

ALYSON JONES
— & ASSOCIATES —

Assisting Families through Divorce & Separation

Navigating the pitfalls and challenges while keeping your children's needs at the forefront of the process.

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Assessment. Therapy. Growth.

Multi-disciplinary counselling centre, offering a full-range of therapies for individuals, couples, family, children and youth.

www.alysonjones.ca
113-2419 Bellevue Ave, West Vancouver
604-926-6665

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Overview

- Impact on Children
- Needs of Children
- Divorce and Separation System
- Pitfalls and Potential for Growth

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Impacts of Divorce & Separation on Children

- Higher Risk
- Transition and Stress
- Attachment/ Detachment
- Impact of Conflict
- Good News: You Can Control the Conflict
- Good News: Relationship Deepening

Q&A

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**CHILDREN
IN THE FOREFRONT**

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What Children Need to Hear

- You will continue to take care of and provide for them
- Adult love is different than the love between a child and a parent
- Your feelings for you partner have changed BUT your special relationship with the child will go on forever
- The child did not cause the divorce

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What Children Need to Hear

- It is not the child's job to fix the adult problems or to be your support
- Even though it is normal to wish the parents will get back together, it is not going to happen
- The separation/divorce was not an easy/ quick decision
- When you married, you loved each other and hoped things would work out

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What Children Need to Hear

- A separation/ divorce is a sad time and it is OK for everyone to have his/her own feelings about it
- You are sorry this decision has hurt the children
- You encourage the children to see the other parent/ support that relationship
- Reassure them that, although they are sad now, they will feel happy again

Property of Alyson Jones & Associates **Q&A**

Overview of the System

- Mediation
- Collaborative Law
- Negotiation/ Judicial Case Conference
- Litigation (court-order)
- Parenting Coordination
- Co-Parenting

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Mediation

A method for resolving disputes that involves a neutral third party mediator who assists parents in reaching an agreement without having to go to court.

- Voluntary Process
- Parents determine courses of action - Decision is not imposed

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Collaborative Law

A process where each parent has a lawyer, but all parties agree that they will work on an agreement without going to court.

- Non-adversarial
- Multi-disciplinarian model that may involve lawyers, divorce coaches, child specialist and financial specialist

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Negotiation

The process where each parent has a lawyer as their advocate and there may be threat of court action for the participants if they are not able to form an agreement.

- Can involve several steps, and other professionals as needed.

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Litigation

A course of action which leads to court where a judge will impose a decision if the parties are not able to negotiate a settlement.

- Can involve both financial issues as well as custody and access of the children.
- Involves several steps prior to arriving in the court room

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Parenting Coordination

A process that has a neutral decision maker in place to resolve parenting issues as they arise. Parenting Coordinators educate, mediate, and even arbitrate decisions if needed.

- Can be assigned by the court or agreed upon by the parents.
- Involves a time limited contract signed by all parties

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Co-Parenting

A voluntary process in which both parents engage with a neutral counsellor who assists in building communication and problem solving skills for the parents.

- non-adversarial process
- concentrates on the needs of the children
- explores parenting strategies
- can assist with developing developmentally appropriate parenting plans.

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Roles

- Lawyers
- Counsellors
- Child Specialists
- Divorce Coaches
- Financial Advisors
- Assessors

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Custody and Access

- Section 15?
- Views of the Child Report?
- Parenting Plans?

- Parenting Time?: Coming Soon

Q&A

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What AJ&A Does

- Couples and Individual Counselling
- Child and Youth Counselling/ Informal Advocacy
- Parenting Plans
- Mediation
- Parenting Coordination
- Divorce Coaching
- Reunification Counselling
- Transition Counselling
- Co-parenting Counselling

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Pitfalls: What to Avoid Doing

- Be Invested in "Winning", "Being Right"
- Involve Children in Adult Conflict
- Use Children as Emotional Support/ Allow them to Act as Caretakers
- Share with Children the Details of what went wrong in the Relationship
- Make Reactive Decisions/ Threaten Stability
- Disparage/ Blame the other Parent
- Use Children as Messengers
- Devalue or Underestimate the Other Parent Relationship on Development of Children

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Pitfalls: What to Avoid Doing

- Let the Interests of the Children Slip Out of the Forefront
- Give in to every "Want"/ Overcompensate
- Impairment (Get counselling for any drug or drinking issues you may have)
- Anger – It can Undermine Parenting and Your Ability to Show Children Your Love for Them
- Let Financial Issues Impact Parenting
- Withhold Child Support Payments/ Tell children about withheld payments

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Potential for Growth!

- You Can Demonstrate to Children how to be a Grown-Up
- Show this Can be Done with Dignity
- Show Conflict can be Resolved
- Children are be given opportunity to be Resilient.

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Potential for Growth!

- Children can develop Adaptive Skills
- Children are Encouraged to develop Strong Relationships with both Parents Individually
- You can gain Self Respect and Credibility with your Children
- Opportunity to Create 2 "Safe Harbours"

Q&A

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Resources

www.collaborativedivorcebc.com

<http://www.bcparentingcoordinators.com>

www.alysonjones.ca

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