

## Divorce Roadmap

I've never met you before, but having met thousands of people going through divorce, I promise that you're normal. The doubt, the fear, the confusion, the pain, and the anger are all normal. You've got a million questions, but take a quick timeout – you're about to embark on a journey of finding your way through divorce, and before you get started, I've got one more promise for you. Everything is going to be okay.

When we meet, I'm going to ask you lots of questions because I want to know about you. Yes, there will be some questions about your income and whether or not you want to keep the house, but don't focus on those things. I want you to be prepared for the big question, which is going to come up sometime during our conversation. What are your goals?

Huh?

Yes, you read that right. I want to know what your goals are. I want to know how you see yourself at the end of this journey before you even begin it.

But . . . why?

Well, simply put, unless you know where you're going in your journey, I won't be able to guide you on your path to your future. Your job is to figure out what your future looks like, and my job is to help get you there by creating you a customized roadmap to lead you through your divorce process. I'm your cheerleader, your coach, your supporter, your legal guru, and your travel guide all rolled up into one.

So tell me about you. What are your fears? What makes your situation unique? What are you looking for? In other words, how can I help you?

Sometimes help means giving you a reality check. I'm not going to lie – a lot of my job as your guide is to warn you about dead ends that you'll hit if you choose to go down certain paths on the road to your future. You'll be tempted to go down a rabbit hole more than once, and my job is to keep you out of it. I can be awfully stern in those situations because it's my job to protect you and make sure you don't get into trouble.

Maybe we'll need to make some detours. After all, you and your situation are unique. Let's talk about your options at each fork in the road and come up with a plan. Maybe you want to try mediation or a collaborative approach to your divorce. Maybe your case needs to be litigated. The key is to make your decisions after being fully educated and equipped to do so. We've just got to make sure the path you pick is the best one for you, regardless of whether it's the most or least traveled road. Forget about what your brother or your best friend did in his or her divorce. Focus on you.

So how do you make decisions? That all goes back to your goals . . . once you know where you want to go, you'll be able to make all of your decisions on whether something helps you get to a goal or distracts you from accomplishing it. That way, your decisions are smart, well-informed, and with the "big picture" always in mind. You'll be better able to stay focused and confident in this journey.

In the meantime, I'll be there to make sure your case is making its way through the system and that you're fulfilling all of the legal requirements. I'll clear the path for you and protect you so that you're always behind a shield of knowledge and power. I'll do my best to fight off the stress and uncertainty, prepare you for the unexpected, and make being under the microscope a less difficult experience.

Most people don't realize when the journey of divorce is over. For most, it happens suddenly even though the process seemed endless (and hopeless at times). But you're going to get there too. You'll have new hobbies, a new family structure, and a new identity. With my help, you'll also have acceptance of your past and hope for your future. You'll be excited to be the author of the next chapters of your life and own your story. And you'll look back on my promise to you on the first day we met and now be able to say that everything *is* okay.