



### **Top Thirteen Tips For Clients To Have A Successful Online Mediation**

To have a productive and conducive online family mediation session the following tips are worth noting and implementing:

1. **Devices** – Correct equipment is essential, i.e., a computer, laptop, smartphone or tablet with a camera and microphone. Ideally, the use of headphones is recommended for clarity and to limit the chance of the mediation being overheard.
2. **Internet** – Ensure that you have appropriate internet connection for the online mediation to take place.
3. **Privacy** – Mediation is a confidential process. There must be no one else in the room and the session must not be recorded.
4. **Screen display** – You must be clearly visible from your device, and it is recommended that we are all eye level to our cameras. It is wise to look behind you and check that you are content for the other party to see your background. Alternatively, use Zoom to enable a choice of backgrounds.
5. **Turn off distractions** – Other devices are to be switched to silent mode whilst conducting the session so that there are no distractions, and all parties can fully concentrate on the discussions.
6. **Comfort** – Mediation can get a little intense and so it is important from the outset that all parties are comfortable. Check your seating, room temperature and available refreshments beforehand.
7. **Paperwork** – If you need any paperwork or a pen and paper for the session, make sure this is with you at the start of the meeting, so you do not need to break off and disrupt the flow of the session at any point.
8. **Dress code** – There is no dress code in mediation because it is an informal process. However, it is good practice to dress in a way that is appropriate and respectful.
9. **Timings** – Usually, sessions are booked for 90 minutes but it is a good idea that you allow some extra time in case it overruns. Also, be at your device and ready to start the session at least 5 -10 minutes beforehand in case of any technical difficulties.
10. **Communication** – With any effective mediation session, all participants (that includes the mediator) need the space to communicate. It can be more difficult to pick up on social cues online and there is a possibility of slight time delays, so allow for pauses between discussions to avoid the risk of either party speaking over each other, which will hinder progress.

**11. Breath Work and Meditation** – It is good practice to calm any emotional tension and nerves in between and before mediation sessions. Gentle breathing and meditation exercises will help with this as explained in the links below.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress/>

<https://www.headspace.com/meditation-101/what-is-meditation>

**12. Exercise** – Any form of regular physical activity will help your emotional and psychological well-being and thus help clear your mind and give you the right headspace for productive mediation sessions. You can take a walk, do the gardening, cycle, practice yoga, dance – the list is endless! Do a regular activity that brings you joy and some form of physical movement to increase endorphins.

The word "endorphin" comes from putting together the words "endogenous," meaning from within the body, and "morphine," which is an opiate pain reliever. Endorphins got their name because they are natural pain relievers. Since endorphins act on the opiate receptors in our brains, they reduce pain and boost pleasure, resulting in a feeling of well-being.

**13. Legal advice** – Last but not least, family mediation works best when parties are supported by their lawyers (before/after mediation sessions) to manage expectations on your legal rights and responsibilities arising out of separation and/or divorce within the UK family legal system.

This is a holistic family mediation practice and participants are encouraged to take care of their mind, body, spirit, and soul by practicing self-care/love. It may seem alien at first as we are not taught to practice this in western societies.

We are always beating ourselves up for our short-comings and mistakes, when in fact, we should show compassion and kindness both to ourselves and others. We should come from a place of love, understanding and acceptance. Not from a place of anger, fear, and denial.

It takes a lot of determination, clear intention, internal work, re-wiring, personal development/growth and digging deep to achieve a dignified, amicable, and fair resolution/outcome for you and your family.

If you wish to:

1. Lead happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives moving forwards
2. Secure two happy homes for you and your children (if any)
3. Save time, money, and energy on protracted negotiations/court proceedings then this is the way forward for you.