



REINTEGRATION COUNSELLING INFORMATION & REFERRAL PROCESS

General Purpose of Counselling and Functions of Reintegration Counsellor :

1. The purpose of reintegration counselling is to repair the relationship between a parent and child(ren), which has been damaged or severed subsequent to their parents' separation. The reasons and degree of damage can be complex and varied. The counselling process itself includes a number of components, the details of which are outlined in a Counselling Agreement.
2. Although most parents want what is best for their child(ren), as there tends to be a high degree of conflict between parents in these cases, they may each have different goals and expectations of a reintegration counselling process. During the process, the parents will be expected to consider different perspectives and approaches to parenting to those they may be accustomed to. This can be very challenging but nevertheless necessary for change to occur and for the reintegration process to be successful.
3. The functions of the counsellor may include the facilitation of a court-ordered parenting schedule, and helping family members to better manage anxiety and acquire or improve co-parenting communication and problem-solving skills. In addition, family members are counselled to appreciate the negative impact of a damaged or severed relationship between the child(ren) and a parent, and the benefits of the child(ren)'s having a meaningful relationship with both parents. The counsellor may establish more appropriate parent-parent and parent-child roles and boundaries, assist parents and their child(ren) to identify and separate their own views from those of their parents, correct the child(ren)'s distorted perceptions of the rejected parent if and as required, and other functions as outlined in a Counselling Agreement.

Intake:

4. The counselling process begins with a clinical intake consultation (CIC), the general purpose of which is to assess the family's suitability for reintegration counselling, and to finalize the terms of the Counselling Agreement.
5. To begin the CIC, each parent and/or parent's lawyer contacts me by email or telephone, to book a complimentary 15-minute telephone consultation. The purpose of this call is to confirm that the parents are both willing to proceed with the CIC, to give each parent the chance to make some preliminary inquiries about the process, and to ascertain whether the referral for reintegration counselling with me is appropriate.
6. During the CIC, I interview the parents and in most cases, the child(ren). I may review background materials, including but not limited to custody and access assessments, voice of the child reports, psycho-educational reports, and any other background materials which

may be considered relevant for me to complete the CIC.

7. At the end of CIC, if reintegration counselling is recommended and before the Counselling Agreement is executed, I request a meeting with both parents and/or counsel, to answer any questions about the reintegration process, and finalize the terms of the Counselling Agreement and process.
8. It should be noted that although most cases do proceed with reintegration counselling after the CIC, some do get “screened out” of the reintegration counselling process if they are not considered suitable for the process and/or if another process or form of counselling is considered more appropriate.
9. Once the Counselling Agreement is finalized, the parents deliver one original, fully executed Counselling Agreement to me, along with a retainer, the specific amount of retainer having been determined during the CIC. The counselling process begins, which typically means a first session is booked.

Requirement for Court Order & Judicial Oversight:

10. A referral for reintegration counselling must be endorsed by a Court Order. In addition to the requirement of a Court Order, in order to maximize the chances of success of the process, and minimize the chances of sudden and/or premature termination of the counselling, the Court must remain seized of the matter for the duration of the counselling process. The Court’s oversight helps to preserve the clinician’s therapeutic role, leaving the enforcement of the counselling process and parenting schedule to the Courts.
11. Although reintegration counsellors make recommendations in accordance with the mandate defined in the Counselling Agreement, they are not arbitrators. As such, it is up to the Court to determine the parenting time schedule to be implemented, throughout and post-intervention. If the parenting schedule is not finalized at the start of the counselling process, it may be determined by the Court a little later in the process, provided that a follow-up case conference to review and determine the parenting schedule is booked at the start of the counselling process.
12. The parties and/or their lawyers should check my availability and willingness to take on their case prior to obtaining a Court Order. Obtaining my input with respect to the wording of the Order is also important and on occasion, my attendance at a Case Conference in which I may be appointed can be particularly helpful, as it maximizes the chances of a successful outcome, and allows the scheduling of follow-up Conferences.

Fees:

13. The counselling is paid by retainer and, in most cases, parents share the cost of the counselling equally, unless otherwise agreed to or ordered by the Court. Fees are paid by e-transfer. I do not accept debit or credit. As I am a registered social worker, some insurance companies do seem to reimburse parents for the service I provide, although I

understand such reimbursement is generally only for clinical time spent, and not for Court appearances or drafting reports. While I do my best to provide parents with the necessary documentation for them to obtain reimbursement from their insurance companies, I do not bill insurance companies directly and am not responsible if parents are not successful in recouping their costs.

Limits to Confidentiality:

14. Reintegration counselling is generally an open process, the terms and limits of which are outlined in the Counselling Agreement. This means that the counsellor may report to the Court and/or an arbitrator or parenting coordinator involved with the case, verbally, in writing, and/or by testifying in Court. The clinician may also exchange information with other therapists who are/have been involved with the children and/or parents. In that regard, parents are expected to provide background information and to sign any consents required to facilitate the exchange of such information, as outlined in the Counselling Agreement.
15. The counsellor has the duty to report to the appropriate officials if she has reason to believe that a child is in need of protection, in accordance with the Child Youth and Family Services Act. In addition, she may disclose information to authorities or relevant others if she feels that either party is a danger to him/herself, or to someone else, or if ordered to do so by a judge or as required by law.