



Kate Scharff, MSW, LCSW-C, LICSW

Psychotherapist ♦ Divorce Expert ♦ Educator ♦ Author

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Professional Experience

2019–Present: Creator and Host, Divorce on Planet Earth Podcast

1989–Present: Psychotherapist, Private Practice

Since 1989, Ms. Scharff has maintained a private practice of psychodynamic psychotherapy with individuals, couples and families (including children and adolescents), clinical supervision, case consultation, and parent guidance. In 1997 she expanded her practice into the field of separation and divorce. Among the specialized services she now provides are divorce process consultation, Collaborative Divorce, divorce mediation, facilitated settlement negotiation, parenting coordination, custody planning, and expert consultation (to attorneys and clients). Ms. Scharff is an internationally recognized voice in the areas of therapeutic jurisprudence, integrative law, and child-centered divorce. She has particular interest in the growing Collaborative Divorce movement (in which she is a senior level practitioner, writer and trainer). Ms. Scharff has been qualified as an expert in the family courts of Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia, and has provided testimony on such issues as normative and pathological development in children, attachment, high conflict divorce, co-parenting, custody and visitation, parental alienation, parental effectiveness, and parental fitness.

2010–2020: Founder and Principal, Collaborative Practice Center of Greater Washington, DC

CPC was a physical and psychological space in which independent professionals from the fields of mental health, family law, finance, and real estate come together around a shared commitment to Collaborative Practice- a compassionate out-of-court settlement process in which a multidisciplinary team helps divorcing couples to restructure their families while preserving emotional and financial resources and enhancing co-parenting capacities. CPC members are carefully selected for their commitment to the peaceful resolution of family conflict, active contribution to positive advances in the fields of family law and alternate dispute resolution, and the ongoing pursuit of excellence in ethical practice at the leading edge of the work. Most CPC-affiliated professionals maintain additional offices in the DC area. When at CPC, they offer an array of services within their own disciplines, work together in mediation and Collaborative Practice, and attend CPC-sponsored trainings, group supervision, and case conferences.

2008–Present: Presenter and Trainer

Ms. Scharff conducts frequent seminars, workshops, and trainings for lawyers, mental health professionals, and financial advisors on a range of divorce- related topics. She teaches both independently and as a member of the multidisciplinary faculty of the Collaborative Practice Training Institute (which she co-founded in 2008).

1997–2010: Founder/Director, The Center for Relationships in Transition (CRT)

CRT was a private agency providing both general psychotherapy and specialized services to families involved in



high conflict divorce.

Publications

Books

Mastering Crucial Moments in Separation and Divorce: A Multidisciplinary Guide to Achieving Excellence in Technique and Outcome, co-authored with Lisa Herrick, PhD (ABA, March 2017)

Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce: A Guide to Enlightened Team Practice, co-authored with Lisa Herrick, PhD. (ABA Publications, 2010)

Therapy Demystified: An Insider's Guide to Getting the Right Help (Marlowe and Co., December 2004)

Other Writing

- **Academic Writing: Book Chapters and Journal Articles (selected sample)**

Sharing Personal Information with our Collaborative Clients: When it's a Good Idea, When it Isn't, and Why, article in *The Collaborative Review*, journal of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Spring 2022 issue

Divorce and Parenting Wars, article in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Jill Savege Scharff and David E. Scharff, Editors, Routledge, 2014

Therapeutic Supervision with Families of High-Conflict Divorce, in Treating Relationships, Jill Savege Scharff and David E Scharff, Editors, Rowan and Littlefield, 2007

Therapeutic Supervision with Families of High Conflict Divorce, in Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies, Jan. 2005.

The Mother as the Desired Object, chapter in Tuning the Therapeutic Instrument, Jill Savege Scharff and David Scharff, Editors (Jason Aronson, 2000).

- **Print and On-Line Media (selected sample)**

Ms. Scharff's pieces appear regularly in both print and on-line publications, including HuffPost (formerly The Huffington Post), Washingtonian Magazine, Washingtonian Mom Magazine, Divorce Magazine, Family Lawyer Magazine, The Collaborative Review, and on her own blog ("Relationships on Planet Earth"). As an internationally trusted voice in the areas of psychotherapy and separation and divorce, Ms. Scharff is widely cited and has been interviewed on programs ranging from National Public Radio to Al Jazeera Media Network. Ms. Scharff is the creator and host of the podcast "Divorce on Planet Earth: Real World Advice for Well-Intentioned Humans," which can be found on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and other major podcast platforms.



Professional Presentations (selected sample)

Professionals (CPNV), Mclean, VA

October 2021: Mediation with High Conflict Couples, presentation for court mediators and senior judges, Family Division of Montgomery County Circuit Court, Rockville, MD

March 2021: I Can't Believe You Think That! Coping When a Client or Colleague Believes Something That Freaks You Out, presentation for DC Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Washington, DC

March 2021: Therapy with Couples in the Edge, seminar for Russian branch of the International Psychotherapy Institute, St. Petersburg, and other sites in Russia

March 2021: Understanding Divorce Processes and Their Impact on Divorcing Families (A Psychodynamic Perspective), presentation for the Program in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Peking University and the International Psychotherapy Institute, Beijing China and Washington, DC

January 2021: Psychodynamics of Divorce, Program in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Peking University on collaboration with the International Psychotherapy Institute, co-presented with David Scharff, M.D., Beijing, China

July 2020: Beyond Competence: The Art and Science of Multidisciplinary Collaborative Teamwork," A four-session online advanced-level seminar, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals (IACP), attendees at various sites in the U.S., Canada, Italy, and Israel

March 2020: Impasses of Divorce, Program in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Peking University and the International Psychotherapy Institute, Beijing, China

February 2020: 2-Day Interdisciplinary Basic Collaborative Family Law Training for Legal, Mental Health and Financial Professionals, Charlotte, NC Collaborative Divorce Professionals and the Mecklenburg County Bar Association, Charlotte, NC (with Pauline Tesler, JD and Lisa Schneider, CPF, CDFA)

November 2019: Issues in Child Custody, Training Program in Forensic Child Psychiatry, Department of Adult, Pediatric and Forensic Psychiatry, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, DC

November 2019: Navigating the Intensity of Divorce Work: Mastery in the Face of Powerful Emotions, Howard County Collaborative Professionals (with Lisa Herrick, PhD)

June 5, 2019: Impasses of Divorce, Program in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Peking University and the International Psychotherapy Institute, Beijing, China (online)



March 2019: Impasses of Divorce, Seminar in Couple Therapy, International Psychotherapy Institute, Chevy Chase, MD

January 2019: Divorce Through the Developmental Lens, Howard County Collaborative Professionals, Ellicott City, MD

December 2018: Issues in Child Custody, presentation for Training Program in Forensic Child Psychiatry, Department of Adult, Pediatric and Forensic Psychiatry, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, DC

November 2017: Mastering Crucial Moments in Separation and Divorce, Virginia Association of Collaborative Professionals Annual Conference, Charlottesville, VA

November 2017: Mastering Crucial Moments in Separation and Divorce", Annual Conference of the Collaborative Council of the Redwood Empire, Collaborative Practice Marin, Integrative Mediation Bay Area, California

January 2016: Creating a Container in Divorce Work, presentation for class in Alternate Dispute Resolution, University of Maryland School of Law, Baltimore

December 2016: Issues in Child Custody, Training Program in Forensic Child Psychiatry, Department of Adult, Pediatric and Forensic Psychiatry, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, DC

October 2016: It Starts Before It Begins: Building a Collaborative Helping Relationship from the Ground Up, Pre-Forum Institute at the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Las Vegas, Nevada

September 2016-May 2017: Becoming a Collaborative Mental Health Professional, second academic year of two-year certificate program (monthly 3-hour classes, didactic and case consultation), Washington, DC

May 2016: The Role of the Child Specialist in Mediation, Collaborative Practice, and Settlement Negotiation, Montgomery County Divorce RoundTable Conference (with Lisa Herrick, PhD), Rockville, MD

February 2016: It Starts Before it Begins: How to Create a Powerful Helping Relationship with Your Collaborative Client, State Bar of Texas Annual Collaborative Law Forum, Dallas Texas

October 2015: Creating Conditions for Growth: Divorce as a Developmental Experience, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Forum, Washington, DC

September 2015: Creating Conditions for Growth: Divorce as a Developmental Experience, New Mexico State Bar Association Collaborative Symposium, Albuquerque, NM



September 2015: Creating Collaborative Parenting Plans, Seminar for Collaborative mental health professionals, Collaborative Practice Center of Montgomery County, Rockville, Maryland

June 2015: Creating Collaborative Parenting Plans, Seminar for Collaborative mental health professionals involved in pro-bono work, Collaborative Practice Center of Greater Washington, Washington, DC

March 2015: Working with Divorcing Parents and Their Children: A Psychoanalytic Perspective, Program in Psychoanalytic Couple Therapy, Peking University and the International Psychotherapy Institute, Beijing, China

March 2015: The Art of Helping People Get Divorced: A Multidisciplinary Collaborative Training, Collaborative Professionals of Washington Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington

November 2014: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce, Ontario Collaborative Law Federation (OCLF), Ontario, Canada

November 2014: Upping Your Game: The Balancing Act Between Tending and Moving in Collaborative Practice, American Association of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML) Annual Conference, Chicago, IL

October 2014: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce, Collaborative Law Association of the Rochester Area (CLARA), Rochester, NY

September 2014: Why Won't They Take My Advice? Understanding and Working with Difficult Clients: A Didactic and Experiential Seminar, American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC), Mid-Atlantic Annual Meeting, Washington DC

October 2014: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce: An Advanced Multidisciplinary Training," Collaborative Law Association of the Rochester Area (CLARA), Rochester, NY

November 5, 2014: Achieving Mastery in Collaborative Law, American Association of Matrimonial Lawyers Annual Conference, Chicago, IL

December 5, 2014: Children in High Conflict Divorce: Clinical and Forensic Interventions, co-sponsored by St. Elizabeth's Hospital and George Washington University Hospital Department of Psychiatry, Washington DC

November 21, 2014: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce: A Two-Day Training Advanced Multidisciplinary Training," Ontario Collaborative Law Federation (OCLF), Toronto, Canada

March 5-7, 2015: Integrative Law: A Multidisciplinary Perspective, Mental Health Professionals, and Financial Professionals, Collaborative Professionals of Washington, Seattle WA, Pauline Tesler, JD and Lisa Herrick, PhD

March 18-26, 2015: Clinical Work with Divorcing Couples, Peking University Psychodynamic Couple and Family



Training Program, Beijing, China

April 2016: Separation and Divorce in the 21st Century: A Three-Day Training for Attorneys, Mediators, Mental Health Professionals and the Public, The International Psychotherapy Institute, Panama City, Panama

June 2014: Navigating Impasse in Collaborative Divorce (A Two-Day Training), Collaborative Divorce Association of the Capitol District (CDACD), Albany, New York

Nov. 2013: Transformative Moments: The Self as Instrument for Positive Change, Center for Educational Leadership, Baruch College, New York

Nov. 2013: Anguish, Anxiety, and Aggression: In the Moment with Our Divorcing Clients, Association of Family and Conciliation Courts Regional Conference, Kansas City, MO

October 2013: Upping Your Game: The Balancing Act Between Tending and Moving in Collaborative Divorce, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Forum, San Antonio, TX

September 2013: Creating a Deep and Durable Parenting Plan – Content and Process, a two-day didactic and experiential workshop for divorce professionals, Washington, DC

July 2013: Reaching Children's Best Interests in High Conflict Custody Cases, Children's Family Law Center, Washington DC
April 2013: The Collaborative Container, DC Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Washington DC

March 2013: Collaborative Divorce: What You and Your Clients Need to Know, Family Law Section, Washington DC

March 2013: The Role of the Mental Health Professional in Custody Cases, Family Law Section, Washington DC

January-February 2013: Introduction to Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Law, University of Maryland School of Law

January 2013: The Role of the Mental Health Professional in Collaborative Practice, Collaborative Divorce Resolution Professionals, Rockville, Maryland

October 2012: In the Moment: Anguish, Anxiety and Aggression, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Forum, Chicago, IL

August 2012: Three Day Basic Multidisciplinary Collaborative Training, Birmingham, AL



June 2012: Divorce Dynamics and the Legal System, International Psychotherapy Institute Master Teacher Series, various cities in the U.S., as well as Israel and the U.K. via video link from Omaha, NE

May 2012: Two Day Advanced Multidisciplinary Team Training, Birmingham, AL

January-December 2012: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce, several venues in the Washington, DC area
October 2011: Introduction to Collaborative Practice, Maryland Administrative Offices of the Courts, Annapolis MD

October 2011: Navigating Emotional Currents in Collaborative Divorce, Virginia Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Mclean, VA

October 2010: Not Your Average Parenting Planning Workshop: Working with the Dynamics in the Room, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Forum, Washington, DC

May 2010: Creating a Deep and Durable Parenting Plan, seminar for attorneys and mental health professionals, Bethesda, MD

October 2009: Navigating Landmines in Collaborative Practice, International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Forum, Minneapolis, MN

May 2009: Three Day Basic Multidisciplinary Team Training in Collaborative Practice, Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers (MICPEL), Annapolis, MD

May 2009: Parenting Together After Divorce, Montgomery County Divorce Roundtable conference; also participated in a multidisciplinary panel on the topic of "Parent Coordinators: Who are They and How Can They Help?" Rockville, MD

March 2008: Toxic Passivity in High Conflict Divorce, International Psychotherapy Institute, Panama City, Panama

February 2008: The Psychodynamic Evaluation of Children in Custody Disputes Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers (MICPEL), Rockville, MD

February 2008: Parenting Coordination: What Is It Anyway? presenter and panel discussant at Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers (MICPEL), Rockville, MD

2005-2008: The Art of Clinical Supervision, monthly course for mental health supervisors hosted by the National Association of Social Workers Metro Washington Chapter, Washington, DC



March 2007: High-Conflict Divorce: An Integrated Model, National Association of Social Workers Metro Washington Chapter Annual Conference, Washington DC

March 2007: Psychoanalytic Play Therapy: Theory and Technique, Family Networker Symposium, Washington DC

October 2006: The Last Taboo: Money in the Clinical Setting, co-sponsored by the Metro Washington Center of the International Psychotherapy Institute and the Metro Washington Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, Washington, DC

September-May 2006: Introduction to Sex and Sexuality: A Course for Psychotherapists, designed, staffed, and chaired this year long course for the Metro Washington Center of the International Psychotherapy Institute, Bethesda, MD

September 2006: Sexual Attitude Reassessment: Workshop for Mental Health Professionals, International Psychotherapy Institute February 2006: Love and Sex: A One-Day Conference for Mental Health Professionals, co-sponsored by International Psychotherapy Institute and National Association of Social Workers Metro Washington Chapter, Washington, DC

September 2006: Psychodynamic Clinical Supervision, organized and chaired this two-day conference, co-sponsored by the International Psychotherapy Institute Metro Chapter and National Association of Social Workers Metro Chapter, Washington DC

September 2005-May 2007: "Introduction to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy," chaired/taught this year long course for the Metro Washington Center of the International Psychotherapy Institute, Bethesda, MD

October 2005: Toxic Passivity: Working with Victimized Parents in High Conflict Divorce, International Psychotherapy Institute weekend conference, Applications of Object Relations Family Therapy, Salt Lake City, Utah

June 2005: Working with Families of High Conflict Divorce: An Integrated Model, American Family Therapy Association/International Family Therapy Association Conference, Washington DC

June 2005: Sexuality in Contemporary Psychotherapy, International Psychotherapy Institute Metro Chapter and National Association of Social Workers Metro Chapter, Washington DC

September 2005: Psychodynamic Clinical Supervision, co-sponsored by International Psychotherapy Institute Metro Chapter and National Association of Social Workers Metro Chapter, Washington DC

April 2005: Working with Families of High-Conflict Divorce, Annual Conference of the Metro Washington Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, Washington, DC



March 2005: Working with Families of High-Conflict Divorce: Therapeutic Supervision, Psychotherapy Networker Symposium, Washington, DC

January 2005: Clinical Work with High-Conflict Divorcing Families, keynote address at conference on "New Advances in Divorce," co-sponsored by the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work and the Catholic University School of Social Work, Washington, DC

September 2004: Clinical Supervision, organized and chaired this two-day conference, co-sponsored by International Psychotherapy Institute Metro Chapter and National Association of Social Workers Metro Chapter, Washington DC

March 2004: Working with Families of High-Conflict Divorce, Psychotherapy Networker Symposium, Washington, DC

January 2003: Therapeutic Supervised Visitation with Families of High-Conflict Divorce, International Psychotherapy Institute Conference, "Working with Traumatized Patients," New Orleans, LA



Board Positions/Professional Affiliations

Current

- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts
- Collaborative Divorce Resolution Professionals
- DC Academy of Collaborative Professionals, Founding Board Member, Past President
- International Academy of Collaborative Professionals

Past

- Society for Clinical Social Work, Washington, DC
- Collaborative Practice Training Institute, Founding Faculty
- Divorce Roundtable of Montgomery County, Past President
- National Association of Social Workers Metro Washington Chapter, Past Executive Board Member
- Pro Bono Collaborative Law Project of Washington DC, Founding Board Member
- Pro Bono Collaborative Law Project of Maryland, Founding Board Member

Education

Degrees

1989: Columbia University School of Social Work, New York, New York

Master of Science in Social Work

1986: Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Arts, with Honors

Psychotherapy Training

1997-2002: International Psychotherapy Institute, Chevy Chase, Maryland

Certificate training in Object Relations Therapy with individuals, couples, and families

1991-1996: Institute for Child, Adolescent, and Family Studies, New York, New York

Certificate training in psychodynamic psychotherapy with children, adolescents, and families



Additional Training (selected sample)

November 2013: Association of Family and Conciliation Courts Regional Conference, Kansas City, MO

October 2013: International Academy of Collaborative Professionals 3-Day Forum, San Antonio, Texas
April 2013: Civil and Commercial Applications in Collaborative Law

March 2013: Ethics in Custody Evaluations, Washington DC

October 2012: International Academy of Collaborative Practice 3-day Forum, Chicago, Illinois

October 2010: International Academy of Collaborative Practice 3-day Forum, Washington, DC

October 2009: International Academy of Collaborative Practice 3-day Forum, Minneapolis, MN

October 2008: International Academy of Collaborative Practice 3-day Forum, New Orleans, LA

May 2007: Team Training in Collaborative Law, Gaithersburg, MD

December 2006: 40-Hour Divorce Mediation Training, Bethesda, MD
October 2006: Advanced Collaborative Law Training, Washington, DC
March 2006: Conducting Child Custody Evaluations, Washington, DC

April 2006: Collaborative Law Basic Training, Washington, DC

December 2005: Parenting Coordination, University of Baltimore School of Law and the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

Early Professional Experience

1992-1994: New York University Graduate School of Social Work, Adjunct Clinical Professor

1991-1993: Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Brooklyn, New York, Psychotherapist

1989-1991: Outpatient Clinic of Federation Employment and Guidance Services, New York, New York,
Psychotherapist

1988-1989: Payne-Whitney Clinic of New York Hospital, New York, New York, Graduate Intern