready to feel more confident and in control as a co-parent?



Join me for my upcoming four-week workshop: Co-Parenting Through Conflict—a supportive, practical space designed to help you communicate more effectively, manage emotional triggers, and prioritize your child's needs even in high-conflict situations.

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