

COLLABORATIVE DIVORCE BROWN BAG SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

"*Collaborative Divorce*".....an oxymoron? No doubt. An innovative, civil method for divorce resolution? Most definitely!

Collaborative Divorce Attorney & Mediator, Lisa Jacobs, founder of "*Better Way Divorce*," together with her professional team members, Dr. Greg Yuen, a Psychiatrist, and Monica Jennings, a Certified Financial Planner, shared their insight and mission behind the concept of Collaborative Divorce with members of The Hawaii Paralegal Association during a Brown Bag Seminar held on June 25, 2014 at the law firm of Cades Schutte.

According to this dynamic team, Collaborative Divorce is an alternative method of resolving divorce whereby parties to a divorce pledge to negotiate the details of finances, child custody, and property division with mutual respect and without confrontation or court intervention. . Their team consistently strive to uphold their motto which is to "Deal with issues in a 'Pono' (i.e., Hawaiian term for "fair," "successful," "in perfect order") way" with one another.

In 2012, the State of Hawaii was one of many states which had officially adopted Family Code (H.B. 3833) Title 1-A, Chapter 15, Sec. 15.001 which encompasses the policy and method of Collaborative Divorce and states (in part): "*It is the policy of this state to encourage the peaceable resolution of disputes, with special consideration given to disputes involving the parent-child relationship, including disputes involving the conservatorship of, possession of or access to, and support of a child, and the early settlement of pending litigation through voluntary settlement procedures.*"

Since the practice of Collaborative Divorce has only been introduced to the islands since 2012, it is Lisa's hope to spread the word about the services which she and her colleagues offer, not only due to this respectful method of divorce resolution, but for practical purposes for families as well. Collaborative Practice is a cost-effective, problem-solving approach that can minimize the impact of conflict on a family. Depending on the circumstances involved, a family can literally save as much as 50 percent (possibly more) of the cost to resolve divorce issues via the collaborative process versus the traditional process. Further, families are supported by professionals with the right expertise to guide and inform them along the way. The results are legally binding agreements that resolve the issues facing families. With the information and guidance provided by Lisa and her team of experts, families are empowered to make sound, long-lasting decisions that will impact their lives for years to come.

The Collaborative process preserves the privacy and dignity of families involved while giving them the best possible chance at resolving disputes "*Pono*" style.