

MARJORIE JACOBS:

By **Rebecca Osberg**

Photography by **Scott McDougall Photography**



A question Marjorie Jacobs receives on a weekly basis is, “what is mediation?” Over the past 18 years, Marjorie has perfected her answer.

“Mediation is a process for resolving conflict equitably and cost-effectively, with the help of a neutral third party,” she explains. “Unlike a court case, where one party wins and the other loses, the hallmark of mediation is that both parties’ interests are addressed.”

For the past 18 years, the focus of Marjorie’s mediation practice, Alternative Strategies, Inc., has been on resolving family law disputes, such as divorce and parenting issues. Her road to this profession started when she received her law degree and a master’s in health care administration from Washington University in St. Louis. After finishing her education, Marjorie worked for two large law firms as a health care attorney, ultimately becoming the Associate General Counsel for the American Hospital Association (AHA).

“During my tenure at the AHA and during the Clinton Administration I worked on a variety of health reform initiatives; including, Alternative Dispute Resolution which incorporates mediation practices. As a result of this, I sat on a variety of Senatorial and House Committees as a representative from the hospital community,” explains Marjorie. “After my second child was born, the commute to Washington D.C. became more challenging and I began exploring ways I could transition into a more manageable career while still utilizing my education and my mediation experience. My boss agreed to send me to further mediation training.”

This led to Marjorie opening her mediation practice in 2001. “My sole purpose is to help clients navigate their family law disputes and resolve them outside of the court system,” Marjorie says.

Marjorie focuses her practice on families, providing them with a compassionate, impartial, and experienced mediator during some of the most difficult times of their life.

“The hardest part of my job is dealing with individuals and their raw emotion along with their uncertainty of how they will be able to move forward. I tend to lose sleep worrying about the families who are going through such a difficult time in their lives, while knowing that in the end that their entire family will be ok,” says Marjorie.

Working as a team, which can also include attorneys, therapists, financial advisors, and child advocates, means that mediation can often provide a more balanced and amicable outcome that addresses the needs of each family more than a traditional litigated divorce.

“I run into former clients all the time and, for the most part, I am able to witness a stronger and happier person,” says Marjorie.

To learn more about Marjorie and Alternative Strategies, visit marjoriejacobs.com.



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