

# Essentials of Co-Parent Coaching

## A Marathon of Technique and Practice

Presented by Karen Bonnell, MS, Divorce & Co-Parent Coach, Mediator

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425-454-4510

ZOOM video training | 15 Contact Hours | \$550

Attendees must have a graduate degree and a minimum of three years of professional experience. This is not a course for professionals who are new to working with divorcing or divorced parents, but rather a course for those who have experience working with family members going through divorce/separation and want to develop the specific skill set for strengthening co-parenting relationships including parenting plan mediation and dispute resolution.

Participants will roll up their sleeves and practice with the instructor and each other – this is an active, participative, experience-driven training.

### Thursday

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**1:00 - 2:30** Opening

### *Holistic Divorce as the Architecture for Restructuring Families from Parents to Co-Parents to Step-Parents*

Separation or divorce is often experienced as a radical family change. Much of our work is directly related to helping clients understand and manage the experience of discontinuity in a constructive and resilient manner. We will take a look at family systems theory and discuss the importance of a holistic approach to each and every family member as an integral part to the whole. Appreciating the emotional impact of radical, unexpected change gives context to our work. How does a family system restructure from one home to two? How does a family system successfully integrate new members? How we define roles and responsibilities, how we hold boundaries, teach decision-making and problem-solving, how we understand loyalties and bonds have a direct impact on the success or failure of the changing family's ability to cope with and adapt to structural and membership changes.



**2:30 - 4:30** Training

## *What Happens When We Add People*

For the first hour we'll focus on parents dating, new romantic partners, step-parents and new siblings joining the family system. During the second hour we'll discuss the various divorce team members that may augment your coaching and will be an additional part of your client's changing family system. Coordination, collaboration, and integration are key concepts for professionals working toward the same end: a healthy, resilient restructured family.

*Friday*

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**8:30 - 9:00** Gathering and Informal Q&A

**9:00 - 12:00** Training

## *Uncoupling: The Journey from Intimate Partners to Co-Parents*

From the first contact through the closing session, you are coaching. Learning how to energetically support and shift the client or couple underpins the potency of your coaching interventions and teaching. Recognizing what is intimate partner thinking/ responding and carefully untangling that from healthy parenting gives direction to your work. Confidently working with complex emotional responses / triggers helps manage emotional safety and optimism for a better future. Transforming the many ways clients whose trust has been shattered resist and struggle against accepting and building a skillful co-parenting relationship without alienating one or both clients is an art of using your own heart / energy / intention.

**12:00 - 1:30** Lunch and Stretch Break

**1:30 - 4:30** Training



## *Separating Volume I from Volume II: Radical Acceptance of a New Family Reality*

As coaches we can't do a thing about the past, we can only be available to help clients create a better today and a stronger tomorrow. Volume I contains all the client's experiences from the past that continue to undermine and inform today's perspectives often disrupting stability and adjustment. Another vector of radical change – an experience in discontinuity -- is the metaphor of 'closing Volume I in order to write Volume II'. This is not a request for amnesia, but rather a skill set that allows the sins of the past to remain in the past and to manage the mistakes of the present in the most constructive way possible. The pace of individual adjustment becomes part of anticipating the impact of change on the entire family system. Here we will talk about the tactical: specific protocols for high-end goal setting, constructive communication, respectful boundaries, skillful / timely problem-solving, and other two-home family protocols.

### *Saturday*

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**8:30 – 9:00**      Gathering and Informal Q&A

**9:00 – 12:00**    Training

## *What's Best for Kids? Two Good-Enough Parents Engaged in and Caring for Children in One Home or Two*

How to talk with children about separation / divorce, developmental considerations, expectations, children's questions, and how to coach parents to be confident guides to their children will be our primary focus. We'll consider the range of temporary daily parenting schedules / residential schedules and their implications as part of empowering parents to begin to shape a future for their children in the earliest stage of two-home family development. We'll practice skills that shift adversarial, parental-rights based approaches to a whole-family approach – where empathy for children's needs for a relationship with each parent, and child-development prevails over intimate-partnership hurt. We'll also discuss complex adult circumstances and coaching a parent who doesn't have a willing co-parent partner. We'll touch on how to utilize a child specialist for "child inclusive" mediation / coaching as well as children with special needs in the two-home family.



**12:00 – 1:30** Lunch and Stretch Break  
**1:30 – 4:30** Training

## *The Parenting Plan as a Tool for Co-Parent Relationship Building*

The afternoon will be spent discussing coaching through the various components of the “general parenting plan.” Parenting plan specifics vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, however the family elements of a parenting plan are universal. We’ll go over pitfalls, strategies and typical provisions: residential considerations, transitions, decision-making, the interface between the parenting plan and child support, dispute resolution protocols, and co-parenting guidelines. Through this experience, whether you mediate parenting plans or assist with dispute resolution or neither, you will have insights and a general understanding of typical issues and concerns that arise for co-parents when implementing their parenting plan or paying for child-related expenses.

**Continue to the following page for registration information.**



## To Register

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Please send \$550 through PayPal to karen@coachmediateconsult.  
Or send a check for \$550 to the address below:

Karen Bonnell  
7919 127th Pl NE  
Kirkland, Washington 98033

Please include your name, address, phone number, and email. **Refunds for the full amount available 60 days prior to the start of training and at any point as long as I can refill your spot. A refund of 50% between 30 – 59 days prior to start of training if I am unable to fill your spot. No refund for unfilled spots for the last 29 days prior to the start of training.**

This workshop is approved for 15 CEUs by the Washington Chapter, National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists and Licensed Mental Health Counselors. Provider number: #1975-466. Also pending approval for 15 CLEs by the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA).

Please let me know if you have questions!

Warm regards, Karen

