

About Michael Becker

Michael Becker has been working with couples and individuals to solve relationship problems for more than 25 years, as a divorce mediator and an individual & couples counselor.

Michael brings a unique combination of professional training and expertise to his work, including:

- **A law degree**
- **A master's degree in marriage and family therapy**
- **An accounting degree**
- **Advanced training in individual & couples counseling**

Michael has written for and been featured in numerous legal, counseling, financial and family-related publications, including: Connecticut Magazine, Good Housekeeping, the American Journal of Family Law, Connecticut Connection (publication of Connecticut Association for Marriage and Family Therapy), Financial Planning Magazine, the Connecticut Post and the Connecticut Family Lawyer.

Michael has achieved the status of both an Association for Conflict Resolution Advanced Practitioner and an Academy of Professional Family Mediators Advanced Member. He is also a James W. Cooper Fellow of the Connecticut Bar Foundation, as well as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. Additionally, Michael is an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Pre-Clinical Fellow. He is also a Founding Member and Member Emeritus of the Fairfield University Department of Marriage and Family Therapy Advisory Board.

Michael has also developed and taught graduate-level coursework at UConn and Quinnipiac University Law Schools, as well as in the Marriage and Family Therapy Master's Degree Program at Fairfield University.

Divorce Mediation

Michael has practiced full-time divorce mediation for almost 25 years, longer than anyone in the state. He started his mediation firm in the early 1990s to help his clients cut the cost, conflict and delay of divorce. Almost three decades later, Michael is known as one of the most experienced divorce mediators in Connecticut. Michael weaves all four levels of his experience — legal, accounting, counseling and teaching — into his mediation, to help clients work out thorough, carefully thought-out and durable agreements in a calm, civil and private setting and without pressure.

Having served as a Founding Director and two-time President of the Connecticut Council for Non-Adversarial Divorce, Michael has been instrumental in the growth of mediation in Connecticut. He also chaired the Council's Legislative Committee, and served on the Standards and Qualifications Committee, which wrote the first Standards of Practice for Connecticut mediators.

Michael's contributions to the advancement of mediation as a profession also include public speaking, writing, supervising interns, as well as providing training for mental health agencies.

Individual & Couples Counseling

In his counseling practice, Michael helps people get 'unstuck.' He strongly believes that unstuck people lead healthier, more connected, happier lives. They are more effective in their personal lives, at work, and in relationships. And they make better, more loving partners and parents.

Individual Counseling. Michael helps people get out of a rut, or feel less overwhelmed, anxious, hopeless or down. This enables them to choose a different path, and become happier, find greater purpose and fulfillment, be more in control of their lives — or just have more fun. He often uses the Internal Family Systems (IFS) approach, which helps people to identify the underlying, deeper things keeping them stuck, and then healing them. This leaves clients more in charge of their lives, freeing them to move forward in whatever direction they choose.

Couples Counseling. Michael helps couples feel more connected, less lonely or stop the same old argument by helping them to build a safe and loving connection. This helps them to improve communication, bring peace to the relationship, renew trust and connection — or just plain enjoy each other again. Michael often uses an approach called Intimacy from the Inside Out (IFIO), which, which was developed specifically for couples counseling. Its basic premise is that everyone needs to be understood by their partner, to have a secure and loving connection with their partner, and to be able to communicate with their partner. IFIO, based on the Internal Family Systems approach, provides couples with the tools to accomplish this.

Discernment Counseling

Deciding whether to stay married or get divorced is one of the most difficult and complex relationship decisions most people ever make. For couples facing this dilemma, Michael offers Discernment Counseling. It's a short-term decision-making process designed specifically to help these couples decide whether to stay married, and then possibly engage in couples counseling, or instead move toward separation or divorce. Discernment Counseling is a well-developed, brief process designed to help get the couple unstuck and moving forward, in whatever direction they choose. Couples emerge from Discernment Counseling with clarity about the current state of their relationship, as well with a decision about what's next for their marriage — and with confidence to know that they've made this decision well.

Discernment Counseling isn't couples counseling. Rather, it is a structured assessment process, not treatment, designed to help couples evaluate their relationship and take action.