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**MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL CO-PARENTING PARTICIPATION &
RETAINER AGREEMENT**

This Mental Health Professional Co-parenting Participation & Retainer Agreement (the Agreement) is made between _____ and _____ (the Client) and Heather Clift, LPC, the Mental Health Professional (the MHP) who shall render professional services to the Client as set out in this agreement. The Client has agreed to use the principles of the cooperating and collaboration to achieve a positive resolution that minimizes the negative economic, social and emotional consequences that a family often experiences in the traditional adversarial divorce process. The Client hereby agrees to engage this MHP as the Co-parenting Coach or Child Specialist.

1. Engagement of Mental Health Professional

The MHP serving as the Client's Co-parenting Coach will assist in identifying and prioritizing the goals/concerns of each person; help each person make effective use of conflict resolution skills; help the parents develop effective co-parenting skills; work collaboratively with the Client and other professionals engaged to enhance communication and reduce misunderstandings, and assist the team moving toward resolution. As indicated above, the MHP will work with the Client in the role of a Co-parenting Coach and will **not** provide psychotherapy services to the Client.

The MHP serving in the role of Child Specialist has primary responsibility for serving the children as the children's "voice" and advocate in the Divorce Process. The Child Specialist will provide the child/children an opportunity to voice concerns regarding their parents' divorce; provide parents with information and guidance so that the parents can help their child/children through the divorce; and provide information to the parents and the team that will be used in developing an effective co-parenting plan. The MHP will work with the children in the family in the role of Child Specialist and will **not** provide psychotherapy services to the child/children in the family.

2. Fees

The Client agrees to pay the MHP's rate of **\$150** per hour for professional services

rendered to the Client. In the One Coach model, when the couple is seen together, each client will be responsible for payment based on a prorated fee of \$75.00 per hour per client (for a total of \$150.00 per hour). During the meetings with the child/children, each parent will pay \$75.00 per hour (for a total of \$150.00 per hour). All coaching sessions will be scheduled for two-hour blocks of time. These charges are due and payable by check, cash or credit card at the time services are rendered. Itemized billing statements will be provided if requested.

Extended phone conversations between coaching sessions (in excess of 10 minutes) will be billed to the Client in 15-minute increments in proportion to the \$150 hourly rate. (For example, a 15-minute phone call charge is \$37.50).

Please note that coaching/child specialist services are not covered under health insurance policies so charges will not be reimbursed by your insurance.

3. Messages

During weekday office hours (Monday-Thursday 8:00-4:30) your phone calls will be answered by my office manager. Messages can also be left in the confidential voicemail. Your phone calls will be returned within 24 business hours.

4. Cancellations

A **24-hour** advance notice of cancellation is required for all scheduled individual appointments. Appointment times are exclusively reserved for Client and family members. Therefore, Client will be charged the **full fee for a late cancellation or missed appointment without appropriate advance notice.**

5. Election to Terminate

If either party involved elects to terminate from the Co-parenting Process and litigate instead, the MHP shall provide no further services to either of the Clients or their children. Information and records gained through the Co-parenting Process will remain the property of the MHP and will be stored in a secure location at the address above consistent with Virginia statutes pertaining to maintenance of Health Records. All outstanding fees incurred will be due at the time of termination of the Co-parenting Process. In addition, the Client agrees not to subpoena the MHP or case records in the event of litigation.

6. Future Professional Services

The Client may in the future engage the services of the MHP as a coach and/or child specialist to continue dealing with post divorce adjustment and any parenting consultations needed under the same terms and provisions set out in this Agreement.

In addition, if the Client presents a personal concern unrelated to the divorce process during or after the Co-parenting Process, the MHP will carry out the terms of this Agreement by clarifying and adhering to the respective roles of Client and Co-parenting Coach/Child Specialist, and will **not** provide counseling services. In appropriate circumstances, the Co-parenting Coach/Child Specialist will make a referral to a licensed mental health professional for assessment and psychotherapy services.

7. Confidentiality

The Client understands that information shared with the MHP will be kept confidential, with the exception of the team members and the attorneys with whom the Client signs a release of information. In the event that a Guardian ad Litem is appointment by the court, the court provides full access to all information. In addition, the MHP is a mandatory reporter under Virginia law and is mandated by law to report to the appropriate authorities any cases of suspected child/adult abuse or neglect.

I/We have read the Mental Health Professional Co-parenting Participation & Retainer Agreement and I/We agree with it.

Client Date

Client Date

By _____
Heather Clift, LPC Date