

Code For Clarity  
*divorce coaching & therapy*



# CALM COMMUNICATION KIT



SCRIPTS AND LANGUAGE PATTERNS TO HELP YOU  
RESPOND WITH CALM CLARITY — ESPECIALLY IN  
HIGH-CONFLICT SITUATIONS.

[WWW.CODEFORCLARITY.CO.UK](http://WWW.CODEFORCLARITY.CO.UK)

# BEFORE YOU BEGIN

High-conflict communication is exhausting. Whether you're navigating a separation, co-parenting after divorce, or managing an ongoing difficult relationship, the pressure to respond — quickly, calmly, and without making things worse — can feel overwhelming.

This kit gives you the tools to do exactly that.

It's not about being cold or shutting people out. It's about finding your footing before you speak, choosing words that protect you without escalating things, and knowing that you don't have to justify, defend, or explain yourself to anyone.



Work through it once to familiarise yourself. Then keep it somewhere accessible — because the moments you'll need it most are the moments you'll have the least headspace to think.

How to use this kit: Use the CALM Framework when you don't know where to start. Reach for the Scripts when you need words fast. Check your message against the Checklist before you send. Use the Rewrite Worksheet when something feels off but you can't see why. And keep the Quick Reference somewhere visible — your phone, your fridge, your desk.

**THIS KIT IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL OR THERAPEUTIC ADVICE. IF YOU ARE IN A DIFFICULT LEGAL SITUATION, PLEASE SEEK APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT.**



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# PART 1: THE CALM FRAMEWORK

## ■ C - CHECK YOUR STATE FIRST

Before you type or speak a single word, pause. Use the STOP tool: Step back, Think, Observe your state, Proceed with intention.

If your chest is tight, your thoughts are racing, or you're already composing a reply in your head — you're in reaction mode. That's not the time to communicate. Save the draft. Step away. Come back when you're grounded.

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## ■ A – ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT'S ACTUALLY HAPPENING

You don't have to agree with someone to acknowledge them. Acknowledgement disarms escalation. It sounds like: "I can see this matters to you" — not "you're right."

This isn't about being soft. It's about removing the fuel from the fire before you say what you actually need to say.

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## ■ L – LIMIT YOUR WORDS

In high-conflict situations, more words = more ammunition. The BIFF principle applies here: keep it Brief, Informative, Friendly (or at least neutral), and Firm.

Say the essential thing only. Resist the urge to explain, justify, or defend — that's the JADE trap. One clear sentence is more powerful than a paragraph.

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## ■ M – MAKE A NEUTRAL CLOSE

End every communication with something that doesn't invite a fight. No sarcasm, no passive aggression, no "as I said before."

A neutral close keeps the door functional without being warm when warmth isn't warranted. It signals: I am in control of this conversation, even if you are not.

# PART 2: SCRIPTS

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## SCRIPTS FOR COMMON FLASHPOINTS

Use these as-is or lightly adapt them. They are factual, bounded, and non-inflammatory. Notice how none of them JADE — there's no justifying, arguing, defending, or explaining.

### **WHEN YOU'RE BEING ACCUSED OF SOMETHING UNTRUE:**

"I DON'T RECOGNISE THAT AS AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT. I'M GOING TO FOCUS ON WHAT WE NEED TO RESOLVE GOING FORWARD."

### **WHEN SOMEONE IS PRESSURING YOU FOR AN IMMEDIATE ANSWER:**

"I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO RESPOND TO THIS RIGHT NOW. I'LL COME BACK TO YOU BY [DATE/TIME]."

### **WHEN A MESSAGE IS AGGRESSIVE OR ABUSIVE IN TONE:**

"I'M HAPPY TO CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION WHEN THE TONE IS RESPECTFUL. I WON'T BE RESPONDING TO MESSAGES LIKE THIS ONE."

### **WHEN YOU'RE BEING DRAWN INTO AN ARGUMENT ABOUT THE PAST:**

"WE MAY SEE THAT DIFFERENTLY. WHAT I'D LIKE TO FOCUS ON IS [THE SPECIFIC ISSUE AT HAND]."

# PART 2: SCRIPTS

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## **WHEN SOMEONE KEEPS COPYING OTHERS IN UNNECESSARILY:**

"I NOTICE OTHERS HAVE BEEN COPIED INTO THIS. GOING FORWARD I'D PREFER WE KEEP OUR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN US UNLESS THERE'S A PROFESSIONAL REASON TO INVOLVE OTHERS."

## **WHEN A CO-PARENT IS UNDERMINING ARRANGEMENTS:**

"THE ARRANGEMENTS WE HAVE IN PLACE ARE [X]. I'D ASK THAT YOU FOLLOW THEM. IF YOU'D LIKE TO DISCUSS A CHANGE, PLEASE PUT IT IN WRITING AND I'LL CONSIDER IT."

## **WHEN YOU RECEIVE A WALL OF TEXT OR EMOTIONAL DUMP:**

"THERE'S A LOT IN THIS MESSAGE. I'M GOING TO TAKE SOME TIME TO READ IT PROPERLY AND COME BACK TO YOU ON THE SPECIFIC POINTS THAT NEED A RESPONSE."

## **WHEN YOU NEED TO MAKE A CLEAR, ASSERTIVE REQUEST (USING DEAR MAN):**

"THE LAST THREE DROP-OFFS HAVE BEEN 30-45 MINUTES LATE. THIS MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN ROUTINE FOR THE CHILDREN. I NEED DROP-OFFS TO HAPPEN AT THE AGREED TIME. CONSISTENT TIMEKEEPING BENEFITS EVERYONE."

## **WHEN COMMUNICATION HAS COMPLETELY BROKEN DOWN:**

"GIVEN WHERE THINGS ARE, I THINK IT'S BEST WE COMMUNICATE IN WRITING ONLY, AND ONLY ABOUT [THE CHILDREN / THE FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT / THE MATTER AT HAND]."

# PART 3: BOUNDARY LINES

## BOUNDARY LINES THAT DON'T INVITE DEBATE

*These phrases are complete sentences. Do not add softeners, apologies, or explanations after them. Explaining a boundary is the beginning of negotiating it.*

### SITUATION

### WHAT TO SAY

**Being contacted outside agreed hours**

"I respond to messages between [hours]. I'll pick this up then."

**Asked to discuss things verbally when you need a record**

"I'd prefer to keep this in writing."

**Pressured to decide on the spot**

"I'll let you know once I've had time to consider it."

**Receiving personal attacks**

"I'm not going to engage with this."

**Being guilt-tripped**

"I understand you feel that way. My decision stands."

**Requests that cross legal boundaries**

"This is something that needs to go through the proper process."

**Demands for your reasons**

"I've given you my answer. I'm not going to debate it."

A boundary stated once, clearly, is enough. Repeating it is optional. Defending it is not required. When you feel the pull to over-explain — that's JADE calling. Don't answer.

# PART 4: THE CHECKLIST

## THE 60-SECOND "SHOULD I SEND THIS?" CHECKLIST

*Before you hit send, work through this. If in doubt, start with the WAIT question: Would Anyone's Interest be Served by This?*

- Am I calm? If not – use STOP, save as draft, come back in an hour.
- Is this necessary? Does this message need to exist at all? (WAIT)
- Is it factual? Have I removed opinions, assumptions, and emotional language? (FACT)
- Is it BIFF? Brief, Informative, Friendly/neutral, Firm?
- Is it proportionate? Am I responding to what was actually said – not the worst interpretation of it?
- Would I be comfortable if a judge, mediator, or solicitor read this? In separation cases: assume they will.
- Have I JADEd? Remove any justifying, arguing, defending, or explaining that isn't strictly necessary.
- Have I used any of these? → Remove them: "As I've already said / You always / You never / That's ridiculous / I can't believe you / Fine."
- Does it end neutrally? No sarcasm, no parting shots.
- Is it the shortest version of what I need to say? If not – cut it down.

If you answered **NO** to any of the above: do not send yet. Edit until you can check every box.

# PART 5: THE REWRITE CHECKLIST

## THE REWRITE WORKSHEET

*Use this when you've drafted something and it doesn't feel right yet. Apply the FACT filter throughout: is every sentence Factual, Action-focused, Clear, and Tonally neutral?*

**Step 1** – Dump Draft Write your first draft freely. Get it all out. This version is not for sending. Give yourself permission to be angry, hurt, or blunt here – it's just for you.

**Step 2** – Highlight the Hot Spots Go through and mark anything that:

- Sounds defensive or justifying (JADE)
- Contains emotional language (frustrated, hurt, furious, can't believe)
- Makes assumptions about the other person's motives
- Includes anything that could be used against you
- Breaks BIFF – too long, too personal, too vague, or too soft

**Step 3** – Apply the Filter Questions For each highlighted section, ask:

- What is the actual information I need to convey here?
- What is the specific outcome I want from this message?
- Is this sentence doing work, or is it venting?
- Does it pass FACT – Factual, Action-focused, Clear, Tonally neutral?

**Step 4** – Rewrite to the Bones Strip it back to: fact + request or response + neutral close. Nothing else.

**Step 5** – Read It Aloud If it sounds like you're gritting your teeth, it'll read that way too. Revise until it sounds like someone calm and in control – because you are.

### BEFORE & AFTER EXAMPLES:

#### BEFORE

**"I cannot believe you're doing this again. Every single time we agree on something you go back on it. This is exactly why I don't trust you. The answer is no."**

**"Fine, do whatever you want, you always do anyway."**

**"I'm really struggling with how you're speaking to me and I just think it would be better if we could try to be more respectful."**

**"I declined because I had a lot going on and it wasn't a good time and I'd already explained my reasons twice before."**

#### AFTER

"My position on this hasn't changed. The answer is no."

"Noted." (or no reply at all)

"I'd ask that we keep communication respectful. I'll do the same."

"I've already given my answer on this."

# QUICK REFERENCE: ACRONYM TOOLKIT

## QUICK REFERENCE

### YOUR ACRONYM TOOLKIT

*Six tools that cover almost every high-conflict communication moment. Save this page somewhere visible.*

**Card 1:** 🛑 STOP Before you respond Step back · Think · Observe your state · Proceed with intention Use when: you feel flooded, triggered, or reactive

**Card 2:** ⏳ WAIT Before you send Would Anyone's Interest be This? Use when: you're not sure if a message needs to exist at all

**Card 3:** 🚫 JADE What not to do Don't Justify · Argue · Defend · Explain Use when: you feel the pull to over-explain a boundary or decision

**Card 4:** ✉️ BIFF How to write it Brief · Informative · Friendly or neutral · Firm Use when: drafting any written communication in a high-conflict situation

**Card 5:** 🔍 FACT How to check it Factual · Action-focused · Clear · Tonally neutral Use when: rewriting a message that feels too emotional or too long

**Card 6:** 💬 DEAR MAN When you need to ask for something Describe · Express · Assert · Reinforce stay Mindful · Appear confident · Negotiate Use when: making a specific request or raising a concern assertively



YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET IT  
PERFECT. YOU JUST HAVE TO GET  
IT CALM.

If this kit has been useful and you'd like more personalised support navigating the emotional and legal complexities of separation, I'm here to help.

I offer a blended approach of emotional support, legal clarity, and practical guidance – so you can move through this process with confidence and calm.

BOOK A DIVORCE CLARITY SESSION  
@ CODEFORCLARITY.CO.UK

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*This kit is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or therapeutic advice.*

