

## The Consultation: How to Prepare in Advance

Trying to convey several years' worth of information can feel overwhelming, but there are ways you can prepare in advance:

**Prepare a brief overview of your case**

**List your primary goals.** Identify them by thinking about what you want your life to look like six months, one year, and five years after the divorce is final

**List your assets and debts.** Think about your financial situation by listing all your assets and all your debts. If you have access to tax returns, account statements, and other financial documents, make a note of that and tell the attorney. This can help the attorney evaluate many aspects of your case, such as how long it may take, how much formal discovery (the process of obtaining evidence from the opposing side) will be necessary, and how much you can expect to pay in attorney fees

**Prepare to briefly describe your marriage.** Divorce attorneys typically understand the sentiment behind the saying "the marriage is the parent of the divorce," so be prepared to describe the marriage and the deterioration of the relationship

**Create a concise list of recurring themes of conflict in your marriage.** If you think fault may be relevant to your situation, ask whether it will play a role in the financial or child related outcomes of your divorce. Even if fault is irrelevant, the attorney may ask you to describe the marital dynamics in order to assess how those same dynamics may continue to play out in the divorce process. Rather than preparing a list of every disagreement you or your spouse ever had, provide themes of the marital dynamic. Provide an example to illustrate each theme