

Training Session 8

Getting Your Buttons Pushed During Mediation

Purpose:

- To reflect on situations in mediation that might make it difficult to remain neutral and how to deal with difficult emotions and other challenges during mediation.

Length: 30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Ask the participants why it is important to remain neutral in mediation. Elicit the following: to be trusted, to be fair, to be helpful...
2. Hold a discussion about how participants might respond in the following situations:
 - If a disputant says something that the mediator knows is an obvious lie. The mediator might say, "I'm still feeling confused or unclear about what you're saying. Can you please say more about that?"
 - If a disputant says something mean and hurtful to the mediator (or to the other disputant) during a mediation. The mediator could say, "When you say that I feel hurt. Perhaps we should take a break and cool down a bit so we can return to working on the issues."
 - If a disputant laughs inappropriately at what another disputant says. The mediator might say, "Do you remember that at the beginning of the mediation we all agreed to some ground rules and we agreed to keep the mediation respectful? When you respond that way, I feel concerned that we aren't withholding our ground rules. Let's try to respect each other in here."

