



Solving Conflict Through Divorce

A Siotha Project Workshop
Presented by Jenn Easley-Maynord, M.S.



The Who and Why

Hi, I'm Jenn!

- I am a divorcee with a heart string for helping people experiencing divorce.
- I nerd out on how psychology, human behavior, conflict research can be a tool for healing.
- I believe there is hope within divorce culture.

Find my bio at:

www.thesiothaproject.com

Constraints



This workshop is intended for conflict education and mental health enhancement and *is not* a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment.

Please contact a specialist for any severe mental health or addiction issues.

Goals for Today



- Help you take ownership of your individual emotions and behaviors that can lead to self-empowerment and healing.
- Offer awareness on how you and others respond to conflict.
- Provide options and tools in responding to conflict.
- Support you to build a healthy relationship with yourself and others.

The Change Factor



Change is a big step. There is a part of our brain that doesn't like change (limbic system). Another part of our brain is capable of change (prefrontal cortex) and is responsible for creativity and innovation. The process is moving from FREEZE to FLUID, or fixed mindset to open mindset. Being here is the first step in self-empowerment and healing.

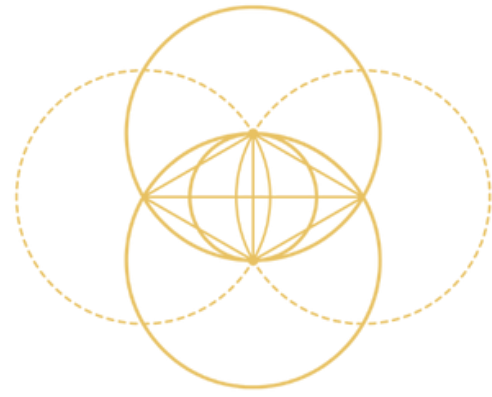
The Opportunity

Re-framing conflict from a negative to a positive opportunity.
What doors are opening and what resources are showing up?
How can you rebuild a better YOU?

F₄ O₁ C₃ U₁ S₁

O₁ N₁

Y₄ O₁ U₁



Introductions and Why You Are Here.

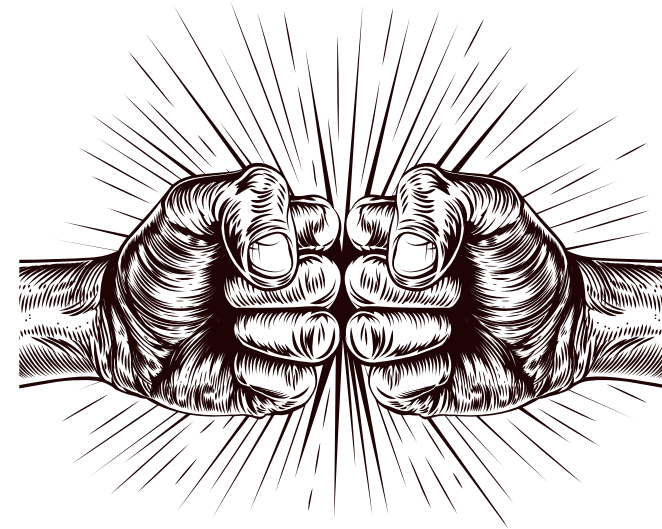
My Divorce Story

Remodeling Our Family...

“Dustin and I split in 2022 and have done our own peacemaking through divorce and co-parenting. I can’t take credit for his work and journey, but I can share the collective story of how we peacefully managed a divorce, sharing a child, and added new partners to create a positive working pod around our 12-year-old.”

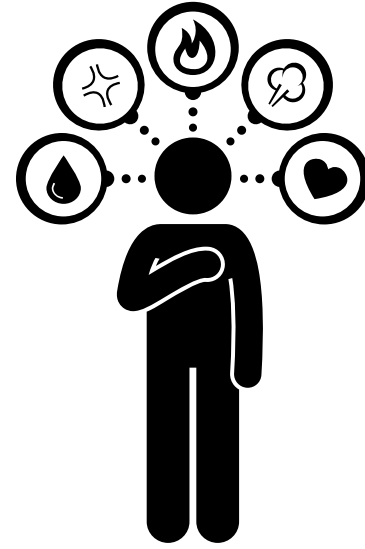


Understanding Conflict



"Conflict is a perceived divergence of interest," or a *belief* that various needs cannot be met simultaneously.

Conflict and Emotions



"Emotion is the first reaction and can overcome our rational, logical thought. We can react to things in our environment that we don't even know. This can cause certain behaviors in us that we may or may not be aware of. It's important that we understand the impact and power of emotions."

- Dr. Doreen MacAulay, University of Southern Florida

5 Stages of Grief

- **Denial:** A stress response that helps people protect themselves from the shock of loss. People may refuse to acknowledge the loss or the impacts, avoid talking about it, or claim the loss is not true.
- **Anger:** A time of demands, such as wanting to know why the loss happened or wanting things to move forward on their terms.
- **Bargaining:** An "imagine if" mindset.
- **Depression:** A painful stage that can include feelings of sadness, regret, fear, and uncertainty. It can also cause withdrawal and feelings of helplessness.
- **Acceptance:** A stage of acceptance with still experiencing many emotions.

DIVORCE TIP:

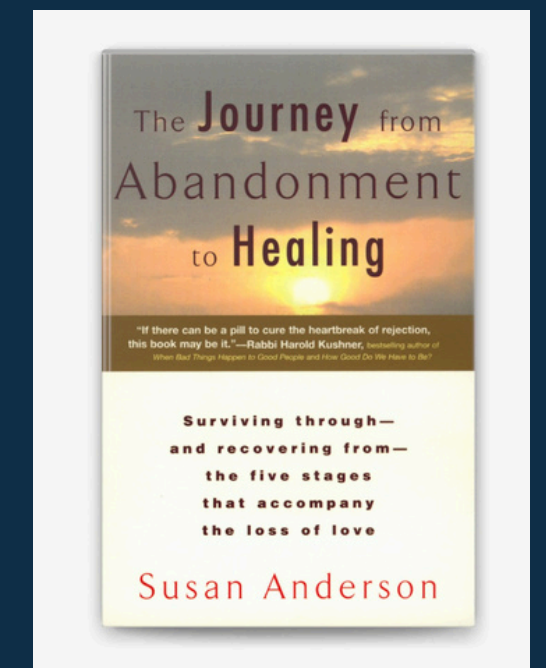
- Learn as much as you can about the PHYSIOLOGICAL process you are experiencing. Take time and space to process them.
- If your separation or divorce is making you feel like you're going through withdrawal, it's because this detachment cuts your dopamine levels.

Neuroscientists Helen Fisher and Lucy Brown use fMRI technology to look at the brain activity during a romantic loss:

“The main results of our study showed that romantic rejection is like withdrawing from cocaine!”

Book Resource:

The Journey from Abandonment to Healing by Susan Anderson



Using Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, control, express, and evaluate emotions. When we can do this for ourselves, we can recognize in others.



Perceptions

Everyone has a different perception. Emotional Intelligence is understanding, and acknowledging, that our perceptions differ.



EI & Conflict

Being aware of how you personally respond to conflict is a form of emotional intelligence.

It's hard to resolve conflict without a degree of emotional intelligence.

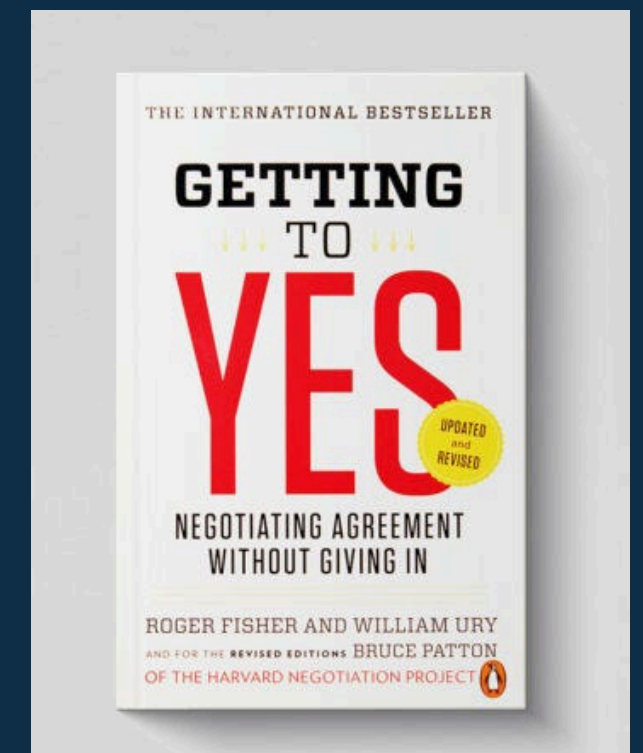


DIVORCE TIP:

- Once you move into the divorce process, take the **emotional** out of the conversations. (Talk to outside friends and professionals and give yourself time and space to process.)
- Think **professionally** and focus on creating an ecosystem of peace and well-being.
- Learn the **negotiation** process and how it works.

Book Resource:

Getting to Yes by Roger Fisher and William Ury



Handling Conflict



When we are in conflict, the amygdala issues a *natural* brain-body response called our "stress response."

Fight | Flight | Freeze | Fawn

“Specifically, under stress: your heart beats faster and your muscles tense, your breathing becomes shallow and you start to perspire, the flow of blood decreases.”

-Mary NurrieStearns





- Fight-flight-freeze-fawn stress responses cause physical reactions.
- Triggered by a conditioned fear.
- Associated with a negative experience.
- Repeats from *original* negative experience and becomes a PERCEIVED THREAT.
- Brain thinks you're in danger.
- Body responds to keep you safe.





Our stress response is part of our species survival that keeps us alive. But the *same response* also kicks in with everyday stressors. How do you react?

The Combatant



The attempt to resolve conflict on your own terms without taking into consideration the other side. This can include threats, punishments, assertion, one-sided solutions.

The People Pleaser



The attempt to reduce or solve conflict by minimizing your own needs, asks, aspirations. Willing to give more to another and settle for less.

The Ghost

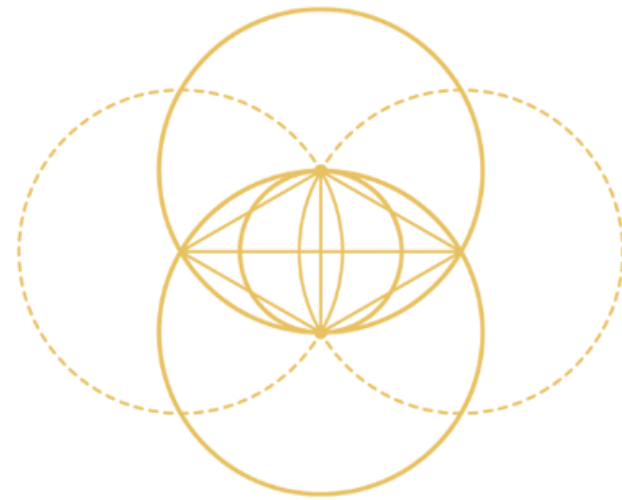


Withdrawing from the conflict and becoming inactive. May feel a sense of freeze and unable to find the words or ideas you want to express. Often waiting for the other person to make a move.

The Problem Solver



Finding solutions that work mutually for both sides. This includes productive conversations, healthy negotiations, and everyone fully caring about the other's best interest.



**Discuss & reflect on your
conflict responses.**



A Counter Balance

A "Centered" Response

We have an innate "relaxation response" or centered response that allows us to communicate, listen, and problem solve. This can go hand-in-hand with emotional intelligence.



POISONWOOD

This member of the cashew family gets its name and reputation from the black sap which stains its orange, peeling trunk. The sap can cause a nasty rash similar to poison ivy if contacted.

The fruit is a vital food for the white-crowned pigeon, an endangered species.

Black-Saps Poisonwood



 *Gumbo-Limbo*

GETTING CENTERED



“The relaxation response reduces the stress response, and is initiated in the brain. The relaxation response includes the following: your heart rate slows down and your blood pressure stabilizes, your immune system is boosted, your brain waves slow down...you experience a sense of well-being.”

-Mary NurrieStearns

WHEN WE ARE CENTERED, WE ARE BETTER

PROBLEM SOLVERS



Finding *mutually* appealing solutions
and seeking win-win outcomes.



Where to start?

Find your
center.

PAUSE &

BREATHE

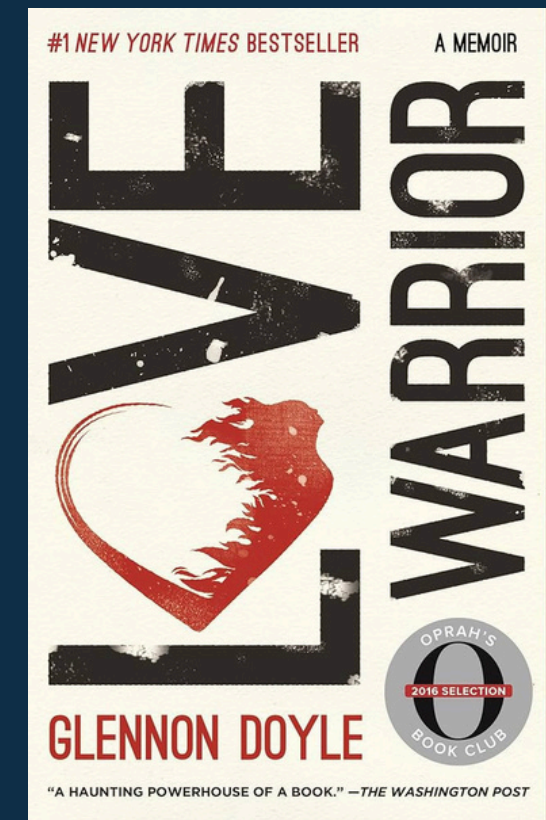
The Value of a Purpose-Driven Pause

“Creating breathing space for thoughtful consideration allows us to be intentional in our actions rather than being caught up in the momentum of others’ actions and priorities.”

-Joyce Lee-Ibarra

DIVORCE TIP:

- Start moving from WE to ME.
- Nurture positive friendships.
- Engage in hobbies, art, recreation.
- Create spaces that are your own.



“The fact that we define ourselves by our roles keeps the world spinning. It is also what makes us untethered and afraid. Who we are is perpetually being taken away from us so we live in fear instead of peace...we must remember--I am the builder, not the castle.”

-Glennon Doyle

HOBBIES, ART AND RECREATION



Hobbies, art and recreation help us tap into our centered response and is an ongoing practice.
What tools do you use to center yourself?



Reflection
What are your
main takeaways
today?

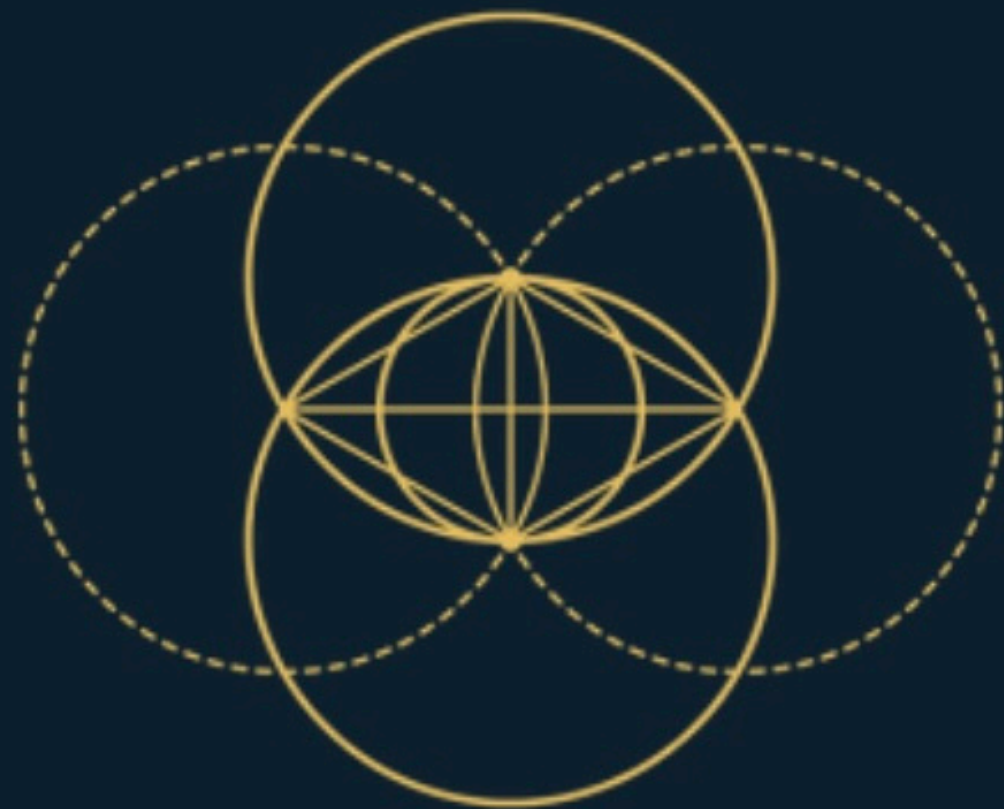
Resources

Find workshop
slides here:



THE
SIOTHA

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PEACEMAKING
WITH OURSELVES
AND OTHERS

The Siotha Project
promotes peacemaking
across individuals,
families and
communities.

Learn more through:
thesiothaproject.com