



**WAQRR**

**Washington Alliance For  
Quality Recovery Residences**

# Basic Mediation Skills for Recovery Residence Staff and Peer Leaders

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# OVERVIEW



- Mediation Basics
- The Mediation Process
  - Before the meeting
  - The Meeting
  - Communication Skills
  - Opening Statements
  - Agenda Building
  - Caucus
  - Negotiation
  - Follow up
- Putting it All Together

## Mediation: **What is it?**

Mediation is a process by which trust is built between two or more people to achieve the outcome they desire to function. The participants make decisions rather than having them made for them.

### Mediation is **not**:

- The mediator solving the problems of the participants.
- A quick fix- trust erodes over time and is built up over time



# THE PROCESS

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# BEFORE THE MEETING-

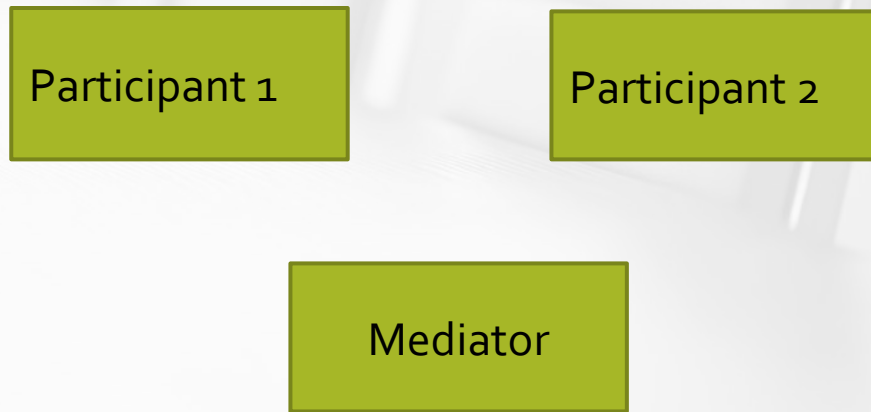
Talk with both parties to determine the following:

- What do they believe the major issues are- write them down to be sure they get addressed in the conversation.
- What they want from the mediation process- remember, you are not the person determining what the outcome should be.
- What the process should look like—be sure each is comfortable with what will happen.

# PHYSICAL LOCATION AND SETUP

The mediation location should be in a comfortable place for both parties.

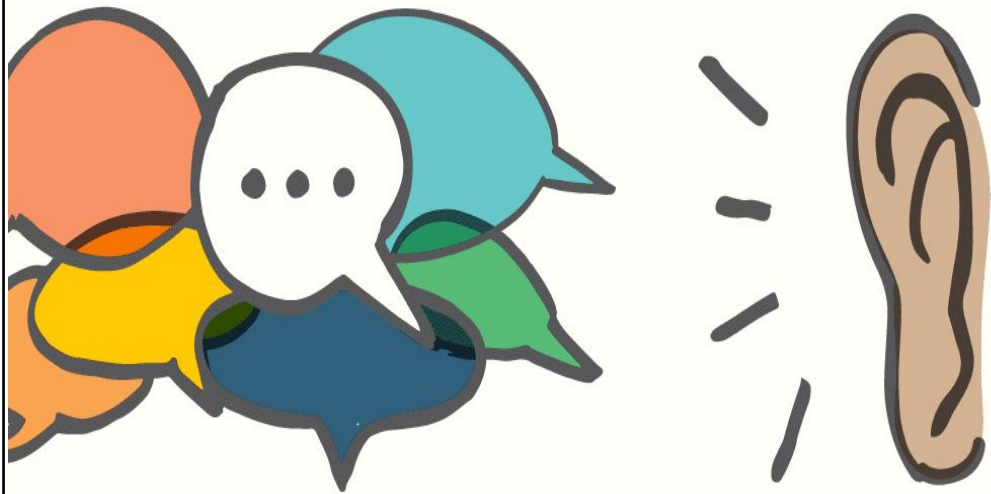
The mediator should not appear to side with either party.



# COMMUNICATION SKILLS



- Listening
- Understanding Common Ground/Wants, Feelings, and Values
- Reflecting
- Reframing
- Neutralizing Language
- Questions
- Summarizing



# ACTIVE LISTENING

- Pay attention
- Show Interest
- Avoid Judgement
- Avoid Common Mistakes





**Common Ground: Bridging the gap between differing attitudes, beliefs, and experiences. (Seek the common value.)**

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**Participant Statement:** I hate assigning chores to Joe! He always waits until the very last minute to do it, which means I have to say awake in order to check and see if he got it done.

**Reflected:** It sounds like you are feeling frustrated and tired because Joe tends to delay completing the chores you assign to him until the last minute.

**Participant Statement:** John is always late when I agree to pick him up from his meeting with his counselor! It's like he socializes before leaving! He doesn't care that I am in the car waiting and is cutting into my free time before I go to work.

**Reflected:** It seems like you feel disrespected because John is frequently late when you arrange to pick him up and you feel this is not valuing your time or respecting your schedule. Is that Accurate?

**(Practice) Statement:** I am just fed up seeing dirty clothes and messes everywhere. I have tried telling her so many times. She doesn't listen.

**Reflected:** You are feeling at a loss and uncertain as to what to do about the laundry. You have tried communicating but you haven't noticed any changes.

**Reflecting:** To reflect to the person speaking the emotion and/or the content of the message.

**Participant Statement:** I hate the way she talks to me, it's so rude and disrespectful. I would never treat anyone like that.

**Reframed:** The way she communicates to you doesn't seem respectful and kind to you, and I can see those are important.

**(Practice) Statement:** I want to leave when she goes off like that. She doesn't let me get a word in.

**Reframed:** You desire to have equal input in your conversations and to feel like what you say is heard.

**Participant Statement:** Whenever the other girls celebrate my achievements in the house meeting, she doesn't acknowledge me. It is so rude. She sits there with a sour look on her face.

**Reframed:** Getting positive recognition from your housemates matters to you, and Sally seems to be communicating something different.

**Reframing:** Speaking to the underlying wants(values) instead of what's lacking or wrong. You put it into language the other party can more easily hear.

**Participant Statement:** She got into a screaming match with me! She needs to learn some respect!

**Neutralized:** There was a loud conversation between you two that left you feeling disrespected.

**(Practice) Statement:**

**I want to discuss Becca being a slob and always leaving dirty dishes in the sink.**

**Neutralized:** You want to discuss solutions to cleaning your shared space.

**Participant Statement:** He spilled his coffee in my car, and we got into a huge fight because he wouldn't take responsibility for being so careless! He is an idiot!

**Neutralized:** Coffee was spilled in the car, resulting in a disagreement over who was responsible.

**Neutralizing Language:** Removing inflammatory or toxic language when reflecting or reframing.

**Participant Statement:** All I want is a clean room.  
Becca doesn't know how to clean at all.

**Question:** What does a clean room look like for you?

**Participant Statement:** She won't let me keep the light on past 9 pm. She is totally unreasonable!

**Question:** Why is keeping the light on later important to you?

**Participant Statement:** I don't know what to say.

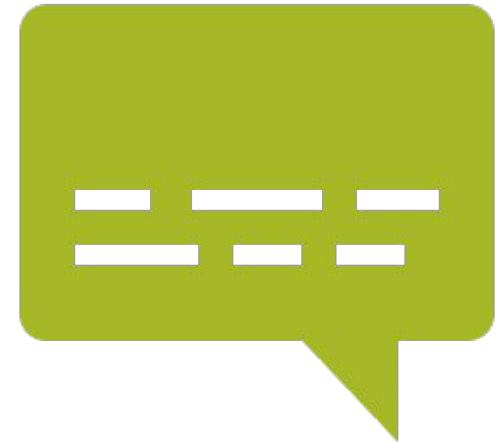
**Question:** What can you tell me about what brought us here?

**(Practice) Statement:** I don't know how to stick to a cleaning schedule. They don't work for me.

**Question:** What other options would you suggest?

**Questions:** They gather information, generate options, and expand perspectives.

**Summarizing:** Uses all the combined communication skills. It can help focus attention on what is important to the person. It can be used to identify common ground.



# THE MEETING



# GROUND RULES

**One person speaks at a time.** (Pass out paper and pens so participants can take notes rather than interrupt)

Participants **agree to practice common courtesy** and not act in ways that will make the conflict worse ( button pushing).

Participants will agree to **participate in good faith**—they won't hold back important information and will not make assumptions about what the other person is thinking/feeling.



# OPENING- STATEMENT OF ISSUES

Two important questions:

1. What brought us here?
2. What are you hoping for out of this conversation?

- Person bringing the concern speaks
- Respondent responds, etc.
- Mediator reviews notes to be sure all issues are on the table.
- Trust is built in the meeting if the rules are followed.

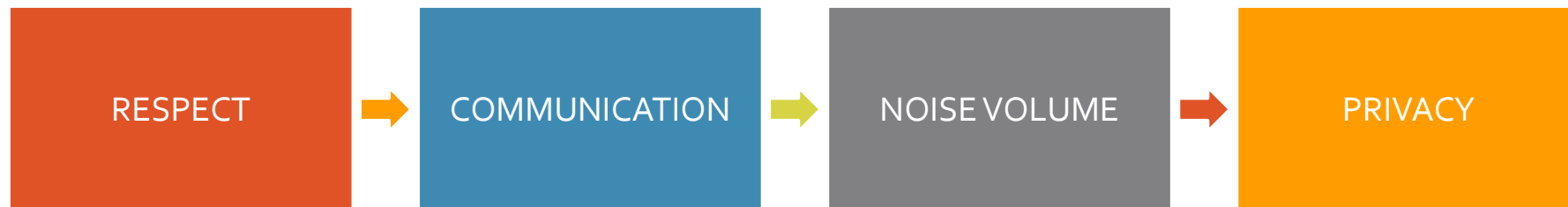


# AGENDA BUILDING

Thank you (for listening; for sharing, etc.)

Create BRIEF agenda—one or two-word items  
(cleaning, communication, respect, etc.)

Consensus/agreement is not necessary



# NEGOTIATIONS – BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS



Participants talk to one another, generating ideas/solutions. (mediator pulls back)

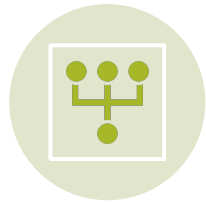


The mediator only intervenes to keep things on track, summarize, and ask clarifying questions.



A list of agreements is created by participants and recorded by the mediator.

# FROM NEGOTIATIONS TO CAUCUS (IF NECESSARY) :



A private separate meeting between the mediator(s) and each party.



These meetings are "doubly confidential."



Opportunities to explore interests, brainstorm options, test and rehearse proposals.

## Objectives of Caucus:

- Create Trust
- Explore
- Rehearse/Coach

# FOLLOW UP

Set up at least one meeting to follow up on the list. Be sure trust-building behavior continues.



**PUTTING IT ALL  
TOGETHER:**

**ROLE PLAY**

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**QUESTIONS?**

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## CONTACT US

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