

Meet ... THE COLLABORATORS!! and their partners in justice... THE MEDIATORS!

It's a sad fact that at least 40% of the women reading this magazine are likely, at some stage in their lives, to experience a break down in their marital relationships, or will need to seek resolution in family disputes. And those that won't, will have plenty of friends that will. So what next? An emotionally fraught, out of control ride along an expensive legal conveyor-belt? Chris Humphreys discovers there is an increasingly popular alternative to using the courts for resolving matrimonial and family affairs...

Rare are the people who claim to have had a good experience when getting divorced, or dealing with issues about child contact or finances. As a divorcee myself, I can vouch for the feeling of uncertainty when subject to a court-based system; neither my ex-wife nor I ever felt in control of the proceedings even though we approached the process in a relatively calm and amicable manner. And how many times have you heard the well-visited phrase, 'the person that did best out of my divorce was the solicitor!'

For those that are experiencing relationship breakdown involving the nitty-gritty of finances, property and children, there is another way to deliver an amicable out-of-court settlement that achieves the best possible outcome for the family and avoids the uncertainty, ill feeling and fees associated with an imposed solution. It's called Collaborative Law and, together with its cousin Mediation, it may come as little surprise that many of the movers and shakers within the local Collaboration and Mediation scene are sassy, savvy women – serial multi-taskers who have first-hand experience of the pressures involved in trying to juggle work and family life.

What's more, our Collaborative lawyers know each other, enjoy each other's company and are determined to confine the image of the fee-generating, pin-striped divorce lawyer to history.

ENTER STAGE LEFT...THE COLLABORATORS

Joyti Henchie qualified as a Solicitor in 1995. She joined Attwaters in 2000 and became a Partner in 2004 where she heads the Family Department in Harlow and Loughton specialising in all areas of Family Law including divorce and



Attwaters' Joyti Henchie

separation, financial settlements, children disputes, child protection, cohabitation agreements and disputes, pre-nuptials and civil partnerships.

For good measure, Joyti is also a working mum who has 3 kids under the age of 12, a husband who works long and unsociable hours as a partner in a City-based law practise, and (at the time of writing) a house move to Clavering on the cards. In short, she is one motivated mama! "I like to work, but want to be available for my family", says Joyti. "That's why if I want to do the school runs each day, client satisfaction is vital – if my clients are happy then that makes me proud and happy, which not only rubs off on my family but somehow makes the work day smoother to organise".

With a goal of "100% client care", it was only natural that Joyti trained as a Collaborative lawyer: "Collaboration allows clients to be in control of their

own destiny", she explains, "it's not about the winning or losing, it's about achieving the best quality of future life for everyone involved in the family breakdown". And as someone who clearly takes pride in leading from the front in her own life ("if you want to do it, work hard, as you can do it...") Joyti champions collaborations and has the means of helping people that are stuck and confused in their lives, to take control and positively move forward.

FROM MEDITATION TO MEDIATION

To be effective at advising people through the crisis of relationship breakdown and divorce, you need to be calm, flexible, strong and centred. It helps to be able to literally turn a problem on its head!



Stanley Tee's Jacqueline Jameson

These are all qualities Bishop's Stortford Collaborative lawyer, **Jacqueline Jameson** exhibits and she draws many parallels between practising law and her other passion, yoga – which she also teaches. Jacqueline says "the ability to stay calm >>