leanne
FINANCIAL PLANNING | DIVORCE ADVOCACY

fearless

5 STEPS TO BE

Smarter, Stronger, & Financially Secure

DURING DIVORCE

Hello!

First let me say, I'm sorry your marriage is ending. I know your heart is breaking and that you are afraid. I completely understand, I've been there too.

Let me give you some really good advice:

> *Your finances and emotions are intertwined. The faster you accept that you have POWER to **direct** the divorce process, the less expensive it will be and the better it will go for you. Your power comes from preparedness and knowledge.*

Divorce Breaks Your Heart.
But It Shan't Destroy You Financially.

If you don't want financial devastation, then you've got to adopt a mindset that includes these things:

1. Divorce is a process of legally dividing 3 things: assets, debt, and custody of children. Two-thirds of this process is about money. Don't lose sight of that, and don't be afraid.
2. The attorney sees your divorce as a business transaction: a series of forms and petitions they file in the legal system on your behalf. They don't care about you. They care about moving your case through the legal process and their billable hours.
3. Hurried and hushed: You won't get updates or ideas from your attorney unless you harass and ask. When you do talk to them, you will get rushed answers and feel pressured. This is why you have to know your numbers better than anyone. If numbers stress you out, I can help you make sense of them.
4. You Direct, They Act: Two-thirds of divorce is financial. Do not forget this! You need a financial plan that directs the divorce process. Your Financial Planner should be creating the income/asset plan that your attorney acts to negotiate and finalize on your behalf. (PS: your adviser at Edward Jones is not a financial planner who specializes in divorce)

Power Belongs to the Prepared

Whether you're contemplating a divorce (people contemplate a divorce for an average of 2 years), or it's already happening, power belongs to the prepared. You have knowledge gaps that can cause you financial harm in the divorce process. This workbook will get you prepared, help fill in those knowledge gaps, and enable you to direct the divorce process rather than be a victim to it!

It is a myth that if you hire an expensive attorney, their knowledge is sufficient. Nope. You need to direct them with your knowledge. When you let an attorney direct, you will be stalled and your legal bills grow by the thousands. I say you're too smart for that!

Think of each completed workbook page as potential savings in your divorce. Being prepared could save you significant attorney fees—they bill hourly, and your organization means less of their time needed!

If you're overwhelmed, then do one page a day until it's done. Your spouse and their attorney will count on you burying your head in the sand. Not you. Not now.

"The traditional process of getting divorced is outdated! Back when society frowned on divorce, the process was designed to make it tough, and traumatic, and largely favors men. I help good-hearted people navigate divorce with a modern approach that cuts out unnecessary pain, expense, and helps families move forward in the healthiest way possible. "

Process of **Preparedness**

Page by page, you will be **gathering** and **documenting** details of your financial-life as a married couple in five easy steps:

1. Income
2. Expenses
3. Assets (things owned)
4. Liabilities (money owed)
5. Insurance

Do one section at a time to completion - which includes gathering the **supporting documents.** I suggest you get a 3 ring binder and begin filling it up with the Docs to Gather items in each section.

After you've completed one section, move to the next. Think of each page you complete as potential savings in attorney fees!

You don't have to understand what you're gathering, you simply have to be a sleuth and find the pieces of paper!

Then your Divorce Financial Planner will step in. My job is to build compelling financial statements that tell a story of what you need in terms of alimony/maintenance, child support, and assets. Don't make the mistake of believing that an attorney does this for you. **They can't and they simply won't**. You direct the divorce process by having your own Plan. This is where I come in.

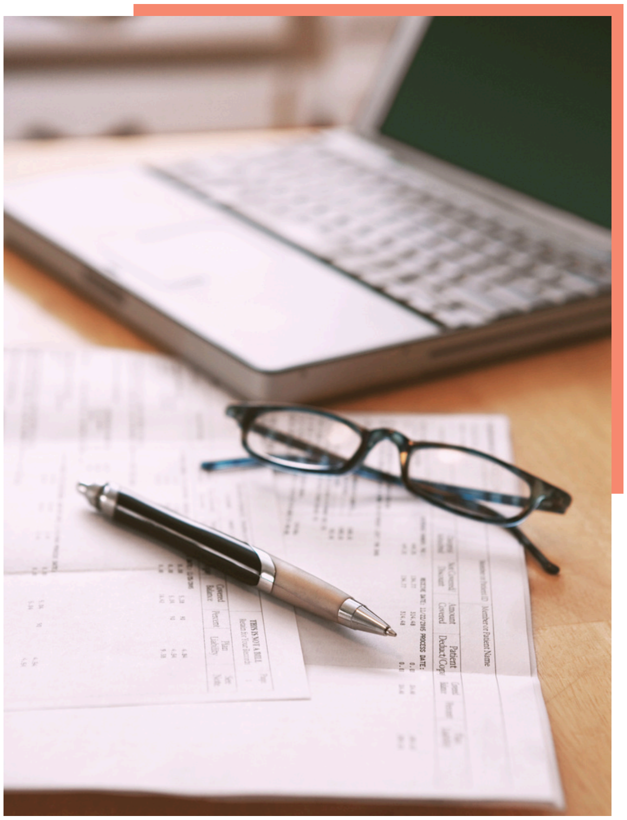
Stay focused. Believe in what you deserve, and let me know if you need my help.

You've got this.

Leanne

STEP ONE

INCOME



The world has gone paperless, so a few of these things may be hard to find! You don't want to go through "financial discovery" unless you absolutely have to. Financial Discovery is extremely expensive, time consuming, and generally not as transparent as you'd think! (it can add tens of thousands of legal fees and an extra 6-12 months to the process)

These bits can be hard to find. Just do your best!

Docs to *Gather*

Tax Returns and Related Forms (Last 3 Years):

- [ ] Federal and state tax returns
- [ ] W-2 forms
- [ ] 1099 forms (for freelance or investment income)
- [ ] Schedule K-1s (for partnerships or trusts)
- [ ] Any special tax forms

Recent Paystubs:

- [ ] Last 4 paystubs for both you and your spouse

Legal and Financial Documents:

- [ ] Documents regarding settlements, child support, alimony
- [ ] Most recent statements from additional income sources
- [ ] Most recent statements showing investment income

Income Sources
Data Dump

**If you select joint income, split the income 50/50 between you and your spouse.*

Real Estate Income (rentals, mineral rights, etc.)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Business Income (Tax Return: Schedule C or Form K1)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Annuities	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Trust Income	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Private Equity or Loans Payable (people are paying you back what you lent them)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Social Security Income (currently receiving)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint	$______	$______

Pension Income (currently receiving)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse	$______	$______

Child Support Income	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse	$______	$______

Alimony or Maintenance (currently receiving)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse	$______	$______

Unemployment / Work Comp (currently receiving)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse	$______	$______

Disability Income (currently receiving)	You	Spouse
☐ You ☐ Spouse	$______	$______

	You	Spouse
Total Income:	$______	$______

Additional Tips from Leanne *about Income*

1 Paystubs

Digital Access: Most people receive paystubs electronically. If you can access your spouse's email or employee portal (legally), download and print them.

2 Tax Returns:

If digital paystubs aren't accessible, locate last year's tax return. (if you can't find the tax returns, call your CPA and ask for a digital copy) The W-2 forms included will show:

- Total income earned
- Payroll deductions (health insurance, retirement contributions)
- Contributions to Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)
- Any 401(k) loan repayments

3 Your Spouse's Current 401(k) Statements:

- **Mail Clues:** Watch for mail from financial institutions to identify where the 401(k) is held (e.g., Fidelity, Vanguard).
- **Online Accounts:** If you have access to shared computers, you might find saved login credentials to print statements.

You are trying to find statements, not just dollar amounts!

- Account balances
- Recent contributions
- Investment details

4 Your Spouse's Pension Estimates:

- **Age Factor:** Pension estimates are usually sent closer to retirement age. If your spouse is under 55, these might be hard to find.
- **What to Look For:**
  - Annual pension statements
  - Employer communications about pension benefits
  - Summary Plan Descriptions (SPDs)

Encouragement from Leanne

Be Observant:
Keep an eye out for any financial documents that arrive by mail or are left around the house.

Stay Legal:
Only access documents and accounts that you have legal permission to view. Unauthorized access can have legal repercussions.

Organize Efficiently:
Create a dedicated folder or binder for all your gathered documents. This will make it easier when discussing with your attorney and/or your Divorce Financial Planner, like Leanne.

Protect Your Copies:
Keep physical documents in a safe place and back up digital copies securely.

This Work Empowers You:
Gives a clear picture of your financial situation for negotiations.

This Sleuthing Ensures Fairness:
Helps in achieving an equitable division of assets and determining appropriate support payments.

STEP TWO

EXPENSES

This is not the time to play frugal! Look for all expenses you can think of. Your Financial Planner needs to understand what it actually costs to live your life and maintain your standard of living. From groceries, to league soccer, to gym memberships. In my experience, people underestimate their expenses. Don't do that, put it all in!

Docs to *Gather*

About the Home & Utilities

- [ ] Mortgage Statements for first and second mortgages
- [ ] Property Tax Assessment Letter
- [ ] HOA and other Fees

Recent Bills and Statements of

- [ ] Electricity/Gas
- [ ] Water/Sewer
- [ ] Garbage
- [ ] Lawn and Pest Care
- [ ] Receipts for child costs

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

Data *Dump*

1 HOME(S)

If you own more than one home, be sure to put the total expenses of all the properties below:

Monthly Rent or mortgage	Annual Insurance	Annual Property Tax

2 UTILITIES

If you rent or own more than one property, be sure to note utility costs for each independently. There's extra space at the back of your Fearless workbook.

Electricity	Gas	Oil	Water/Sewer	Pool Maintenance

Trash/Recycling	Cable/Internet	Home Security Services	Lawn & Pest Care

3 CHILD CARE

If you have more than one child/dependent, include total costs for all of them.

In-Home Child Care	Day Care	After School Care	Summer Camps

Tuition & School Fees	Sports & Activities	Other (clothing, shoes, etc.)

STEP 3A

ILLIQUID ASSETS (THINGS OWNED)

Illiquid assets are things that can't be converted to cash in 24 hours, like real estate.

Docs to *Gather*

Real Estate & Vehicles

- [ ] Loan Statements
- [ ] Property Tax Statements/Assessments

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

Data *Dump*

Sites like Zillow.com or Realtor.com can help you estimate a property's value, but you may wish to consult a realtor to get an accurate appraisal!

PROPERTY 1

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

PROPERTY 2

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

VEHICLE 1

Owner name		**Year**		**Make**	

Model	**Loan Balance/Lease Remainder**	**Estimated Value**

VEHICLE 2

Owner name		**Year**		**Make**	

Model	**Loan Balance/Lease Remainder**	**Estimated Value**

VEHICLE 3

Owner name		**Year**		**Make**	

Model	**Loan Balance/Lease Remainder**	**Estimated Value**

Have more than 3 vehicles? There's space to list them at the end of your Fearless workbook.

STEP 3B

LIQUID ASSETS (THINGS OWNED)

Liquid Assets can be converted to spendable cash quickly.

Docs to *Gather*

Liquid Assets

- [ ] **Statements for each account**
  - [ ] Checking Accounts
  - [ ] Savings Accounts
  - [ ] CDS/Money Market Accounts
  - [ ] Joint Investment Account (Not Retirement)
  - [ ] Trust Account
  - [ ] My Investment Account (Not Retirement)
  - [ ] Spouse's Investment Account (Not Retirement)
  - [ ] Crypto / Crypto Mining
  - My 401K / 403b Or Rollover/Traditional IRA
  - [ ] Spouse's 401K / 403b Or Rollover/Traditional IRA
  - [ ] My Roth IRA
  - [ ] Spouse's Roth IRA
  - [ ] 529 Plans (Combine All 529s)
  - [ ] Annuities (Fixed And Variable)
  - [ ] My Whole Life Insurance Cash Value
  - [ ] Spouse's Whole Life Insurance Cash Value
  - [ ] Additional Liquid Asset
  - [ ] Additional Liquid Asset
  - [ ] Additional Liquid Asset

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

Data *Dump*

CHECKING ACCOUNTS:

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS:

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

CDS/MONEY MARKET ACCOUNTS:

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

JOINT INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (not retirement)

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

TRUST ACCOUNT:

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

MY INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (not retirement)

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

SPOUSE'S INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (not retirement)

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

CRYPTO / CRYPTO MINING

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

My 401K / 403b or Rollover/Traditional IRA

Institution Name ______________________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

Spouse's 401K / 403b or Rollover/Traditional IRA

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

MY ROTH IRA

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

SPOUSE'S ROTH IRA

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

529 PLANS (combine all 529s)

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

ANNUITIES (FIXED AND VARIABLE)

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

MY WHOLE LIFE INSURANCE CASH VALUE

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

Still Paying Premium? ☐ Y ☐ N

SPOUSE'S WHOLE LIFE INSURANCE CASH VALUE

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

Still Paying Premium? ☐ Y ☐ N

ADDITIONAL LIQUID ASSET

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

ADDITIONAL LIQUID ASSET

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

ADDITIONAL LIQUID ASSET

Institution Name ______________ Estimated Total Balance $ ______________

☐ You ☐ Spouse ☐ Joint Add to It Regularly? ☐ Y ☐ N

STEP FOUR

LIABILITIES AND LOANS

Liabilities are debt. Pay attention and gather every detail of financing on your home(s), and car loans like the date of loan, original loan amount, and interest rate so your Financial Planner can do an accurate amortization and future value assessment for the Court. Don't estimate, get exact.

Docs to *Gather*

Real Estate & Vehicles

- [ ] Loan Statements that reflect interest percentage rate

Data *Dump*

Loan Type	Creditor/Bank's Name	APR%	Estimated Balance	Whose Name is it In?

STEP FIVE

INSURANCE

I suggest you call the number on the back of your insurance cards to get the policy information you need. Life insurance is VERY important to get policy details on, especially if you have kids. Your Financial Planner will help the Court see what kind of gap planning needs to be done with life insurance. If your spouse passes away while paying child support, life insurance needs to be dedicated to provide for the kids –especially if your spouse remarries and names him/her sole beneficiary.

Docs to *Gather*

Insurance

- [ ] Life Insurance Declaration Pages (shows coverage, duration, premium, etc.)
- [ ] Car Insurance Policy

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

Data *Dump*

Use the Coverage Details box to list things like coverage amounts, who a policy covers, policy types

HEALTH INSURANCE

Policy Holder

Carrier

Coverage Details

Get it from? ☐ My Employer ☐ Spouse's Employer ☐ Health Care Exchange

DENTAL INSURANCE

Policy Holder

Carrier

Coverage Details

Get it from? ☐ My Employer ☐ Spouse's Employer ☐ Open Market

VISION INSURANCE

Policy Holder

Carrier

Coverage Details

Get it from? ☐ My Employer ☐ Spouse's Employer ☐ Open Market

LIFE INSURANCE (TERM AND WHOLE LIFE)

Policy Holder

Carrier

Coverage Details

Get it from? ☐ My Employer ☐ Spouse's Employer ☐ Private Company

FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

It's more important to get your Docs than it is to fill this form out.

Docs to *Gather*

- ☐ Copy of marriage certificate
- ☐ Birth Certificates
- ☐ Social Security Cards

PEOPLE

You

Name	
Email Address	

Your Spouse

Name	
Email Address	

Child 1

Name____________________ Date of Birth __________

Child of ☐ Both Spouses ☐ Mine ☐ Spouse

Child 2

Name____________________ Date of Birth __________

Child of ☐ Both Spouses ☐ Mine ☐ Spouse

Child 3

Name____________________ Date of Birth __________

Child of ☐ Both Spouses ☐ Mine ☐ Spouse

Child 4

Name____________________ Date of Birth __________

Child of ☐ Both Spouses ☐ Mine ☐ Spouse

EXTRA ASSETS

PROPERTY 3

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

PROPERTY 4

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

PROPERTY 5

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

PROPERTY 6

Type (Residential, Commercial, Land, etc.)	**Purchase Price**	**Year of Purchase**	**Mortgage Balance**	**Estimated Market Value**

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

MORE VEHICLES
(LIKE RVS OR BOATS)

VEHICLE 1

Owner name		Year		Make	

Model	Loan Balance/Lease Remainder	Estimated Value

VEHICLE 2

Owner name		Year		Make	

Model	Loan Balance/Lease Remainder	Estimated Value

VEHICLE 3

Owner name		Year		Make	

Model	Loan Balance/Lease Remainder	Estimated Value

**sites like KBB.com or Autotrader.com can help you estimate value for a vehicle*

OTHER THINGS I WANT TO NOTE:

NOW *What?*

1

Schedule a complimentary consultation with me at www.leannecfp.com

2

Open a checking account in your name only

3

Decide if you are willing to engage “ the relic”. The traditional process of getting divorced is outdated. Back when society frowned on divorce, the process was designed to make it tough, and traumatic, and largely favors men. **I help good-hearted people navigate divorce with a modern approach that cuts out unnecessary pain, expense, and helps families move forward in the healthiest way possible.**