



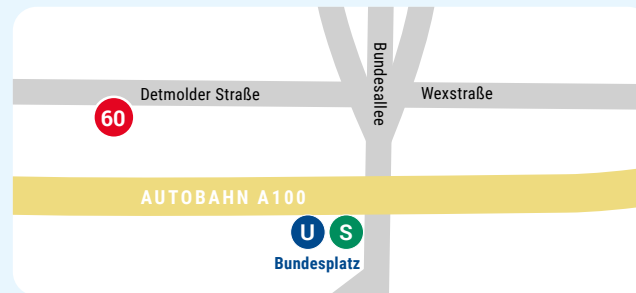
Counselling languages:
German, English.

Our offer is free of charge.

In addition to high-conflict parents, we also support professionals who work with high-conflict parents (specialist counselling, further training, etc.)

Please contact us by telephone or e-mail if you have any questions about this offer, for advice and network enquiries.

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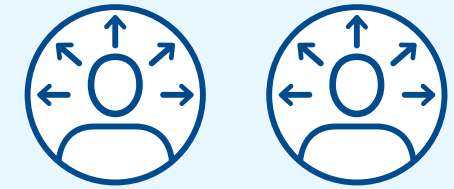
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Purpose of use: Spende

The Gemeinsamer Nenner is a sub-project of the association Selbst.bestimmt e.V., the specialist centre for conflict resolution and violence prevention (www.selbst-bestimmt-berlin.de).

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Gemeinsamer Nenner

**Relief for
high-conflict parents**



Relief for high-conflict parents

Separation and divorce generally represent a difficult phase of life for the former partners as well as for the children involved, which is associated with numerous challenges. While most parents manage to find a way of dealing with their new life situation as time passes after the separation and remain in contact with each other in the interests of their children, there are also families in which the level of conflict remains high. Direct or indirect contact between the parents repeatedly triggers new conflicts and the situation becomes increasingly stressful for everyone involved.

Persistently irreconcilable conflicts at parental level not only severely restrict the parents' life satisfaction in the long term but can also cause considerable developmental disadvantages for the children at the centre of the parental conflicts. In these cases, we speak of high-conflict or highly contentious parental conflicts.

High-conflict is characterized among other things by:

- several court cases, whereby decisions/agreements reached are often subsequently called into question or unilaterally terminated by one or both parents
- allegations of physical, psychological, and sexual violence
- communication characterised by accusations, insults, and threats
- extensive use of professional support services (e.g. youth welfare office, counselling centres, mediation, etc.) without any lasting improvements in communication being achieved as a result

- strong direct and indirect involvement of the children in parental conflict issues and the associated stress reactions of the children
- significant impairment of at least one parent, the parental relationship, and the relationship of one or both parents with the children as a result of the ongoing conflicts

In order to counteract a progressive escalation as early as possible, we offer parents a specific counselling service that meets the special requirements of high-conflict family systems. The counselling setting is characterised by separate counselling sessions between one parent and a co-team of counsellors. Joint parental conversations are not a necessary goal of the counselling process, but under certain conditions (e.g. the consent of both parents) they can take place selectively and on a topic-related basis during the further course of counselling. Through a separate counselling setting, we offer high-conflict parents the opportunity to step out of the often emotionally charged escalation spiral, reduce their own stress levels, and gradually replace dysfunctional conflict strategies with more suitable forms of contact. The children concerned are included in the counselling process in an appropriate manner.

As part of the individual counselling sessions, we work with parents on the following topics:

- how they can take responsibility for their own emotional well-being
- what they need to be able to fulfil their parental responsibilities again in a self-determined way and in the interests of their children
- what resources, ideas and opportunities they can (again) contribute in the interests of their children
- how they can act more independently in conflicts with the other parent and thus relieve themselves and their children
- how they can become increasingly independent of support services and courts
- how they can succeed in living out their responsibility towards their children in a stable way in shared parenthood and appropriately limit any conflicts that arise

Pendulum mediation

A necessary exchange of information between the parents is achieved during the counselling period using the method of pendulum mediation. As part of the pendulum mediation, the counsellors work with one parent towards a possible solution model. The resulting proposed solution is then discussed with the other parent with the written consent of one parent. This goes back and forth in a pendulum until a joint solution model has been developed. The aim of pendulum mediation is for the parents to come to an agreement or arrangement that they both feel is workable.

The method of pendulum mediation can also be used by the parents to enter into an exchange with each other through the mediating counsellors and can include, for example, questions, complaints, feedback or a pure exchange of information.