



Mediation Monitor

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Reflective Practice

The Mediation process is a learned skill that requires consistent application in order to achieve a level of professional competence that is truly helpful to parties in dispute. Mentoring opportunities are important to newly trained mediators, fresh from a training and eager to begin experiencing the world of conflict resolution, but they can be difficult to find. Here at the NMC, our new volunteers are mentored by working with a variety of co-mediators over several sessions until the volunteer gains enough confidence and skill to begin working on his/her own.

Conducting a mediation can sometimes feel a bit like working in a vacuum. Mediation is a confidential process; as such, sharing specific details of a mediation is ethically inappropriate. So what's a mediator to do when faced with a particularly perplexing situation that leaves them doubtful or frustrated, especially regarding their effectiveness? One place to turn is to the use of “Reflective Practice.”

An article written by Michael Lang and Susan Terry, veteran mediators, trainers and coaches, published in the Spring 2013 edition of ACResolution magazine states, “Reflective Practice is a commitment to learning from experience—an exploration of why we make the choices we do.” Reflective Practice helps the reflective mediator to remember to view every mediation as a new experience, understanding that each case is unique thereby making it difficult, even unrealistic to expect the use of similar techniques to produce similar outcomes. A formulaic approach can be narrow and limiting, often resulting in missed opportunities for both parties and mediators.

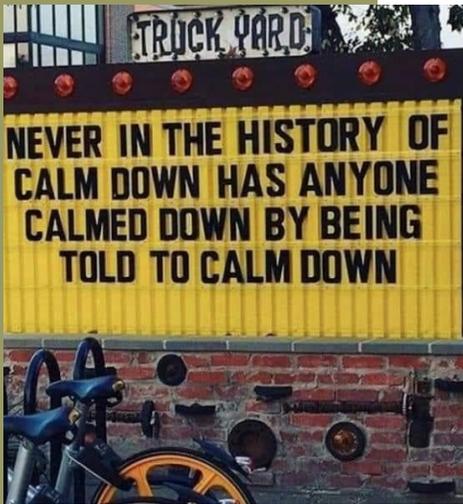
Curiosity is the mediation practitioner's best friend. To continually grow in competence in the practice of mediation, ADR practitioners serve themselves and their clients best by maintaining an open mind and refraining from any tendency to judge, diagnose or assess parties. This helps the practitioner maintain neutrality and be fully present to parties as the manager of the process rather than the fixer of their problem, always remembering that self-determination is paramount. Incorporating regular self-reflection and debriefing cases anonymously with mediator peers when necessary can help with the ongoing journey to a higher, more effective level of practice.

NMC would like to extend deep appreciation to Phil Bushard, retiring NMC board member, and wish him the best in his future endeavors, especially on the ski hill at Sky Tavern! Thank you, Phil, for your years of service and dedication to NMC and to the field of mediation both locally and nationally!

Unresolved conflict is expensive and disruptive!!

*NMC can help you improve your Conflict Handling Skills!
Conflict resolution and effective communication skills are valuable tools to have in all areas of life, work and play.*

*The NMC offers fee based half-day or full-day conflict resolution trainings.
Contact the NMC for more information regarding these services!
Email: mkales@mediatenmc.org Phone: 775-788-2127*



Check out NMC's
new and improved
website!

www.mediatenmc.org

"Calm Down!"

Have you ever told anyone to calm down? And did that person do as he was told? Or, did it escalate the behavior even more?

We've all told at least one person in our lives to calm down. The question is, "Why?" When someone you know is expressing anger or upset in a loud, animated way, why is it that we tell them to calm down or relax and what is that saying to the person trying to communicate his feelings?

Interacting with someone who is highly emotive can be very uncomfortable. While our intent in trying to calm someone is certainly a positive one, research shows that telling someone to calm down is experienced by that person as being dismissed, that the message they are trying to relay is unimportant. Often, telling another person to calm down can really be more about us, about our own discomfort or difficulty being present with someone who is expressing anger or hurt, betrayal or disappointment.

As mediators, we often work with parties who are very upset. One of the most basic aspects of mediation is the goal of helping parties feel heard and understood by allowing them to express what needs expression. During instances of high emotion, using learned techniques that acknowledge and validate those emotions, without contributing to further escalation, can help the party to "calm down", and to feel heard—a most basic human need.

Mediation Training Opportunity!

**The Neighborhood Mediation Center
in collaboration with UNR Extended Studies**

Presents a

40-Hour Beginning Mediation and Conflict Resolution Training

Monday—Friday, April 20-24, 2020

With instructors

Monica Kales, Executive Director, NMC and Dawn Rafferty, Rafferty Consulting LLC

Topics include: Conflict and Negotiation theory, The Mediation Process, Mediation theory and practice, Self-awareness and Cultural considerations, Effective Communication techniques and Ethics and Standards of Practice

For more information: www.extendedstudies.unr.edu or call 775-784-4046

***It is not necessary to deny another's reality
in order to affirm your own.***

Anne Wilson Schaefer

Mentoring in Mediation

Mentoring new mediators has become an accepted and recommended practice in the field of mediation. A 40-hour class in mediation barely touches the surface of what a mediator needs to know. While training opens the door to a new way of handling conflict, it doesn't help someone develop a personal style. I have often said: "a mediation class does not a mediator make." That's where our trained volunteers come in.

Having a new mediator accompany a seasoned mediator allows The Neighborhood Mediation Center (NMC) to make sure that our established procedures are followed and allows the mentee to see in actual practice what they have been briefly exposed to in their introductory class. NMC staff cannot always be present for small claims cases in Reno and Sparks Justice Courts, so having court coordinators and experienced mediators present for mentees to accompany or co-mediate with allows them to see a variety of mediators in practice. This process lets mentees experience first-hand a variety of styles and techniques and begin to develop their own style. Our goal is to have all mentees trained in a similar fashion so NMC is confident that important procedures are followed. All NMC mediators follow *The Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators* of which self-determination, impartiality, confidentiality, and a quality process are paramount.

NMC feels confident that having a mentoring program allows new practitioners to see methodology put into actual practice. Introductory periods are standard in many professional fields: this allows new people to take what they have been briefly exposed to in classes or internship programs and develop their own style and/or practice, all while paying attention to what has been demonstrated as expectations and standard practices. At NMC, the mentoring program is dependent on our trained volunteers and gives mentees a solid platform of experience, practice, and techniques to help them develop their own facilitative style. **Thank you** to our mediators for their invaluable contribution and dedication in this process.

"The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own."

Benjamin Disraeli

"The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves."

Steven Spielberg

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin

Save the date!

American Bar Association's Section of Dispute Resolution Spring Conference

April 22-25, 2020

Sheraton New Orleans

New Orleans, LA

Open to attorneys, mediators, ADR practitioners, academics, law students

www.americanbar.org for more information