



SOCIAL CONFLICT - "TWO OR MORE PERSONS OR GROUPS MANIFEST THE BELIEF THAT THEY HAVE INCOMPATIBLE OBJECTIVES." KRIESBERG, P. 2

Social-conflicts among interacting people.
Two or more-persons in conflict view each other as adversaries.
Person or group-individuals/organizations claiming to represent collectivities.
Manifest-members of contending groups believe goals are incompatible with "other".
Beliefs-how adversaries view a situation is critical.
Incompatible objectives-members think goals are thwarted by "others".

Kriesberg, p. 24

Understanding Conflict Escalation

- *Tactics move from light to heavy
- *Issues move from small to large
- *Issues change from specific to general
- *Parties grow from few to many
- *Goals change from being win to hurting others

Mediator Skills

1. Opening Statement Explain yourself
2. Storytelling-Allow parties to share.
3. Identify Interests-Listening, reframing
4. Problem Solving- Seeking resolution.
5. Agreement-Agree to stipulation or agree to go to court.

BUILDING BRIDGES




PROBLEM-SOLVING

"Meeting the party halfway is a good idea, eating half of the party is not a good idea."

1. This straightforward technique is associated with the Satisfaction Story method of mediation whereby the parties bring their problems to the table, the party's present options, and then an agreement transpires.
2. The agreement addresses those issues that the parties perceive to be the most important to them or to the conflict itself.
3. This process lends itself to efficiency and the potential for expedited resolution.
4. The problem-solving approach represents an over-arching theme or "worldview" of conflict.

LIMITATIONS TO PROBLEM-SOLVING


- Rarely recognizes the emotions of the parties.
- May ignore hidden agendas or peripheral issues.
- May not be effective in preserving the relationship of the parties.



"OKAY, LET'S HACK OUT AN AGREEMENT."

TRANSFORMATION

"The goal of transformation embodies the premise that it is not only being better off that matters, but being better. We are **empowered** to make decisions, and we **recognize** other human qualities.



What does **empowerment** mean?

According to Bush/Folger, **empowerment** is "the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their capacity to handle life's problems."

Central to many conflicts is the inability of the individual to handle their emotions or generate viable, less aggressive ways of dealing with the situation.

Perhaps they feel they have no options or the only way to resolve the problem is to take matters into their own hands. The problem arises when the person does not know how to adequately approach a solution or comfortably deal with the options at their disposal.

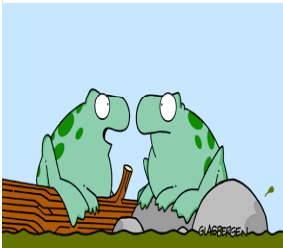
What does **recognition** mean?

According to Bush/Folger, **recognition** means, "the evocation in individuals of acknowledgement and empathy for the situation and problems of others."

In transformative mediation, the mediator constantly looks for opportunities to empower the parties such that they recognize and give value to both their own and the other party's interests.

Being able to see both sides allows both parties to perhaps lessen their stance such they are able to open communication lines or think of creative ways of reaching a solution.


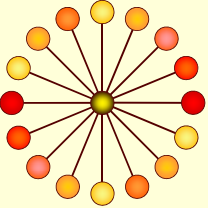
Transformative Mediators




- Concentrate on the parties as they tell their respective stories.
- Look beyond core issues.
- May allow the parties to 'vent' or discuss peripheral issues.
- Encourage the parties to reach collaborative solutions.

"Looks aren't everything. It's what's inside you that really matters. A biology teacher told me that."

LIMITATIONS

May not be appropriate for some non-relational conflicts.




Addressing too many conflicts can create confusion and a distraction from the core issues.


WHY NARRATIVE MEDIATION?

Recognizes cultural stories. Deconstructs entitlements. Therapeutic approach

- Beneficial for marriage and family mediation.
- Beneficial for gay and lesbian community.



Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.
-Hippocrates-



Conflict parties pass through three phases:

1. Engagement
2. Deconstructing the conflict saturated story
3. Constructing an alternative story

Goal of Narrative Mediation

- To create constructive stories together.
- Move toward consensus through understanding oneself and the other by sharing narratives.
- Own new stories that disengage parties from their original destructive descriptions of the "other."
- Focus on the future by asking: *How will the changes you are both making going to be kept intact?*

Focus is on relational strengths and built on a positive foundation.




Strategies of the Narrative Mediator

- ◆ Begin to develop shared meanings, understandings, & solutions through stories.
- ◆ Create "Memory Log" of the mediation sessions.
- ◆ Externalize personal feelings. Examples: "this conflict," "this betrayal," "this distrust" or "this neglect," or "this grief."
- ◆ Notice these examples move away from making negative internal attributions. We label the problem separate from the person.

NARRATIVE LIMITATIONS

- Are generally utilized in multi-session mediation settings.
- Are geared toward restoring relationships through therapeutic approaches.

Can be time-consuming and costly



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4. **Problem Solving:** Seeking resolution.
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