

Midi-Action Welcomes You!

Practice for Psychology, Mediation & Divorce Mediation

Have you ever arrived at a stage in your life where you feel that you have lost control? A work-related crisis that has run amok? A personal conflict that has your life turned upside-down? So many people, so many causes; if untreated it may even express itself in physical effects. Are you wondering how things will ever become normal again? Midi-Action is here to offer you a personalized and experienced approach to help make sense of things again. The support of friends and family is paramount but sometimes an outsider's perspective can create those desperately desired and needed breakthroughs.

My name is Claudia van Kalleveen and I have named my practice Midi-Action which stands for my work method. **Midi** means middle or center of attention. You are finding yourself in the middle of a difficult situation, stuck in a web of emotions and circumstances that are keeping you prisoner. My help is client-focused! That means that *you* as a person are the focal point and your situation is our starting point. No biases, no preordained or package solutions because every person and situation is unique and requires its own approach. You are and will remain the central focus throughout the entire process.

Action means positive movement. You may feel like you are stuck or that something doesn't seem to end or that you're falling deeper into an abyss. Every crisis and every situation however offers a chance for positive movement, a change or renewal. A different approach and creative solutions may be just what you need to feel positive and full of energy again.

Who is Claudia? I come from a hard-working entrepreneurial family and fulfilled various functions before changing the course of my life. I felt that my life was going off-track at a certain point in time. My analytical, listening and empathic skills convinced me to re-educate myself and to set-up practice helping people through their difficult and challenging times. I am NMI (Netherlands Mediation Institute for Conflict Mediation) certified, a Family and Divorce Mediator, Psychologist, Relational Therapist and Personal Coach. I speak English fluently and hope to help you cross that language barrier in order to seek the help you feel you need while living in a foreign country.

Midi-Action for *support, advice, guidance* in personal and business matters a.o.:

- Conflicts with self or others: family, neighbors, colleagues, friends
- Relational problems, intimacy problems
- Individual therapy & personal coaching
- Divorce or stay?
- Divorce mediation
- Children & Divorce: parenting plans
- Mediation procedures (personal and business)
- Loss and mourning
- Acceptance, making choices, letting go, inner balance & harmony
- Individual therapy & self deployment

It doesn't matter who you are, where you have come from, or where you are going. It does matter that you regain control of your life and the situation that has enveloped you. Midi-Action helps you reach this goal by offering advice and support that is specifically fit to you and your situation.

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RATES

Individual Therapy/Personal Coaching: - €65 per hour (VAT excl.)
- 1 – 2 hours max per session

Relational Therapy: - €85 per hour per couple (VAT excl.)
- €65 per hour per individual session (VAT excl.)
- min of 3 sessions – 10 sessions (1 - 2 ½ hours per session)

Mediation (personal & business), Separation/Divorce Mediation and Custody-Visitation Planning

- €125 per hour (VAT excl.)
- 2 – 6 sessions of 1 – 3 hours max per session

Individual Therapy

What makes a person seek help from a professional? It's a difficult decision to make but probably one of the most important steps to take in your life. I understand that and have the experience and the education to help you take the steps needed to feel whole again.

Many situations occur in life over which we have no control and to which everybody reacts differently. A specific situation or event may bring you to me or perhaps it's upon advice from another such as your partner, doctor, friends, etc. One thing is definite, you are unique and your situation is unique. There is no one set of pre-determined interview techniques or treatment methods that can be applied to your situation. My respect for you as a person and your intention to entrust me is the sole basis for our sessions. You are the focal point and we will begin the process by uncovering and expressing the elements that have caused you to seek support.

There are many ways in which you can express your feelings. A psychologist is capable of giving you insights into your own 'I', for instance, exposing those structured reactions that you have developed to deal with certain situations. These may be conscious or subconscious feelings, reactions to situations, interactions between yourself and your environment. It is my job to help you back on-track with these newly acquired insights.

Personal Coaching

A dire event or situation does not need to be the reason to seek help from a professional. You may require a 'personal coach' at some point in your life in order to get to know yourself better. This may have to do with self image, personal development, creativity, assertiveness, etc. I can support those people who have the desire to search within themselves in order to make well-balanced decisions in life and to find harmony and balance.

Possible feelings:

Insecurity, sadness, vulnerability, fear, uncertainty, loneliness, confusion, guilt, inferiority complex, etc.

Possible methods of expression:

A broad range of physical complaints such as fatigue, listlessness, headaches, stomach aches, hyperventilation, shakes; but also anger, aggression, confusion, depression, insomnia, etc.

Possible situations:

Personal loss, move, changes, relational problems, personal crisis, divorce, work stress, other stress, unemployment, unfulfilled children's wish, or no specific situation at all.

Relational Therapy

How did things get so far? What happened to our love? Why can't we seem to communicate and understand each other anymore? How will this ever be alright again? Maybe we no longer complement one another? You may be feeling exhausted by all the energy it has taken to try to make yourself feel understood by your partner. Each time you try to explain your version, the conversation dissolves in tears or screams. A change of season is quite normal in a relationship but when the storm refuses to subside, the fighting seems to be permanent and hostility becomes normal conduct it may be time to seek help from an outside perspective.

An open attitude, an open ending.....

There are many situations that lead to tensions within a relationship. Illness, death, an unfulfilled children's wish, unemployment, incompatibility, etc. Relational therapy is aimed at uncovering the subconscious elements playing underneath the surface.

These can be emotions that neither of the partners is aware of but that are playing a large role in the built-up tensions. A therapist will not have a clear cut formula for you because every client has its own story. Therefore, therapy is about finding a solution together based on the unique elements that are present. My client has to feel safe and to be able to entrust me with their feelings. An open attitude is essential in building a trusting relationship.

Thus, therapy kicks off with an orientating conversation to see if there is a click. There is no 'and they lived long and happily ever after' but therapy is about uncovering 'who are you and what do you want'; together or alone. The couple that appears before me has to want to create mutual understanding, to listen to each other and to discover where the pain and disappointment comes from. This is the only way that the negative spiral of communication can be broken.

Miscommunication is by no means the sole condition for therapy. Couples may be seeking a deepening of their relationship or a need to work things out together. Therapy is aimed at gaining that sense of deeper understanding and at bringing the partners together again in a new or different way.

Parenting Plan

A safe and secure divorce with the help of the Parenting Plan

Sandra lives with her mother since the divorce. Her father moved to another city. Sandra is under a lot of pressure lately and is sleeping poorly. Her parents are fighting often thereby involving her. 'I don't want to choose sides. I just want to have fun with both of them, the way we used to have fun in the past.'

A divorce is monumental for children and asks for a lot of adaptation. They lose one of their parents on a daily basis which is replaced by a new custody & visitation agreement. Children now move between places and eventually deal with new partners/their children with whom they have to build new relationships. Many things change but one thing stays the same: childcare remains a shared parental responsibility and the child has the right to stay in good contact with both divorced parents.

The basis for shared childcare is stipulated in the custody & visitation agreement as a part of the divorce settlement. But, besides that, there is the need for good communication, clear understandings and working together in raising the child.

Unfortunately, this does not always succeed. Many emotions can stand in the way of successful communication. Poor agreements can lead to all around insecurity for both children and their parents. For instance: who is going to pick up the child? If this has not been agreed upon clearly then the child may be meandering around lost for an hour or more. This situation can again lead to more fighting, arguing and finger-pointing behavior. The child feels lost and becomes more and more involved in the conflict of its parents. A child can start to feel guilty, powerless, as well as responsible for the well-being of its parent. All of this is unacceptable. It is the adults' responsibility to avoid loading their children with extra emotional baggage. The divorce in itself is already difficult enough to understand and encompass. If parents cannot find a way to agree among themselves how to care for their children then they can find extra support by setting-up a **Parenting Plan**.

The Parenting Plan denotes all practical and structural agreements between the parents in all areas involving the care for their child. Who picks up the child, who goes to the teacher/parent meetings, how does one parent hear of developments from the other? What are important childcare rules to which both parents will abide? The Parenting Plan comes into being in a neutral environment and under guidance of an objective mediator.

The mediator will raise those issues and broach those subjects too painful to talk about before and come to terms of agreements acceptable to both ex-spouses. The goal is to build and safeguard an environment for the child where they feel secure and to create clear communication for everybody. The agreements in the Parenting Plan may always be adjusted according to changing circumstances. The importance and need for a Parenting Plan must be recognized by all and can be enforced, if necessary, by the Commission for Child Protection. This may even become a legal requirement in due time.

I would gladly support you in putting together your Parenting Plan. You can also choose for another qualified mediation agency but make sure you and your ex-spouse do seek help. Children need the guidance and support of both parents in order to become well-balanced adults. It's not a question of tomorrow or later but a question of doing this right now, today!!!

There are a lot changes for children like Sandra. She has two rooms and two beds in two different houses. She will only be able to sleep once she no longer needs to worry. She needs to feel safe and at home in both places. A secure and caring divorce is the responsibility of you both. Arrange it yourself or through the support of a Parenting Plan.

Mediation

Conflict situations are not a bad thing per definition and can often lead to positive changes. Sometimes a good argument is needed to clear the air. Other times, conflict situations allow for you to step outside of yourself and search for creative and empathic solutions. However, there are those conflicts that drive people apart and lead to full-fledged hostility. Instead of avoiding conflicts or being dominated by another's opinion, the road to mediation is one that allows all parties to be treated equally, with respect and creates the needed space to find a solution to the dilemma.

Choosing for Mediation means choosing for a neutral party to help search for a structural solution that is acceptable to everybody. The process of listening, talking and searching can give insights into how future conflicts can be avoided. Mediation breaks with the negative spiral in which people can lose themselves and that often leads to physical ailments as well psychological ones if gone un-confronted. A mediator can be approached by either one of the conflicting parties or by a third party (family, friends, GP, etc.).

The procedure

I am a mediator who guides and guards the mediation process so that both parties can come up with a win-win solution together. The meetings are held in my office offering the needed neutral territory. The first step is an invitation for an orientating conversation at my office, together or apart. Here we determine whether the situation warrants mediation and will ascertain if both parties are wholly committed to finding a solution. Both parties will need to sign a Mediation Agreement that confirms that they will try to solve their conflict along the lines of the NMI Regulations (Netherlands Mediation Institute). Certain other issues will also be discussed then such as a confidentiality agreement guaranteeing that all parties are free to talk without involvement of outsiders that could otherwise cloud the discussions. All parties are free to end mediation at any time even if they are only halfway through the process.

Goal of the procedure

- To break with the tensions inherent to the conflict.
- To create open communication and mutual trust.
- To find the best lasting solution possible.
- To allow enough time in the procedure for a win-win situation.
- To confirm the agreements to a Commitment Agreement.
- To avoid a court case and costly judicial procedures.

Mediation covers a vast amount of fields

- Relational problems
- Divorce / Separation mediation
- Manners and etiquette
- Family relations
- Neighborly (-hood) conflicts
- Reorganization
- Work-related conflicts
- Sick leave & healthcare issues
- Rent-related conflicts
- Cultural differences
- Problems at school
- Consumer transactions
- Municipality and government issues

Family & Divorce Mediation

Divorcing is a very painful process for partners and their children. A mediator can be used to prevent a divorce and to determine whether the partners can find a way to continue on with one another in a good manner.

Usually a difficult period of time will have ensued before the decision is made to finally separate. Communication may have become so muddled that a mediator is needed to guide the family and the situation back on-track. At a moment such as this, the mediator can also assuage together with the partners if divorce is indeed the best answer. The family is finding itself in a crisis situation and needs a new structure and reorientation. Besides the financial and judicial factors, emotional factors also play a large role during the divorce procedure, especially when there are children involved.

While the partnership ends the parental role and the shared responsibility for the children remains. It is of utmost importance for the children that the parents continue to communicate well. Parents must be aware of the fact that they play an exemplary role and most deal with problems in an adult like fashion. The mediator often intercedes during the mediation process on behalf of the absent party, the child.

The mediation process is focused upon reaching agreements and to committing these to a Mediation Agreement. These agreements concern the care for the children, the custody & visitation agreement, division of goods, eventual debts, alimony, the house, retirement issues, etc. The respective lawyers cover the judicial process of giving advice and handling the final details of the divorce itself. At the end of this formal procedure, the clients will receive formal, written confirmation that their marriage has been dissolved at a certain date.

I have a broad network in 'Mediation land' and can point clients to various independent advisors. Midi-Action has negotiated a discount for her clients with a qualified company that is specialized in the field of alimony calculations (child and / or partner alimony). Furthermore, I have a list of lawyers and lawyers offices specialized in family law should you need any support in this area.

The divorce procedure takes an average of 2 to 3 months and consists of minimal 2 and maximum 6 meetings of approximately 2 hours each with a mediator. The length and the amount of meetings is dependent on the complexity of the situation in which the partners are involved. It is possible to meet again at a later period after the divorce is complete for an evaluation meeting with the mediator. During that time, assessment can be made if the agreements are being upheld such as stipulated in the custody & visitation agreement concerning the children. Perhaps things have changed and the agreement needs to be amended to the new situation. An evaluation meeting is strongly recommended in the first year following the divorce.

Advice for parents

Keep children away from conflict situations and do not speak negatively about the other parent. Your child may never get the feeling that they have to choose sides. Children are, no matter how small, sensitive to tensions and always feel when something is wrong. If your child expresses these feelings then it is best for you to confirm them so that the child does not become confused. Should one of the parents leave for another domicile, make clear to the child that it has nothing to do with them and make sure to stay in close touch. Deal with the divorce in such a manner that conflicts are minimized. This is very important for you as well as for the children. Do not for one minute hesitate to contact a professional in these times of need. Continue to share the care of your children before, during and after the divorce procedures as well as possible. The way you deal with your relational problems will be an example for your child.

Literally ill

Everyone recognizes it, a period during which you are not feeling like yourself. This often expresses itself through physical complaints. You may be feeling tired or are experiencing headaches. Perhaps you may be taking an extra vitamin or sleeping in a bit longer. If this doesn't give the positive effects you seek you may visit the GP for some general testing. But what if it proves that there is nothing wrong with you physically and yet the complaints continue, what then?

The chance then is that you have become literally ill due to the circumstances you are in. There is thus another source that lies at the basis of your physical complaints. One of those sources may be emotional or psychological. Body and mind work closely together. If you have been exposed to a long period of pressure and tension, or are experiencing a hard time over which you have no control then this will always be accompanied by physical complaints.

What are psychosomatic complaints?

Psychosomatic complaints are complaints that express itself physically but are rooted in emotional causes (see list below). The problem, however, is that we often don't recognize the complaints as being such. Everyone is tired at times, aren't they? It's much more difficult to admit that our complaints may have a deeper source that can't simply be cured with one or another miracle pill. Often we don't allow ourselves the time to search for the deeper source but try to hit the road to normalcy as fast as we can, ignoring the warning bells that are going off in our heads.

Denial or negation will only provide a short-term healing effect. In fact, the chance is quite large that the physical complaints will return with ferociousness unparalleled in similarly difficult situations in the future. Therefore, the first step to healing is to admit to having the psychosomatic complaints! The complaints can disappear wholly if you allow yourself the time and space to research (consciously and subconsciously) what is at its emotional base. If you don't allow yourself this, you may literally become very ill.

Healing psychosomatic complaints

In my daily practice, I see how psychosomatic complaints arise in every 'type' of person. It is not a question of character or personality and it is not a sign of weakness. The circumstances in which psychosomatic complaints express themselves are also limitless (see below). It doesn't only happen as a result of traumatic events. It can occur at any given time so that people have no idea what has happened to generate such physical complaints. During your soul searching, however, there appears to be something at its source that makes you feel insecure, angry, and sad. It may be a past event that you have pushed away or forgotten. In any event, the source is at a deeper level than you are conscious of.

Psychosomatic complaints occur often and can impede your activities on a daily basis if gone untreated. I see it as my professional calling to highlight the seriousness of its existence and to offer the resources to help make them disappear. Asking for help is a sign of strength and courage and shows that you have the will to break through the negative spiral that is pulling you down.

A mutual click between us is paramount. An orientating conversation is therefore a good starting point to ascertain whether you feel comfortable enough to step into this process open-minded and open-hearted. Don't doubt getting help, just do it!

A small amount of situations that can lead to psychosomatic complaints:

A personal crisis, loss, move, stress, interpersonal conflicts, conflicts at work, changes, fighting, negative self image, illness, childlessness, being somebody who you are not, youth traumas, dilemmas, important decisions, etc.

Possible psychosomatic complaints are:

Tiredness, exhaustion, irritability, apathy, insecurity, heart palpitations, headaches, stomach complaints, insomnia or trouble sleeping, hyperventilation, panic attacks, depression, overly sensitive to light and sound, chills/shakes, feelings of stress or burnout, sweats, etc.

Possible subconscious emotions present are:

Anger, sadness, aggression, powerlessness, insecurity, vulnerability, guilt, remorse, irritation, disappointment, feelings of not being understood, etc.!