

## **Collaborative Tips Money and Happiness**

One of the greatest challenges of the collaborative process is for you to achieve sound financial solutions when emotions are running high at the end of a relationship.

One goal of the separation process is to sever your legal, emotional and financial ties, allowing you to build a new separated future for your family.

Your collaborative solicitor will play an instrumental role in assisting and supporting you to create a balanced and fair financial solution. Money can often be a major source of stress within a marriage. It is often one of the reasons cited for marital problems. Individuals can have profoundly different approaches. Money is full of psychological, emotional and symbolic meanings, and on separation the differences in a couple's financial code can be highlighted.

Emotion can affect financial decisions. Strong emotions such as depression, anger, retaliation, boredom, envy and the need to control have the potential to impact significantly upon your financial outcome.

Money and emotion do not mix and mixing them will almost certainly lead to high legal bills and stressful times. We can all, at times, allow our emotions to impede upon our good judgment.

Tips to help you separate your emotion from your financial dialogue within a collaborative process:

1. Be involved - whatever role you have played financially within your marriage, now is the time to take responsibility for your own financial future.
2. Seek support - your collaborative solicitor will recommend the involvement of a financial neutral. They can provide invaluable information delivered in a neutral and supportive environment.
3. Retain a future focus – take charge of your financial future. Start thinking of what is yours and mine rather than what is ours. Remember that the financial solution you reach must work for both you and your partner going forward.
4. Banish guilt – if you believe that guilt is playing a significant part in financial decision which are being taken, then you must seek the support of a professional divorce counsellor. Solutions reached around guilty emotion are unlikely to be long lasting and balanced.
5. Be patient – do not rush a financial solution even though you may feel that you simply want it all behind you and that you need to bring an end to legal costs. A well founded long lasting financial solution takes time to find.
6. Commit to a budget – as a single person you will need to manage your money independently and to understand the importance of successful budgeting. This is the opportunity to have a new start. You must be realistic about your spending habits, and be flexible and prepared to adapt your budget and to adjust your lifestyle.

It is vital that you do not make significant financial decisions about a fair outcome which are based on hurt, anger or guilt. You must make such decisions based upon a sound

working knowledge of the financial situation and an appreciation of future needs for you and your separating partner. Financial decisions should never be a forum for expressing deep emotion. The collaborative process will provide you with the necessary legal, financial and emotional support to tackle this very difficult challenge.