



# The Road To Justice Starts Here

Exclusively Representing Women in Divorce, Custody and Support Matters.

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# divorce mediation

## MIGHT BE AN OPTION

Divorce mediation is a process in which divorcing spouses sit down with a third-party mediator to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. The mediator is a specially trained professional who facilitates communication; he/she does not take sides or make decisions for the divorcing couple. Matters that can be negotiated include child custody and visitation, financial issues, and property division.

Divorce proceedings through the courts involve complex legal issues, an oftentimes dragged-out timeline, and final decisions that may not be to the satisfaction of one or both parties. It tends to be more expensive as well.

Divorce mediation provides another option. This process works best for those couples who each know the relationship is over, and who aren't brimming with acrimony or intense feelings of anger. Divorce mediation may be ill-advised for those relationships in which trust is completely lacking, one party entirely blames the other for the divorce, or abuse of some kind has been part of the relationship.

The mediator may choose to work individually with each party, acting as a go-between, or work with both parties at the same time. Any concerns can be discussed with the mediator ahead of time. All agreements must be mutually agreed upon; neither side can claim they were railroaded.

Divorce mediation can be especially beneficial for those couples who want to maintain an amicable relationship after divorce. When children are involved, issues can be worked out in mediation rather than leaving momentous decisions in the hands of strangers.

Mediation length can range from one session to several sessions spanning a few weeks, maybe months. It's a much more streamlined process than the court system, it gives both parties more control, and it's potentially a lot less stressful.

If mediation doesn't work out, then divorce court beckons.

Lastly, do not forget Paul's 4 Goals before you head into mediation.

1. Obviously, you want to settle your case;
2. You want the mediators opinion on the result you'll achieve if you continue on to trial;
3. Find out from the mediator the problems they see in your case so you can deal with those problems if you do not settle;
4. Find out what your husband is willing to accept or offer.

You need to know 2, 3, and 4 so you can make an educated decision on whether to settle your divorce matter or not. ■



# frequently asked questions

**Question:** Things aren't going well with my spouse. I've been on the fence for years about whether I should leave him. How can I gain clarity on this decision?

**Answer:** Many of us take a minute to reflect on our lives as one year ends and another begins. If you've been grappling with a difficult decision for years, this may be the year you should resolve to take action – one way or another.

Deciding whether to leave a marriage can be the hardest decision a person will ever make. People often tell themselves they are just in a low point or going through a rough patch. But, if you've had more low points than high points and more rough patches than smooth days, how will you know when enough is enough? At the same time, indecision can be crippling. You may feel like you are in a holding pattern, waiting for your real life to begin.

As you reflect on your marriage this year, consider these points:

- 1. You're going to have to try something different.** Doing the same thing hasn't helped thus far. You probably need to step out of your comfort zone. Try counseling. Go to therapy. Read self-help books. If you are not ready for that, you may not be ready to fix your marriage. A book I endorse is *10 Lessons to Transform Your Marriage* by John M. Gottman.
- 2. A marriage takes two.** If your spouse is not actively trying to work on repairing your relationship, there's not much that you can do. Of course, you can instigate positive changes, and these changes may lead him to change his ways, too. But if you have invested time and effort and he has not, nothing will really change.

To discuss a possible divorce with an experienced family law attorney, contact Paul Nathan. He represents women in divorce matters throughout Northern California. To get in touch with him, contact the Law Offices of Paul H. Nathan at 415-341-1144 or by filling out our online contact form. ■

# two primitive tips

## IN LOWERING STRESS IN OUR MODERN LIFESTYLE

By Dr. Marisa Williams, ND

As 2013 develops, our routine solidifies for the year. While rushing, we breathlessly return to anxious lives that never have 'enough time'. Two emerging tips that can positively nurture our well being are featured below.

1. Japanese 'Forest Bathing', [shinrin-yoku]; quint-essentially hiking a calm forest trail. In 2010 two walking groups were compared, one group was documented within a city and then compared to another in a forested area. Heart rate, levels of cortisol and blood pressure were measured before and after their separate walks. The forest environment group was found to have lower measurements of heart rate, blood pressure and cortisol and significantly increased parasympathetic activity.
2. 'Digital Detox'; is a new term relative to our evidently insatiable desire to remain virtually interconnected. There is debate on how increased access to technology lowers our concentration and limits creative responses by splitting our focus. What percentage of people are online while on vacation, or after office hours/during weekends? A few locales are offering lower rates to patrons who give up electronics so they may truly experience exotic travel destinations.

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# surgical errors

All surgeries carry inherent risks to patients who undergo them, but doctor/nurse negligence further complicates their situations. Negligence can occur in “major” or “minor” surgeries, as well as tests/screenings, worsening patients’ health and sometimes resulting in death.

Following is a list of some surgical errors that are more common than they should be:

- **Surgery on the wrong patient.** Miscommunication between health-care professionals, lack of preoperative verification, and inadequate hospital protocol can lead to the loss of healthy organs and other consequences, not to mention that the original intended surgery still hasn’t been performed.
- **Wrong-side surgery.** Whether a patient has the wrong leg amputated or a healthy kidney removed and the diseased one left untouched, it’s a mistake that should never happen.
- **Foreign objects left in the body.** Sometimes

when a patient is “closed up” after surgery, they wind up having more parts inside them than prior to surgery. Sponges, clamps, gauze, pads, and scalpels have on occasion been left behind, inside patients. Extreme pain, serious infection, and death are the obvious potential outcomes. A patient who survives initially will need another surgery to remove the left-behind item.

- **Anesthesia errors.** Too much anesthesia may lead to lack of oxygen, brain damage, and death. Too little might result in a patient waking up in the middle of surgery in excruciating pain.
- **Collateral damage.** While surgery to correct one problem may be successful, other problems are sometimes created. A punctured organ or damaged nerves may lead to lifetime disabilities, chronic pain, and serious infection.

If you’ve been a victim of a surgical error, contact an experienced medical malpractice attorney to fight for your rights for just compensation. ■

## March 2013 Important Dates

March 10 – Daylight Savings Time Begins    March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day  
March 20 – First Day of Spring    March 24 – Palm Sunday  
March 26 – Passover    March 29 – Good Friday    March 31 – Easter

# did you hear?

## BOTOX, NOT JUST FOR WRINKLES ANYMORE

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved the popular anti-wrinkle drug Botox for a far different use than what we’re accustomed to. It now appears that it can help reduce the frequency of urinary incontinence caused by an overactive bladder.

According to the FDA’s clinical studies, injecting Botox into the bladder muscle helped to relax the organ, boost its capacity and cut down on the number of incontinence episodes.

The FDA studies also indicated some side effects from the Botox procedure were possible, including painful urination, urinary tract infections, and incomplete emptying of the bladder.

An estimated 33 million men and women in the U.S. suffer from overactive bladder. ■





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**COMING SOON!**

Paul Nathan's book, *What Every Woman in California Should Know About Divorce* is being published as we speak.

And, next month Paul will begin providing his favorite recipes in the newsletter!

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## “a cheeseburger, fries, and intensified asthma, please”

A recent international study, published in the journal *Thorax*, suggests that kids who eat fast food three or more times per week have more severe asthma than kids who don't. Over 500,000 subjects were involved in the yearlong study (13- and 14-year-olds comprised over 300,000, and 6- and 7-year-olds accounted for nearly 200,000.) Eighty-two countries were represented, and kids of all levels of affluence were included.

The results of the study showed that the teenagers experienced a 39 percent increased risk of severe asthma when consuming fast food three or more times per week. The 6- and 7-year-olds' risk was elevated by 27 percent.

Parents of the kids in the study were asked questions regarding their children's symptoms of asthma, how these symptoms

impacted their daily living, and what foods their children had eaten (on a week-by-week basis) that already had a protective or damaging influence on health.

Among all the variables that came into play in the study, the only common food link between both age groups was fast food. Fast food generally contains high levels of trans fats and saturated fats, both of which have been shown to diminish the strength of the immune system.

It must be noted that the study shows an increased risk of asthma severity in kids *who already have asthma*. It has not been demonstrated that fast food causes asthma. If such a link is established in the future, the fast food conversation may become even more interesting. ■

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