RICH MAHLER
MEDIATION & THERAPY
0417 947 976 | rich@richmahler.com.au | GPO Box 2639 Brisbane City Qld 4001

SIX THINGS I CAN DO FOR YOU

1. Specialist Family Law Mediation

Since 2004 I have been working at various times as a Specialist Family Lawyer, Specialist Family Law Mediator, Child-Inclusive Mediator, and Relationship, Family and Co-Parenting Counsellor / Psychotherapist. I am a registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP) and Nationally Accredited Mediator (AMDRAS).

I can issue Section 60I Certificates and Certificates of Dispute Resolution under the *Family Law Act* (1975) (Cth) as required by the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA).

I conduct mediations in person and by Zoom. I also conduct mediations both with and without lawyers. If a party is not legally represented at a mediation and agreement is reached, I prepare a draft Parenting Plan or written Heads of Agreement (for property matters) for that party to then seek legal advice about.

Prior to the mediation each party attends a separate 1-hour pre-mediation assessment / intake with me by phone or (preferably) Zoom. I conduct a risk assessment to determine whether it is appropriate for me to conduct a mediation and help each party prepare for the mediation. I am informed by an understanding of the nuances of power imbalance in relationships and prioritise affording safety in the context of domestic and family violence.

2. Child-Inclusive Mediation

As a family therapist and child consultant, my child-inclusive mediation (**CIM**) services utilise my dual qualifications and experience in law and psychology.

A CIM empowers school-aged children with a voice to express their lived experience and can involve play or art therapy. I screen caregivers to safeguard against them weaponising the process against each other or the children.

I assess children for signs of trauma, attachment issues and third-party influence such as coaching or parental alienation. I reassure children that the dispute between their caregivers is not their fault, and encourage them to express their needs, concerns, and overall wishes. I discourage children from attempting to make decisions about their relationships with significant caregivers such as who they live with and how much time they spend with them. This process is non-reportable and cannot be used in Court proceedings.

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3. Individual Therapy

Since 2018 I have been working as an Individual, Relationship, Family and Co-Parenting Counsellor / Psychotherapist. I am registered with the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) (Provisional 27503).

My therapy practice is trauma-informed, evidence-based, and draws upon several modalities, such as Gestalt (including authentic presence and empty chair work), existential (meaning making), experiential / felt sense (linking the mind and body for awareness and healing) and psychodynamic (such as exploring the effects of key relationships with caregivers and partners).

4. Relationship Therapy

My relationship therapy combines active listening, reflections, and communication skills. It is informed by the effects of power imbalances and domestic and family violence in relationships. I take into consideration each individual's attachment style developed in early childhood (and long-term adult relationships).

5. Family Therapy (including Reunification Therapy)

My family therapy includes all family members aged five and above, and often in high-conflict situations. I work with children in supporting them navigate their relationships within a family system.

My reunification therapy is a specialist service that I offer within my family therapy practice. Reunification therapy requires a sensitive and adaptive approach, given that generally at least one party (usually a child of another party) is somewhat reluctant or resistant to this therapeutic intervention (at least at the beginning). The purpose of reunification therapy is to determine whether the child's resistance to a parent comes from the genuine innate (and appropriate) safety concerns of the child, or the child being influenced by the (often well-meaning) non-rejected parent.

6. Co-Parenting Counselling

My co-parenting counselling involves blending my expertise in both family law mediation and psychotherapy to support separated couples with developing respectful parenting relationships free from aggression, coercion, and control.