



Family Court Checklist

Increase the likelihood of keeping your self and your family safe as you go through the family court process. This simple 6 topic checklist will help you go from scattered and scared to confident and courageous as you face your ex in family court.

1. Organized Documentation

- All financial documentation is easily accessible and organized including previous 2 year's income tax returns, proof of income for both you and your spouse, list of assets, list of debts, property valuations, retirement, life insurance, documents on joint financial accounts, etc.
- Documentation based on the 11 factors of the "Best Interests of the Child" and the 8 factors of "Allocation of decision-making responsibility"
- Court accepted documentation and evidence to support any claims you are making or to dispute any false claims made against you by your ex

(Feeling overwhelmed with this step, stay connected with us to learn more about our documentation workshop, February 2023)

2. Relationship with Your Attorney

- You have interviewed more than one attorney asking questions specific to their experience with domestic violence and narcissistic abuse including examples of how they mitigate false narratives, their beliefs on false reports of abuse, and the level of support they provide.
- You have a full understanding of and are comfortable with your financial responsibilities.
- You have discussed your expectations of level of communication you will have with your attorney during and between court hearings.

3. Communication with Your Abusive Ex

- You have set up a co-parenting communication app for all communication with your ex (Peaceful Coparenting Messenger, Talking Parents, Our Family Wizard, etc.)
- You use the BIFF communication technique for all your written communication (Brief, Informational, Friendly, Firm)
- You have set realistic expectations for this communication.

4. Firm and Compassionate Boundaries

- You have a good understanding of your top priorities and values during this time and have written them down in order to decide what battles are worth fighting and when you can answer "yes" without resentment.
- You have assessed all of the people in your life to determine their level of safety and support given your current situation. Who of these people belong in your innermost circle of support and are there any you need to move further out of the circle?
- You have consequences that you will follow through with when people do not respect or cross your boundaries.

5. Support System is Ready

- You have set up any professional support resources you may need during the duration of your family court case that are trauma informed, understand abusive relationships, and understand family court (therapist, attorney, support group/community, advocate, etc.)
- You have assessed your inner circle of support for safety (those you do not have to constantly defend yourself) and have identified what types of support each person is willing to provide.
- You have resources easily available in case of safety concerns (national DV hotline # 800-799-7233 and national suicide hotline 988)

6. Tool Belt of Coping Skills

- You are aware of when your nervous system goes into fight/flight/freeze
- You have planned ways in advance to move out of Fight/Flight including moving your body in ways that match the intensity of your anxiety (taking a walk for mild levels of anxiety or doing kick boxing to manage extreme levels of anxiety); using deep breathing, meditation, cold water, journaling, etc.
- You have planned ways in advance to move out of Freeze including small amounts of slower movement (walking to the mailbox or stretching); using breath and mindfulness of your senses and your environment, coregulating with a safe person.

You can do this!

While we cannot promise that things will go smoothly with your case as there are so many things outside of your and our control, we have seen an increase in successful outcomes when you are prepared and have the items on this checklist put in place. If you feel overwhelmed when looking through this

checklist, remember that you can do hard things and that we are here if you need increased support.

The Rising Beyond Team

For more resources go to www.risingbeyondpc.com