

# PEER MEDIATION

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO



## Mediator Mentors



Pamela S. Lane-Garon, Ph.D.  
Kremen School of Education and Human Development

*With training activities adapted from the work of Lane-Garon, Nelsen and McWhirter,  
Community Boards of San Francisco,  
and the Peer Mediation Standards of the National Association for Conflict Resolution*

# VOCABULARY

**CONFLICT** A problem between two or more people. There are three styles of conflict. The styles are:

1. Denial- you pretend there is no problem
2. Confrontation- you fight with the other person
3. Problem Solving- you talk together about the problem and together find a way to solve it that is good for both of you

**SOLUTION** A way to solve a problem

**RESOLUTION** A way to solve a conflict

**DISPUTANT** Someone who is having a conflict or argument (from the word “dispute”)

**MEDIATOR** A specifically trained student who can help other students talk about their conflicts and find a good way to resolve them

## Ways of Approaching Conflict:

### DENIAL

This style of dealing with conflict happens when someone is angry, and instead of saying what is making them mad, they deny there is a problem.

Trying to end a conflict this way is difficult because the second person never really knows what is wrong or why the first person is angry. Therefore, the conflict may never be resolved.

## Ways of Approaching Conflict:

### CONFRONTATION

Confrontation happens when there is a conflict and one person verbally or physically attacks the other.

The two people involved may not be willing to listen to each other.

No mutually satisfying resolution is found. Hard feelings continue.

# The Way Mediators Approach Conflict:

## PROBLEM-SOLVING

Problem-solving is when people talk about the problem without insulting or blaming each other.

They know they have a problem and try to think of many ways to solve it.

Then they choose the solution that is the best for both persons.

Conflicts can be resolved in mutually satisfying ways.

Sometimes, relationships are even improved.

# PROFILE OF A PEER MEDIATOR

- ❖ Shows no prejudice.
- ❖ Friendly.
- ❖ Impartial. Does not take sides in the conflict.
- ❖ Good listener- listens to both sides.
- ❖ Takes in all the facts.
- ❖ Desires to help others.
- ❖ Cares about others resolving their conflicts.
- ❖ Knows when to be a leader.
- ❖ Knows when to take control of the situation.
- ❖ Doesn't worry about what others think.
- ❖ Helps each party to see the other's perspective.

# WHAT IS A PEER MEDIATOR?

## IS

1. Good listener
2. Good teamworker
3. Fair person
4. Helper
5. Dependable
6. Trustworthy
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## IS NOT

1. Disciplinarian
2. Boss
3. Judge
4. Advice giver
5. Gossip
6. Dishonest
7. Therapist
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

# PHILOSOPHY

The Peer Mediation program believes that conflict is normal. The Peer Mediation program helps students find peaceful ways to solve problems. The Peer Mediation program also believes that students are responsible persons and can solve their own problems, given appropriate teaching and guidance. For example, a safety issue is for staff to handle, interpersonal "fussing" may be a good issue for mediator practice. Stopping small disagreements from getting larger is a program goal. Program values are: respect for diversity, future focus and mutual benefit.



WHAT DO YOU SEE? PERCEPTIONS MATTER!

# ABOUT BULLYING

Examine the Information on Bully Behavior below. Mediators can mediate cases of '*potential bullying*', but if it is on-going or chronic, this is a matter for staff to deal with.

If a mediator is not sure about this, s/he should ask a Mediator Mentor on the team.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Intentional
- Repeated (chronic) hurtful acts
- words or other behavior, such as name-calling
- threatening and/or shunning

...committed by one or more children against another...

## TYPES OF BULLYING

- Verbal Bullying: Chronic, hurtful name-calling, teasing, and gossip.
- Physical Bullying: Punching, hitting, hair pulling, biting, and excessive tickling.
- Emotional Bullying: Chronic intimidation through gestures or social exclusion.
- Cyber Bullying: Sending messages by phone or computer.

# ABOUT DIVERSITY

The family, religious, ethnic and social culture we come from has lots to do with the way we resolve (or don't resolve) conflict. In almost every culture, there are some traditions we'd like to keep and others we'd like to leave behind. It is not for mediators to make decisions about this. Mediators acknowledge and respect the diverse cultures of their disputants.

HOWEVER, THERE IS ANOTHER CULTURE WE SUPPORT, RESPECT and MODEL...AND THAT IS THE CULTURE OF OUR SCHOOL. THE RULES AND GUIDELINES OF MEDIATION ARE BUILT ON THE ONE CULTURE WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON--OUR SCHOOL CULTURE!

## Example

### HOME CULTURE

At home, Paulo's loving family does a lot of yelling and everyone speaks at once.

### SCHOOL CULTURE

When Paulo works with the mediators, he knows he has to keep his voice down and take turns to speak.

## INTRODUCTION

(this is the starting place of the mediation process where we strongly invite disputant participation through sharing of names and process ground rules)

## INTRODUCTION

Hello,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and this is my partner,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

We're peer mediators. What are your names? Do you need help solving your problem? (Let's move to a quieter place)

We can help you stay on track; you'll come up with the solution.

Everything that is said during the mediation is private and will not be told to anyone, unless you talk about DANGER to SELF or OTHERS.

OK?

Then, you'll need to agree to the ground rules:

1. **W**ork hard
2. Be **H**onest
3. No **I**nterrupting
4. No **P**ut Downs

Good, now we can begin.

Make a folding "tent" table card with the ground rules on both sides.

# MEDIATION

## INTRODUCTION STAGE (Mediator #one)

*We are mediators. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and  
this is my partner, \_\_\_\_\_. You are? And You are?  
Have you been in a mediation before?  
Mediation is peaceful problem-solving.  
You solve your own problem with our help.  
If you work with us, you will not get in trouble.  
Everything we say here, stays here, unless it is about DANGER.*

Sound OK? Good. Let's go over the ground rules for problem-solving:

Do you, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to ...

Do you, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to...

1. Work hard to solve the problem.
2. Be as honest as you can.
3. Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking.
4. No put downs.

▼ *OK, now we can begin...*

---

## LISTENING STAGE (Mediator #two)

*What do **you** think the problem is?  
How do you feel about it?*

*So, you're saying...*

*Is there anything else?  
Thank you for waiting patiently.*

*What do **you** think the problem is?  
What are your feelings?  
So, I hear that you...*

---

**WANTS/WILLINGS (Mediator #one)**

*What do you want and what are you willing to do to solve this problem?*

*So I hear that you want \_\_\_\_\_ and you are willing to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*What do **you** want and what are **you** willing to do to help solve the problem?*

*So **you** want \_\_\_\_\_ and **you** are willing to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Have you thought of as many possible solutions as you can?*

---

**SOULUTION (Mediator #two)**

*Sounds like you two have a solution.*

*I hear that **you**, \_\_\_\_\_,  
are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ and **you**,  
\_\_\_\_\_, are willing to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(who, what, when, where)*

*Congratulations! Before you go, please sign the agreement.*

*Would you come back to mediation if something like this happens in the future? Tell your friends/teacher the problem has been solved to prevent rumors. Please check back with the mediators tomorrow and let them know how your agreement is working.*

*Thanks for letting us help you. Please take this to the office for a reward.*

---

**(Mediator #one writes the agreement)**

## Skills for Effective Communication

### Active Listening Techniques

*Statements that help the other person talk.*

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>To do this...</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Encouraging</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To convey interest</li><li>2. To encourage the other person to keep talking</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...don't agree or disagree</li><li>...use neutral words</li><li>...use varying voice intonations</li></ul>	"Can you tell me more...?"
<b>Clarifying</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To help you clarify what is said</li><li>2. To get more information</li><li>3. To help the speaker see other points of view</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...ask questions</li><li>...Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further</li></ul>	"When did this happen?"
<b>Restating</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To show you are listening and understanding what is being said</li><li>2. To check your meaning and interpretation</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...restate basic ideas and facts</li></ul>	"So you would like your parents to trust you more, is that right?"
<b>Reflecting</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To show that you understand how the person feels</li><li>2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...reflect the speaker's basic feelings</li></ul>	"You seem very upset."
<b>Summarizing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To review progress</li><li>2. To pull together important ideas and facts</li><li>3. To establish a basis for further discussion</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...restate major ideas expressed including feelings</li></ul>	"These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed..."
<b>Validating</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>...acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings</li><li>...show appreciation for their efforts and actions</li></ul>	"I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter."

Active Listening Techniques  
Community Boards of San Francisco: School Initiatives Program

# PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING

## INSTRUCTIONS

In the space below each statement, write how you might respond if you were really listening. What does the speaker think and feel?

## EXAMPLES OF LISTENING RESPONSES

1. "School is stupid. I don't see why I need to go there everyday."

Listening Response: "You say you don't see why you should have to go to school everyday because it is stupid?"

2. "Yes, Jill played a trick on me today that really made me look stupid."

Listening Response: "Jill played a trick that made you feel like you looked stupid?"

# PRACTICE LISTENING RESPONSES

**1. “It’s none of your business! I’ve got enough problems without you trying to tell me what to do.”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

**2. “This is supposed to be a group project, but you always just take off and do whatever you want without asking me.”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

**3. “Just leave me alone! I’m not going to play with cheaters like you anymore!”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

**4. “Every time I have an idea, you treat me like I’m an idiot. You never want to do anything I suggest.”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

**5. “Quit bugging me! Why are you always following me around?”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

**6. “Who put you in charge of this project? I don’t like your ideas, and I want to get into a different group.”**

**Listening Response:**

---

---

# I-MESSAGES V. YOU-MESSAGES

**I-Messages are an integral part of the communication necessary to handle conflict using a cooperative response.**

## **I-Messages**

- ❖ **Are assertive messages that accept ownership and responsibility. “When you interrupt me, I get frustrated and lose my concentration.”**

## **You-Messages**

- ❖ **Are occasionally very helpful in preserving safety or preventing chaos.**

**“Fire! Leave the room now like we have practiced in our fire drills.”**

- ❖ **Are often aggressive put-down messages that judge or make demands on others.**

**“Don’t interrupt. You ought to know better.”**

## **I-Messages**

- ❖ **Communicate something about the speaker. They often include a brief description of what happened and how he/she experienced it (both facts and feelings).**

**“Yesterday, when you suddenly walked out while we were talking, I was really confused and sad because I thought we had agreed to try to work through our conflict.”**

- ❖ I-Messages don’t elicit defensive responses because they focus on the experience of the speaker.**
- ❖ I-Messages elicit change because they effectively communicate the impact of the other’s action, leaving judgment and the decision to change with the listener.**

**“When you drive so fast, I am really afraid we’re going to get into an accident.”**

- ❖ I-Messages elicit I-Messages in return because, having heard the impact on the speaker, the listener wants to communicate how he/she experienced the situation.**

**“I was really upset when you ignored me in the meeting yesterday.”**

**“I was ignoring you because I thought you were about to say something you would regret.”**

- ❖ I-Messages involve more than just learning a skill. By using I-Messages, the speaker accepts ownership of the problem.**

**Incorrect: “You’d better do your homework or you’ll be in trouble.”**

**Correct: “When you don’t do your homework, I’m worried that you are not progressing in your learning. My job is to help you learn. I’d like to arrange a time to talk about it.”**

## **You-Messages**

- ❖ **You-Messages often provoke destructive arguments and mutual name calling.**

**“You are so slow.”**

- ❖ **You-Messages are frequently damaging to self esteem, especially when the messages come from a respected person or an authority figure.**

**“You ought to know better,” is often heard as, “I am dumb.”**

- ❖ **You-Messages often communicate a lack of respect.**

**“You’re acting like a baby.”**

- ❖ **You-Messages are often coercive. In emergency situations, they can be useful for protection or preventing chaos. If used frequently they create power struggles.**

**“Sit down right now.”**

# PRACTICE I-MESSAGES

**Pretend you are in a mediation session, and design an I-Message for each of the following situations.**

- 1. The parties keep interrupting each other. You have reminded them of the groundrules several times.**

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
when you \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. You hear opposite stories from the participants.**

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
when you \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Your co-mediator did not give you a chance to participate in the process. When the session is over, you both take a few minutes to discuss how you worked together.**

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
when you \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. One of the disputants is really angry. He/she snaps at you and says: "Get off my back and go do your goodie-goodie work with someone else!"**

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
when you \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

# ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- 1. Put yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how he or she feels.**
- 2. Show understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behaviors:**
  - tone of voice**
  - facial expressions**
  - gestures**
  - eye contact**
  - posture**
- 3. Restate the person's most important thoughts and feelings.**
- 4. Do not interrupt, offer advice or give suggestions. Do not bring up similar feelings and problems from your own experience.**
- 5. Remain neutral. Don't take sides.**

# LISTENING FOR FEELINGS

1. **“I can’t figure it out.” “I give up!”**
2. **“Wow!” “Eight Days until Christmas vacation!”**
3. **“Look at the picture I drew!”**
4. **“Will you be calling my parents?”**
5. **“What a drag, there’s nothing to do.”**
6. **“I’ll never do it as well as he does.”**
7. **“You never get mad at him, always me.”**
8. **“I’m getting a new mountain bike!”**
9. **“Yeah, I guess I was mean to him. I shouldn’t have done it.”**

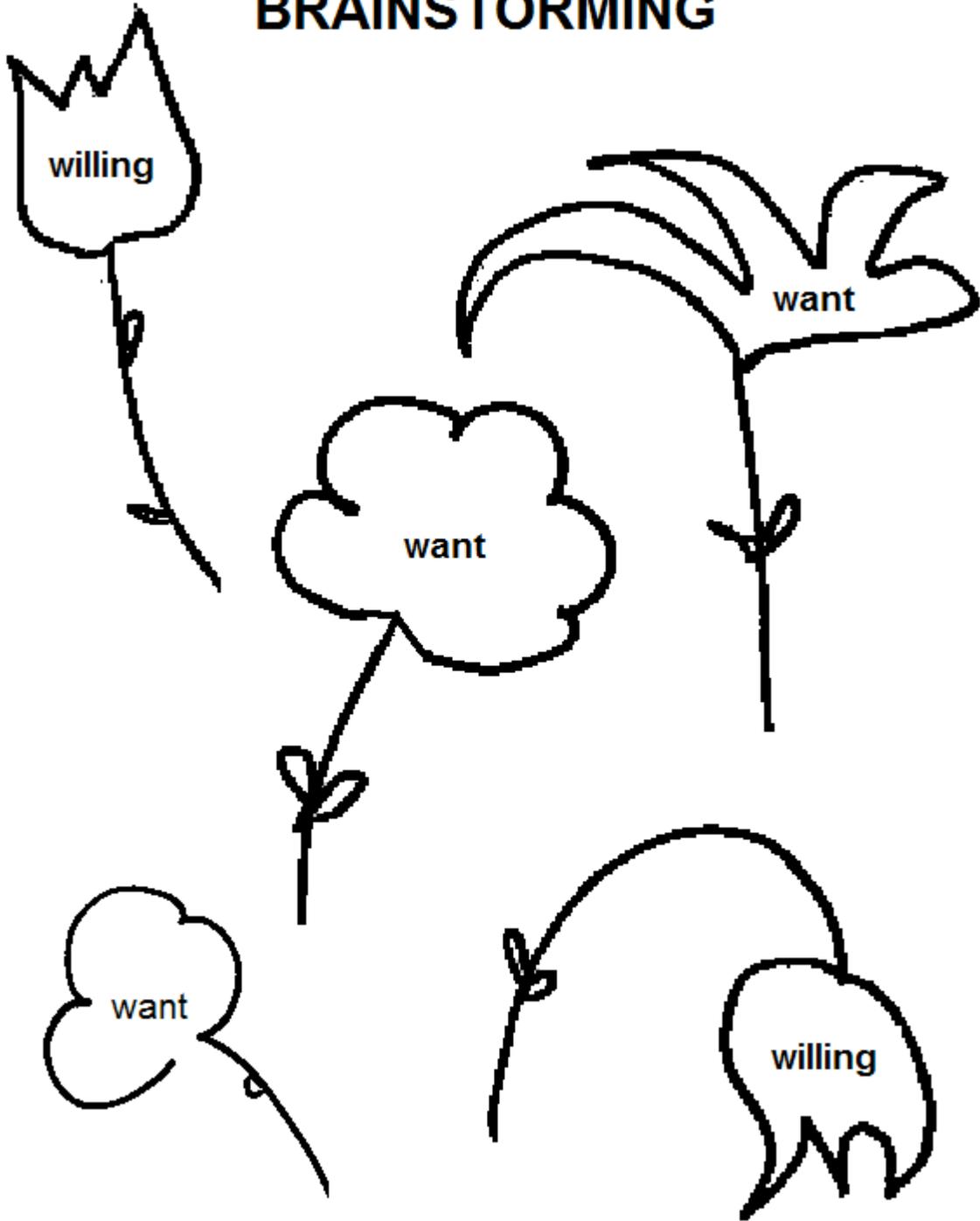
# WANTS AND WILLINGS

## BRAINSTORMING

### Helpful Hints:

- “What will happen if you don’t solve this problem?”
- “How many ways can you think of to solve this problem?”
- “And you?”
- “Wow! You’ve thought of many ways to resolve your problem. Which ones would be the best solutions for now?”
- “What might happen if you choose A?”
- “How about B?”
- “Do you think C would work?”

# BRAINSTORMING



## When disputants are not cooperating:

- ❖ **If one leaves during the process, mention the name of the student who left to your mentor or to a teacher. Compliment the student who wanted to stay and mediate.**
- ❖ **You can remind them assertively that they agreed to the ground rules.**
- ❖ **You can ask them if they would rather have staff solve the problem.**
- ❖ **You can make an “I statement.”**

*“I feel frustrated when you won’t cooperate...after all, I’m trying to help you.”*

*"I feel disrespected when you won't work with us...after all, we are giving up our recess to help you."*

## MORE HELP FOR CHALLENGING MEDIATIONS

### “Miracle” Questions:

Use these questions when you think that the disputants are not moving toward a solution.

1. What will happen if you don't solve the problem?
  - a) We won't be friends.
  - b) Do you want that to happen?
  - c) No
  - d) Then work with us!
  
2. Can you restate what he/she just said?
  
3. Did you know how he/she felt?
  
4. Does knowing this make some difference to you?
  
5. How many possible solutions can you come up with?  
Specific Agreements include WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE  
HOW

## Process Pointers:

- ❖ Make sure that it does not appear that your partner is working for one of the disputants and you for the other.
- ❖ Use eye contact and state names frequently.
- ❖ Look at your partner from time to time to be sure you are sharing the process facilitation.
- ❖ Model respect for disputants and your partner.
- ❖ Trust the process to get you through. Be patient and “feel” the parts of the process as they happen.
- ❖ It’s OK to show excitement when the disputants start making process... *“Great, now we’re getting somewhere!”*
- ❖ If disputants feel like quitting, remind them of how far they’ve come in the process and that there’s just a little bit more to go.
- ❖ When you have said, “Congratulations, you have solved your problem”, disputants will want to go... ***don’t forget signatures on written agreements.***
- ❖ Keeping good data supports your program. All agreements should be kept in the confidential binder and given to the mentor or teacher at the end of recess.

# **CHECKLIST FOR A GOOD RESOLUTION**

- 1. Is the resolution specific enough? Does it tell:**
  - a. Who
  - b. What
  - c. When
  - d. Where
  
- 2. Is the resolution balanced? Do both students want to solve the problem?**
  
- 3. Can both students really do what they promise?**
  
- 4. Will the resolution solve the problem?**
  
- 5. Will the resolution solve the problem for good?  
(It is OK to solve it just for today, too)**

# PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Respect the right to disagree.

Express your real concerns.

Share common goals and interests.

Open yourself to different points of view.

Listen carefully to all proposals.

Understand the major issues involved.

Think about probable consequences.

Imagine several possible alternative solutions.

Offer some reasonable compromise.

Negotiate mutually fair cooperative arguments.

—*Robert Valet*

**Student Input:**

**Here is an example of a problem that happens  
at our school:**

---

---

---

---

**Student Input:**

**Here is an example of a problem that happens  
at our school:**

---

---

---

---

## Peer Mediation Report Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time:      A.M.    Lunch Recess    In Class

Peer Mediators:

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Disputant: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Disputant: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of conflict was it?

\_\_\_\_\_ Argument      \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Property      \_\_\_\_\_ Space Intrusion

\_\_\_\_\_ Harassment      \_\_\_\_\_ Boy/Girlfriend      \_\_\_\_\_ Rumor/Gossip

\_\_\_\_\_ Name Calling      \_\_\_\_\_ Money      \_\_\_\_\_ Potential Bullying

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Was the conflict resolved?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No    \_\_\_\_\_ Mediation Refused?

### Agreement


\* Former disputants will keep what was discussed in this mediation confidential and agree to return to mediation if a problem comes up in the future.

Signatures    \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_  
                         Former disputant      Former disputant