

ZOË DURAND - MEDIATOR

Principal, Nationally Accredited Mediator, Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner & Lawyer

APAC Insider Legal Awards 2019 and 2020
Family Law Mediator of the Year, Australia &
Best Family Law Publication for Inside Family Law



EXPERIENCE

Zoë Durand has a wealth of experience (15 years PQE) primarily specialising in family law (both parenting and property) in a national private practice law firm. She has won the 2019 and 2020 APAC Insider Legal Awards for Family Law Mediator of the Year (Australia) and also the 2019 Best Family Law Publication for Inside Family Law.

This ground breaking and highly publicised book was recommended as a “*must read*” by The Honourable Peter Rose AM QC (former Family Court Judge) and is on the recommended reading list for Family Law at several universities. She has also edited CCH’s Master Family Law Guide and Family Law Practice and Procedure and authored the Law Society Journal case notes and guest lectured in family law at UNSW.

Property - Prior to family law, Zoë worked at leading national and international commercial law firms (K&L Gates and HWL Ebsworth) giving her a financial acumen that is highly desirable in family law property matters. She is also the Co-founder and CEO of FutureCase, the first pre-diagnostic tool for family lawyers in property matters (www.futurecase.net).

Parenting - She has worked as a Court Appointed Independent Children’s Lawyer at Legal Aid and is a qualified Parenting Coordinator (PCA), lending her an insight into the needs and perspectives of children, including in the most complex parenting matters.

From her experience in commercial firms, private practice family law and Legal Aid, Zoë has a way of connecting with diverse clients from all walks of life - from multinational corporate clients, to societies most wealthy, and also its most vulnerable individuals. In terms of legal issues, her broader experience also provides a distinct advantage in family law, where other areas of law often become relevant.

Zoë’s other relevant experience includes:

Education

- Nationally Accredited Mediator, Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP), qualified Collaborative lawyer.
- Masters of Applied Family Law (College of Law), Bachelor of Law Degree and Bachelor of Arts Degree (first class honours) from UNSW.
- Qualified Parenting Coordinator with Parenting Coordination Australia.

Employment

- 15 years PQE
- Years of prior experience as a family lawyer in a large national firm acting in family law parenting and property matters.
- Court Appointed Independent Children’s Lawyer at Legal Aid.
- Volunteer at Youth Law Australia, providing legal advice to children.
- Previously worked at leading national and international commercial law firms K&L Gates and HWL Ebsworth.
- Currently a consultant family lawyer.

Academic, Author & Speaker

- Editor of CCH’s most recent Master Family Law Guide and Family Law Practice and Procedure Alternative Dispute Resolution chapter.
- Author of *Inside Family Law*, which is on the recommended reading list at many Universities.
- Hosts the *Inside Family Law* podcast (www.zoedurand.podbean.com and on Spotify) including interviews with The Hon. Stephen Thackray, The Hon. Diana Bryant AO QC, Judge Tom Altobelli, Judge Alexandra Harland, Judge Joe Harman, The Hon Mark La Poer Trench, The Hon Peter Rose AM QC and leading family law experts from around the world
- Authored family law case notes for the NSW Law Society Journal, reviewing the latest family law cases.
- Featured for her insights on the ABC, Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, The Age, The Daily Telegraph, A Current Affair, 9 News, 10Daily, Mamamia, 9Honey, The NSW Law Society Journal and Lawyers Weekly.
- Frequent key note speaker on family law including for UNSW The Edge programs, The Law Society Young Lawyers events, and the World Litigation Forum.
- Guest lecturer in family law at UNSW, Faculty of Law.
- On the ground correspondent who reported live at the AFCC (Association of Family and Conciliation Courts) conference.

Organisations and memberships

- Founded Women’s Nexus, a professional and business networking organisation for women, which has hosted talks from Judges and other leading Court experts.
- Member of the Family Law Section of the Law Council of Australia, the Women Lawyers Association of NSW, the Asian Australian Lawyers Association and the French Australian Lawyers Society.
- Zoë has Australian / Taiwanese Citizenship and French Permanent Residency. Her daughter has French / Australian citizenship. She has a real life understanding of cross cultural issues in families.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

"Dear Zoe, I wanted to extend my debt of gratitude for your efforts today in assisting my client at the parenting and property mediation to achieve an outcome that (to my observation) all parties recognised was fair and just. You did so by treating each of the parties with respect, working with not only the parties but the lawyers. I feel that both clients felt they had been heard, and even where they struggled to express themselves your 'take out' was accurate and gratefully adopted.

Please be assured you made a positive difference to 2 people today and their 2 children. 4 people are now ready to enter the next chapter of their lives with optimism. Thank you.

Regards, Greg Parker"

- Greg Parker, Partner, Swaab Attorneys, Sydney

"Just a note to say thank you for your efforts in our recent mediation. I am very grateful for the work you put in, both in terms of preparation, and in terms of working with the parties on the day. The mediation proceeded with a lovely blend of firmness and kindness, and I know that for my client it was a positive experience."

- Jacqui Dawson, Partner, Sexton Family Law, Sydney

"There is no other book like *Inside Family Law*. This book is 'prime real estate' because of its range of practical knowledge from leading experts... in my opinion a copy of this book is a must for all institutions teaching family law, for family lawyers or those going through the process firsthand."

- The Honourable Peter Rose AM QC

former Family Court Judge, mediator, arbitrator and adjunct lecturer at Sydney University

"I write to extend a debt of thanks to you for the assistance that you have provided recently to two of my clients in Mediations. I note that one of those Mediations dealt with property issues and the other dealt with a complex parenting arrangement.

You attacked each of the disputes in a unique and well thought out way which showed the clients, and me, that you had not only read and understood the material presented to you but had also thought quite considerably about how you could assist the parties in resolving their matter and moving forward.

There are many Mediators out there who simply pick up a Brief, moments before the Mediation is to commence and it is refreshing that you have broken the mould in this respect and come willing to devote all of your attention, focus and knowledge to genuinely providing assistance.

Your calm and comical manner suits well to the Mediation environment and I will be sure to recommend your services to other Practitioners.

I wish you well in the development of your Mediation practice and I look forward to working with you in other matters, so that sensible solutions can be found for clients, without waiting years in the Court system."

- Amy Jenkins, Partner, Russell Kennedy Lawyers, Sydney

"Hi Zoe, thank you for assisting the parties yesterday to resolve their property and parenting matters.

You structured the mediation in accordance with exactly what the parties needed to reach a resolution. You were personable and relatable with my client, empathetic where necessary but also straight down the line.

It was a pleasure working with you and I would not hesitate to recommend you as a mediator to any family law practitioner.

Kind Regards, Briony"

- Briony Doyle, Associate, Fox & Staniland Lawyers, Sydney

"Hi Zoe. Thanks again for the mediation yesterday. My client informed me that he felt comforted by your intake session with him in the lead up, and that seemed to make for a more open and trusting start to the day with you from his perspective. There were some tense times there, but between the parties; but you managed to summarise the issues and defuse any tension seamlessly. I'm sure they are both relieved that all matters have now been resolved. Looking forward to working with you again!"

- Courtney Mullen, Director, Australian Family Lawyers, Canberra

Hi Zoe,

Thank you so much for the way you conducted our mediation. It was an unusual matter, where one party was self represented, requiring sensitivity and flexibility. Having a partial shuttle, and partial joint mediation gave us a way forward, and we reached a resolution. My client and I appreciated your knowledge and professionalism but also your warmth and understanding.

Sincerely and gratefully,

Jo"

- Joanna Knight, Barrister, Frederick Jordan Chambers

"Thanks for today. You were really prepared and it was obvious you were on top of all the issues. I also appreciate you recognised the right time when there was a need to separate the parties. Thanks for being respectful with the clients and showing empathy. I will be using you again and recommending you to others."

- Maria Monastiriotis, Lawyer and Group principal, Nexus Lawyers, Sydney

"Mediation with Zoe is a thoroughly professional and structured process. Whether it be hearing out the technical arguments of legal practitioners or the more personal concerns of the parties, Zoe conducts her mediations with a masterful balance between ensuring a generous airing of the parties' individual perspectives and keeping negotiations within reasonable

bounds in the interests of a favourable and timely resolution, maintaining all the while a rigorous impartiality. Zoe's multifaceted experience in the practical application of family law is evident throughout the mediation process, and where resolution or agreement are possible, parties are assured of a tireless perseverance from Zoe in considering all options and making all attempts to bring finality to proceedings."

- Muhamed Mehmedbasic, lawyer, JB Solicitors, Sydney

Hi Zoe, thank you for assisting my client in mediation for her property settlement matter. I appreciate your understanding and caring nature towards my client at such an emotional time.

- Kirralee Dixon-Hall, lawyer, Rafton Family Lawyers, Richmond

"Zoë thanks for today. You did a really good job at identifying the issues in dispute and helping the parties reach agreement. The process allowed the parties to look at things from a different perspective. I was very impressed with your work and the process."

- Audrey Diliberto, lawyer, Bell Lawyers, Penrith

"Thanks Zoe well done today. Good friendly approach pays dividends I think. Upon reflection I think your strength as a mediator is that in your approach at mediation it is not about you, but is about the clients."

- Alan Taylor, lawyer, North Coast Law, Palmwoods, QLD

"Zoe - thanks for today. You were attentive and listened to the client and both the legal representatives concerns and information. I thought you did well to put the clients at ease. Also importantly, you acted impartially and fairly."

- Andrew Smith, barrister at University Chambers, Sydney

"Dear Zoe

Thanks for your assistance recently. I know it was a complicated mediation both in terms of parenting and property issues. Thanks for establishing a good rapport with the clients and also your helpful suggestions as to the way forward. You were empathetic and attentive and I look forward to working with you again. Thanks."

- Dianna Kovacevic, Principal, Kovacevic Lawyers, Woollongong

"Zoe just wanted to say that from start to finish you conducted your mediation in a relaxed, but professional way that was conducive to resolution. Your manner puts the parties at ease which meant they were more open to listening to each other. You were realistic about the outcomes of mediation and focused on reaching agreement that will last. I will be recommending you to others."

-Melissa Sharpe, Sharpe Legal and Conveyancing, Sydney

"Thank you Zoe for your help in the recent parenting matter. The parties started a long way apart and I saw no prospect of the matter settling. You worked tirelessly over the course of the day and were able to get the parties to focus on their child, rather than on their dispute with each other. You were empathetic, kind and determined. It was great to get to a set of consent orders signed and sent to Court for filing, all in one day. Thank you, Zoe."

-Thomas Galton, Senior Associate, Ryan Seton Law, Central Coast

"Dear Zoe, thank you for your assistance on Friday to help the parties reach a resolution of their property settlement. You worked hard with both parties to help them reach an outcome that was just and equitable for them both, in a matter that had stalled and was dragging on too long. You treated both parties with respect and allowed them to be heard and understood, which is what was needed to reach a resolution in the matter. Your approach, especially with the exchange of information and summary of the issues and approaches to settlement, really helped both parties focus on the reality of the situation and work towards a settlement"

- Alana Jacquet, Managing Director, Lawyer, Our Lawyers, Mittagong, Southern Highlands

"Dear Zoe, Thank you for your excellent efforts at our recent mediation which resulted in settlement of a matter that had been going through the Court system for about 18 months. Your approach kept energy levels maintained throughout the process and your ability to encourage our clients to look for other options when the parties seemed to be at an impasse was handled in a respectful and measured way and was instrumental in getting our client over the line. We look forward to working with you for future mediations and we will be recommending you to colleagues."

- Irene Pickel, partner, Pickel Legal, Bowral, Southern Highlands

"I have known Ms Zoe Durand for many years in various professional settings including solicitor, ICL, mediator and presenter.

I have always found Ms Durand to be extremely knowledgeable, professional and approachable with a keen interest in resolving matters.

In her most recent role as mediator, my client engaged Zoe to preside over a difficult family law matter involving complex issues that had affected the family for many years and caused the breakdown of the relationship. Zoe was understanding of my client's position and anguish and assisted me and the other solicitor in negotiating a reasonable property settlement for the parties and avoiding lengthy court times and legal costs.

Zoe made my client feel comfortable, confident in her advice and satisfied with the resolution.

I would highly recommend Zoe for any role as a mediation/arbitrator and with her wealth of legal experience, kindness and empathy towards clients she would be an asset in any role."

- Agatha Satala, principal, Agatha Satala and Associates

"Recently I represented a party in a family law mediation conducted by Zoe Durand. The mediation involved both parenting and property matters and was run over a number of hours by way of shuttle style.

Zoe from the start outlined her role and the objectives of the proceedings to our client and emphasised the benefit of finding a possible outcome on the day. Zoe listened well and was understanding of our client's circumstances and her warm and calm demeanour quickly gained the trust of our client.

While the mediation was held by shuttle style, Zoe brought both legal practitioners together to understand their respective positions and applied a significant amount of reality checking to the positions put forward.

Zoe's strengths are her strong communication skills and easy paced nature which ensured that a positive and fair resolution was found in this difficult matter.

Buckley Lawyers would have no hesitation in recommending Zoe for any type of family law dispute and we will continue to call upon Zoe's services in the future."

- Matthew Buckley, Principal, Buckley Lawyers

"I believe Zoe has an exceptionally professional and objective approach to mediation. In my experience, Zoe shows no favour to either party and provides an objective assessment of the respective parties' cases. She assesses the relative strength and weaknesses of each party's case and facilitates the parties arriving at a position that is within range of what the court may order if called upon to do so. I highly recommend Zoe".

- Sim Moore, Principal, Sim & Co Legal Services

"Hi Zoe. I have now had the opportunity to do a number of mediations with you and each one has been conducted in a smooth and efficient manner. You have been able to easily identify issues in dispute, focus the attention on the best way forward to resolve the issues and also work with the clients and explore different perspectives and approaches to achieve a fair outcome. I look forward to continuing to use your services in the future".

- Andrew Larque, Marsdens Law Group

"Zoe was very professional and did an excellent job in ensuring that discussions between the parties and legal practitioners remained constructive. Zoe made our client feel comfortable, while still being realistic as to an achievable outcome. Zoe assisted immensely in reaching a settlement in a property and parenting matter that had already been litigated for two years. We would highly recommend Zoe as a mediator."

- Montana Mosca and Jean Alim, Marsdens Law Group

"Dear Zoe,

I refer to the above matter and to the successful mediation that was conducted today.

I have to say that having attended and participated in many mediations in my 10 years of practice, this was a great event.

The way the mediation was conducted by you was simply amazing. The whole session was smooth and it flowed spontaneously and effortlessly. My client was so happy that I will definitely recommend you to anyone. The success today is attributable only to you.

All the best and keep in touch. I look forward to working with you again."

- Vaikom Sundar Rajeev, Vaikom Law

"Zoe is a pragmatic and insightful mediator who works tirelessly to resolve disputes. She is a delight to work with and we will continue to engage her services. Thanks Zoe for the wonderful results."

- Kylie Burke, Partner, Burke & Mangan Lawyers

"Dear Zoe,

Thank you for having accepted the role of being the mediator for this matter. We appreciate your time and efforts.

We would like to express our gratitude to you for attending to the mediation in a courteous, polite, professional manner. We found your methods very professional, well thought out and conciliatory.

Thank you kindly and looking forward to working with you in future."

- Alexandra Wilcock and Pamela Cominos, Cominos Family Lawyers

"Zoe is an incredibly objective and compassionate mediator. In a recent mediation Zoe was committed to exploring all avenues to get to the underlying issues. It was a matter that looked doomed from the start but Zoe was able to find something the parties could move forward on. Thank you for your hard work and dedication in persisting in what was a particularly difficult matter."

- Katrene Halteh, Partner, Urban Family Lawyers

"I have used Zoe as a mediator and would describe her as enthusiastic and committed in the way she approaches her work. She struck me as being absolutely committed to doing everything in her power to ensure the parties reached a settlement and this sort of "hands on" approach is a very valuable attribute in a family law mediator. She obviously has a great

understanding of the issues from her years in practice but it is her very practical and relatable style that I think works best in family law matters. I have no hesitation in recommending her for family law mediations."

- Andrew Capelin, Partner, Capelin Lawyers

"I have been practicing in the area of Family Law since 1997.

During my period of practice, I have engaged a number of Family Law Mediators for the purpose of assisting clients resolve issues pertaining to the division of matrimonial property and/or parenting matters.

I have previously utilised the services of Zoe Durand as a Family Law Mediator and on each occasion I have found Zoe to be professional, compassionate, empathic and extremely focused.

I would highly recommend Zoe Durand as a Family Law Mediator."

- Paul Mereniuk, Partner, Peninsula Law, Central Coast

"Hi Zoe, thank you so much for your assistance with our matter. I really appreciate the time and effort you put in especially booking the mediation urgently and the short amount of time you had to conduct intake sessions. Through your assistance we were able to settle parenting matters on a final basis and my client is grateful for that."

- Monique Loveday, Senior Associate, Frank Law

"Zoe was the mediator in a particularly complex parenting matter where we were able to achieve an outcome in the best interests of the children. Her experience and active role in the mediation contributed strongly to achieving that outcome. As an ICL and experienced family lawyer I couldn't recommend her strongly enough."

- Warrick Hawkins

"Zoe possesses all traits of a good mediator. She is understanding, patient and trust worthy. She is willing to spend time really drilling down the issues and understand the hidden barriers that prevent the parties from reaching agreement. She is able to pass the parties' offers and opinions in a constructive way so it is easier for it to be accepted. I strong recommend Zoe and I look forward to working with her again."

- Lucia Gao, Solicitors, Diamond Conway Lawyers

"Dear Zoe

Thank you for conducting our recent shuttle mediation. My client had contacted you independently and I was impressed with the setting out of your services on your website. My first impressions were reinforced during our telephone intake sessions and then again during the course of the mediation itself. You were personable towards the client in explaining the way the mediation would work and emphasising everyone's role in the mediation. You dealt with the parties and the legal representatives throughout the course of the mediation with professionalism and expertise."

- Nyree Deirmendjian, Partner, EH Tebbutt & Sons Lawyers

"Zoe, thanks for your help. You were professional, easy to work with and great at identifying the main issues for the parties. You really are a great mediator who gets straight to the point to help parties resolve their issues."

- Jessica Strangio, Access Law Group

"Dear Zoe,

Thank you for your assistance at the mediation for my client. It has been a long protracted matter and you were able to understand the nuances of the clients and their disagreements to help them agree. I also appreciated your persistence in that you continued the mediation up until the time an agreement was signed. Your approach was tailored to the clients and you were pleasant and impartial. I would certainly recommend you as a mediator.

Kind Regards."

- Anne Day, Anne Day & Associates Lawyers

"Dear Zoe, thank you for your assistance with our recent mediation. At the commencement of the mediation there did not seem like a resolution would be reached. You worked very hard (and late) in a difficult parenting matter to reach a resolution."

- Luke Meehan, Holmes Donnelly

"Hi Zoe,

I trust you are keeping well. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. It was a difficult matter and I do not believe it would have resolved without your assistance. I think it is a great outcome without having to commence proceedings.

Many thanks and I hope to see you in person again soon."

- Harpreet Bawa, Justice Family Lawyers

"Thank you Zoe for your professionalism and persistence in our recent mediation.

It is difficult when one party is self-represented, but you clearly outlined the processes for the day for the parties and managed the shuttle process so smoothly. Your sensitivity and strong communication skills allowed the parties to reach agreement very lengthy negotiations.

It was a pleasure to work with you and we are grateful for your expertise as an objective Mediator who is willing to take the extra time and effort to assist the parties reach a settlement. Look forward to working with you again. "

- Penny Ling, Cominos Family Lawyers

I would like to express my gratitude for your efforts in the property settlement mediation. The intake session with my client prior to the day assisted them in feeling at ease and after the mediation they reported that they were very happy with how the mediation was run. You ran the mediation in a fair and impartial manner, while also adding input where required.

Importantly, you were extremely empathetic towards and my client and made her feel listened to and at ease while delicate issues were discussed. Thanks again for your assistance and I look forward to working with you again in the future."

- James Nelson

"I can't recommend Zoe enough as a patient and thoughtful mediator. She puts the parties at ease from the beginning of the day and at the end of the day she is still working hard to bring about a resolution.

- Kathy Matri, East Coast Family Lawyers

"We used Zoe in a matter recently and with her assistance we were able to resolve a matter which did not appear from the outset to be able to be resolvable but with her guidance and pragmatic approach we were able to get there in the end and a bonus was that her fees are affordable for most clients. We will definitely use her service again."

- Nicola Benbow, Sharon Moss Legal

"We engaged Zoe as mediator in a complex parenting and property matter. With Zoe's exemplary negotiation skills we were able to resolve the property aspect of the matter which was a great relief for our client. I highly recommend Zoe's services. She made our client feel comfortable, respected, and heard throughout the mediation."

- Jessica Koot

"I have had the pleasure of engaging Zoe in both parenting and property family law mediations. Zoe is extremely knowledgeable across all areas of family law and displays a calm presence to clients during their mediation but is also ready and willing to take control where necessary to ensure that all matters are resolved by the end of the mediation. We have managed to resolve all matters with Zoe's assistance as mediator and highly recommend her services."

- Melody van der Wallen, Family Law Matters

"Hi Zoe, thank you for your assistance with the complex matter that you were engaged in as our mediator. It was clear from the outset that you were across the issues and appreciated the sensitivity that was required for a young boy who was the centre of a complex dispute between a biological parent and a non-biological parent. It was a credit to you that a resolution was able to be reached and the parties were able to avoid their relationship deteriorating further through litigation. I look forward to working with you again in the future."

- Alison Brown, Special Counsel, Armstrong Legal

"Zoe from Mediation Answers was referred by the other side during family law mediation and we are so glad she was one of the few who responded immediately. From the beginning, Zoe maintained a level of professionalism, empathy, and compassion. Once the mediation commenced, there was instantly sense of warmth and feeling comfortable for the client and practitioners, which helped lower barriers, collectively. Due to Covid restrictions, the session was run through zoom, however, Zoe managed the waiting room incredibly. Would recommend and use Zoe's services again."

- Chloe Grace

"Zoe was great at understanding the issues in dispute and tackling them head on. She showed empathy in a way that aided resolution of the conflict and showed great consideration for the matter even following the mediation."

- Sam Hutchinson, Coleman Greig

"I have found Zoe's approach to mediations as being unique and special. In my experience with Zoe as mediator in various matters, I have observed Zoe's wonderful ability to combine her experience and knowledge as a family lawyer with her compassion and empathy as a human. Zoe goes above and beyond the call of duty with the time and energy she puts into her role as mediator, and the feedback I have received from clients about Zoe has always been positive. I would have no hesitation in recommending and proposing Zoe as mediator in future and I look forward to her continued assistance in resolving high conflict and complex family law disputes."

- Nora Michael, Nora Michael Family Lawyers

Zoe, thank you so much for your fantastic effort during the recent Mediation. This one was a particularly difficult financial settlement involving an inheritance. I believe that your approach and methodology in looking behind the figures / percentages and into what was important to each party and his/her driving motivation truly helped them reach a final resolution and move on with their lives. You were compassionate with my client whilst also being pragmatic and solution focussed. I found your dedication in sticking around until Jean and I had finalised the Consent Orders to be commendable given that we were drafting up until 7:00pm that evening! I have one very relieved client who is looking forward to starting this next chapter of his life. Thank you.

- Catherine Piotrowski, Hills Family Law Centre

"Dear Zoe. Thank you for your assistance at mediation. Your on-going effort, structure and approach throughout the day greatly assisted in the parties and solicitors to reach an amicable and fair outcome. You were realistic about possible court outcomes with the range of issues in dispute and you provided a great depth of knowledge and skills to enable us to settle the matter. I would not hesitate to engage you for future mediations and will recommend you to others."

- Vanessa Barnsley, Armstrong Legal

"I have found that Zoe's approach to conducting mediations has been very comforting to clients immediately from the intake stage. She is able to assist parties in navigating their journey through a positive experience by exploring a range of outcomes appropriate for all parties involved. Thank you Zoe for being so approachable and easy to work with in this industry."

- Carla Sechi, Marsdens Law Group

"I have used Ms Durand on a number of occasions. Ms Durand mediated with diligence, was across the brief and the issues and was able to keep the mediation moving forward even in circumstances where the parties were appearing to become recalcitrant. I have found her to be effective and able to arrive at binding outcomes. I have no hesitation in recommending Ms Durand for mediations and I would certainly be using her again in the future to conduct family law mediations on behalf of my clients."

- James Jordan, Jordan Djundja Lawyers

"Dear Zoe,

Thank you for your assistance in mediating this matter.

You set a clear, strong, agenda from the outset, and it made the parties consider some of the finer details to be clarified in mediation before they attended – this ultimately helped with obtaining an outcome at the end of the day.

You were very systematic to the agenda, making progress through each point of discussion in a practical sense.

You had a lot of time to hear the opinions and thoughts of my client and stepped through some difficulties in an efficient and reasonable manner, which was greatly appreciated by both myself and my client.

Thank you for your patience, professionalism, and support during this matter, and I hope to work with you again soon."

- Danielle Henderson, Sydney Legal Advisers

I just want to say thank you for the mediation. You were clearly prepared and conducted the negotiations in such a professional yet empathetic manner. It was tense at times, but you assisted the parties to hear each other and post importantly focus on the children. I must say I wasn't sure an agreement would be achieved in this particular case, so thanks again and look forward to working with you next time.

- Tara Mooney, Tsolakis Solicitors

"To say that Zoe Durand is an excellent mediator is an understatement. Zoe harnesses her experience as a family lawyer, Independent Children's Lawyer and commercial lawyer in her mediation practice. She is able to provide distinctive solutions to each client's matter. In my experience of using Zoe as a mediator she has ensured that both parties have felt heard. She is well prepared and understands the crux of the issues at hand. Zoe is an involved mediator, she drives the mediation and ensures that the issues are resolved, while making sure the mediation runs on schedule.

Zoe has the capacity to use mediation as an effective tool in family law disputes. She allows clients to tailor the resolution to their dispute. Zoe is outcomes focused, she helps her clients facilitate agreed upon Consent Orders, signed by both parties on the day of mediation. Mediation with Zoe is an effective use of the solicitors' time and the clients funds.

- Bharty Baskaran

"Zoe was able to successfully navigate between two polar opposite parties throughout the day of mediation including conducting a joint session which while more therapeutic than legal, allowed both parties to identify the root causes of their conflict and bring about an agreement which ultimately addressed many of the parties' concerns. The mediation was successfully conducted interstate and via zoom following closely to an agenda and timeframe agreed between the parties. Zoe encouraged dialogue between the parties rather than simply having the lawyer's speak which gave the client's much more agency over their decisions and ultimate agreement. I have no hesitation of including Zoe in future panels for Sydney based matters.

- Ruby Priestly, Stone Group Lawyers

"I recently represented a client who had a difficult property matter. Zoe Durand was our mediator during the course of a full day mediation. Zoe is an excellent mediator, her approach to the mediation was quite unique, refreshing, but very professional and effective. She showed good understanding and tenacity but also exhibited great communication skills which kept her well-connected to the flow of the mediation, the participants and the lawyers involved. Although the mediation was by Microsoft teams (I am based in Darwin and Zoe is based in Sydney), communication between all involved was excellent throughout. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Zoe for future mediations and I look forward to my next mediation with her."

- Julian Barry, Darwin Family Law

"I recently had my first mediation before Zoe. With a client who had a very set position in mind, Zoe was caring and pragmatic. This approach greatly assisted the parties in reaching a final agreement, which was unexpected at the commencement at mediation. Thank you Zoe for your care, thoughtfulness and understanding to both parties and solicitors. We could not have done it without you!"

- Cassandra Bujaroska

"Zoe, your fair and pragmatic approach in conducting the mediation enabled the two parties to effectively come to a settlement. In circumstances where the matter had been overly prolonged, your skills and expertise pushed the parties to 'come to the table' and reach a resolution. Your dedication to your work is very evident, which makes me look forward to working with you again in future."

- Luisa-Maria Maroun, Sage Solicitors

"Zoe is a very talented and proficient mediator. In particular, she has wholly resolved every single one of the several matters that I have both been involved in. When speaking to other practitioners I am aware that she has a remarkable settlement rate across the board.

She has a kind, yet firm and directive approach at mediation. I have relied upon Zoe for a number of highly complicated parenting and property matters, including some where the parties were substantially far apart.

She has always provided outstanding assistance in reaching a final resolution of the matter.

Zoe has the magic touch with clients being an ability to really listen and understand what the obstacles are and then dissolve those barriers to resolution. She has a unique ability to structure the mediation so that issue A unlocks issue B, unlocks issue C in a way that flows and feels effortless, but no doubt takes planning and skill.

In addition to her effective interpersonal skills, I have found that Zoe's extensive knowledge and experience as a practitioner allows her to engage with and effectively resolve highly complex and technical issues. She is always pleasant to work with and I would highly recommend her to those requiring a skilful and experienced mediator."

- Greg Mclellen, Justice Family Lawyers

"Zoe is an exceptional mediator with a keen eye for detail and is incredibly adept at resolving high conflict matters, particularly those where the parties' separation has taken place quite recently. I have found Zoe to be most helpful in complex parenting matters where the gap between the parties' proposal has seemed too large at first, however after the application of Zoe's concerted efforts, the parties have been able to come to a sensible agreement in their matter without the need to resort to protracted litigation. I would highly recommend Zoe as a mediator, particularly in matters where the parties are strictly at odds with one another, and their positions seem immovable."

- Christopher Kissoglou, Unified Lawyers

"Zoe is such a pleasure to work with. Both mediations that I have had have settled with a positive outcome. She takes the time to understand each party's positions and also their perspectives. She encourages the parties to narrow the issues and to negotiate in that sphere. During one mediation, she continued to check in on the progress even after the mediation had ended and she had another session afterwards. I would recommend her and her services to my colleagues. Thanks Zoe."

- Sandra Benjamin, O'Sullivan Legal

"Zoe works extremely hard to get the matter settled and is always suggesting practical alternatives for the client's to consider. Zoe makes sure that each party feels heard and allows them to raise and canvass issues that are important to them. Zoe is a pleasure to work with and I will definitely be using her mediation services again!"

- Savanna Bull, East Coast Family Lawyers

"Zoe is a wonderful mediator, she is experienced and knowledgeable which allows for parties to come to the table with reasonable offers that steer them away from litigation. She gently motivates and encourages the parties, with a focus on the benefits of dispute resolution, ensuring that personal issues are set aside, and all parties concentrate on the issues at hand."

- Valentia Tahmizian, Legal One

"Dear Zoe

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your time and effort yesterday throughout the Mediation.

We were very happy with the structure of your Mediation, particularly because it provided guidance as to how the day would run. It also gave the parties and practitioners a time frame and set a clear tone for the day. Your intake assessment leading up to the Mediation date was new to me, but I believe it was a fantastic idea. It really put my client in a positive head space before the Mediation and it made him feel a lot more comfortable as he was able to connect and build rapport with you.

We also appreciated your drive and encouragement towards the parties to settle on the day. You clearly outlined to the parties the best and worst case scenarios, both in Mediation and court proceedings. This really encouraged my client to settle.

Although there was some difficulty in reaching an agreement at one stage, the parties finally came to an agreement. Our client reflected and was extremely happy with the outcome.

During the intake assessment, you requested the parties to deliver a (non-compulsory) opening statement to set the tone for the day. For our client, his opening statement was, in summary, "to settle today, move on and keep it out of court." We confirm this was reached satisfactorily for him.

Our client is also very happy that he has saved any further legal costs now that he has not proceeded to court litigation. Our client is looking forward to a fresh start.

We are extremely grateful for your assistance in helping the parties resolve their family law dispute."

- Raween Albarouki, Johnsons Law Group

As a Legal Author

"Zoë Durand has provided such an important resource for those going through the process looking for more perspective. I've been recommending Inside Family Law to all my friends."

-Isabel Lo, journalist, founder of Media Diversity Australia and former producer for ABC and CNN International

"As far as I am aware- having worked in family law as a barrister, Judge and now mediator and arbitrator- there is no other book like this. If there is, despite many years working in this area, I certainly have never come across it.

Inside Family Law offers the reader, whether a law student, academic, inexperienced lawyer, a lawyer wanting a refresher, a person going through a separation, a public servant, or politician (which today could be pretty important), quality knowledge and experience in the practise of family law in all its aspects, from representing and guidance of the client, to advocacy, appreciating psychological issues and their importance and more. The interview with Dr. Antony Milch in the book is a must-read.

...This book, as far as I'm concerned, is prime real estate. That's because of its range of practical knowledge from leading experts. Should you want to know what makes a good family lawyer in practice, or the methodologies in valuing a business or real estate, or the wisdom gained in dealing with difficult child-related matters, the topics can be easily found in the well-organised index.

In my opinion, a copy of this book is a must for all institutions teaching family law, as well as for those who are current or aspiring family law practitioners or those going through the family law process firsthand."

-The Honourable Peter Rose AM QC

"As a journalist and someone who found themselves going through a separation, I found Zoe's book so helpful. I felt like I was sitting down with these Judges, barristers and other legal experts getting exactly the sort of information I needed. I highly recommend this book for anyone about to embark on this difficult and overwhelming time."

-Justine Kearney, ABC journalist

"Durand gets to the human side of law... other authors of law books could learn from her precise questioning, her focus on the emotional and psychological toll of law...along with her focus on the effect law has on society. The approach of asking these questions directly to those within the legal system (judges, lawyers and so on), is a fresh new approach to the problem, and one that again, deserves celebration for Durand's efforts."

- Joshua Krook, author and writer at The New Intrigue

As a speaker

"I would like to thank you for coming to speak with my Family Law students yesterday.

Your talks were insightful and interesting, and gave students a much needed understanding and perspective about the reality of practising family law."

- Dr Noam Peleg, lecturer at UNSW

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