

CALL TO ACTION

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Mediation Works!

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Conflict in life is a given. It's simply a question of how we chose to resolve it. Because mediation is so effective, it is rapidly becoming the best way to manage conflict. Unlike litigation, which drives a wedge between the parties, mediation creates an opportunity for people to work together to find a long lasting resolution.

In any relationship, but especially in ongoing ones, feeling respected and listened to is important in resolving conflict. Mediation considers all parties and provides a safe format for problem solving and finding consensus or a win-win solution for everyone. In litigation, supposedly, there is a winner and a loser.

Having experienced both litigation and mediation personally, I can say in litigation there are no real winners. Someone who does not know you or the situation makes the final decision about an important issue in your life such as your divorce or child custody.

In mediation, everyone wins - the outcome is based on your input. Each person brings his or her own perspective. There is no right or wrong; there is simply a difference in viewpoints. Mediation allows you to gain an understanding of the other person's point of view which is essential in resolving the conflict. Given the opportunity to talk and brainstorm, creative solutions are found. All parties reach an agreement that works for everyone involved.

The story of two women quarreling over an orange comes to mind. They both wanted to use it for cooking. When a neutral third party entered the debate, he found that one wanted the inside of the orange for juicing while the other wanted the rind for grating. Because they talked and discovered what the other's needs were, they were able to resolve the conflict creatively and find a workable solution for both of them.

Mediation provides the ability to hear one another's concerns and respect each other's differences, thereby nourishing the foundation for a lasting relationship and opening the door for harmonious resolution.

A worthy goal for the business community would be to contribute to a lessening of the contentiousness which seems to be all too much a part our daily lives. Mediation may be an important resource in that endeavor.

