

Co-Parenting Successfully: COMMITMENT **Shift from personal relationship and needs to work** **for the best interest of the children**

The foundational piece that must be in place for successful co-parenting is your commitment to fully engage in making changes that are in the best interests of your children. The New World Dictionary defines commitment as “a pledge or promise to do something.” That “something” you promise to do is to shift your relationship with your spouse or partner from meeting your relational and personal needs to identifying and responding to the developmental needs, interests, and rights of your children. Some of these needs and rights include: the right to a continuing relationship with both parents, the right to continuing care and guidance from both parents, and the right to spend regular and consistent time with each parent without one parent degrading the other.

The **challenge** for each parent is to work to move beyond the pain, hurt, disappointment, and grief of the breakdown of the adult relationship and the breaking apart of the family; and working toward meeting the needs and interests of the children. The **opportunity** is to work toward rebuilding trust between the parents by focusing on common goals and learning to move from destructive patterns of communication and behaviour to more effective ways of communicating, negotiating, and making agreements that meet the interests and needs of the children.

Some suggestions that may assist you in clearly articulating your commitment include:

1. Write out what successful parenting looks like to you.
2. What do you see are the challenges that you face in being the successful parent you want to be?
3. What are you willing to do to work on those challenges?
4. What are your strengths as a parent and what are you doing to support those strengths?
5. Write out your hopes, dreams, goal, and expectations for each of your children.
6. What are you willing to do to support those dreams, goals, and expectation?
7. What are your worries or fears for your children?
8. What are you willing to do to address those worries or fears?

Another commitment you can make is to work on the other building blocks of the Co-Parenting Pyramid of Success. Each section of the pyramid builds on the previous blocks and together forms a comprehensive roadmap to being the best parent you can be.

In the next newsletter we will explain and explore the block of **Responsibility**.

© 2012 **Robert J. Blank, M. Pscyh.**
Divorce Coach and Registered Psychologist
Member of the Collaborative Family Separation Professionals
Victoria, BC, Canada