

Facilitator: Ken, good morning to you.

Kenneth Cloke: Good morning Karen. Thank you very much!

Let me start off by trying to create a context for how we think about conflict resolution. I understand a little bit about some of your work from Karen but not a great deal, so I may not have all of the information correctly and I may not be addressing exactly what you want to be talking about. But, let's start in the largest possible way, by talking just for a moment about what the project of mediation encompasses.

I'd like to begin with a rather simple idea. And the simple idea is very simply, that mediation is a procedure that we use in connection with conflict in order to be able to resolve it. So, the idea is that we should gather whatever information we require about what mediation is from the nature of conflict itself. So the more we understand about how conflict works, the more we will understand about how mediation might work in order to be able to counter it.

Having said this, let's start with basics. And the basics essentially are these: I think we can start with a question and the question is, "what do you have to have in order to have a conflict?" And at the simplest possible level we can identify the elements or ingredients or components of conflict, just at a very fundamental, simple, level. The first of those is, obviously, you have to have two or more people or two or more sides of the same person in order to have a conflict. Without two, there's no conflict. I think most people have probably heard the expression, "It takes two to Tango." Unfortunately, for most of us, we ignore the fact that there is a hidden corollary and the hidden corollary is, it takes one to stop the Tango. What this tells us is that any time we do anything that reduces the two to one; we have done something that has altered the ability of the conflict to continue into the future. So, for example, caucusing is a mechanism that can be used to reduce two to one. And we can now understand why we caucus without being told you should caucus but instead we've deduced it from first principals. But more importantly it turns out there are a series of a number of interventions that can also reduce two to one. The most important of these, I think, is asking an internalizing question; a question that has as its point of reference, not the other person, but you. How you're handling the conflict. What you're doing in response to the other person. What the conflict means to you. Why this is so important to you. These kinds of questions draw people inward, into themselves so that they almost ignore the presence of the other person and begin thinking about the conflict in slightly different ways. Now it turns out that there are some other things that can take people individually into themselves and then bring them together in a significantly different way.

Here's an example of something that I do very commonly now. I'll actually tell a short story about it. I was doing a mediation in a workplace between two women. One was a supervisor and the other was the employee and they were having lots and lots of fights with each other and we met for the mediation only the room that we were going to be using to hold the mediation in was locked. So we had to send off for the janitor to get a key to the room. And in the period of time that we were waiting for the janitor we couldn't start the mediation because we were in a public space and so I just asked what I thought was a relatively innocent question. And the innocent question was, "can you tell me a little

something about yourselves before we begin?" Within five (5) minutes it turned out that each of them discovered that they had both been raised in families with thirteen (13) children. This was such a shock to them that they just couldn't believe it. And then they had a further shock which was, the supervisor was the oldest in her family and the employee was the youngest in hers. And so, what happened was, the conflict basically disappeared. On the one hand they went into themselves in order to just say something about what their background or history was and on the other hand they found out that they had this incredible thing in common that actually explained the whole source of their conflict to them. They no longer had a conflict. They laughed at the coincidence and had a story they could tell other people about what had happened to them that really allowed them to, not only explained what happened but to realize that they actually understood each other at a very deep level. So, I very commonly now use the technique of simply asking people, "Can you tell me a little something about yourselves before we begin?" And it is, I would say, uncommon for people to talk about themselves and not have some degree of empathy and commonality arise as a result. So this is relatively minor and insignificant but it's possible for it to actually have a huge impact on the conflict resolution process.

But now we're just at the first element in conflict which is the fact that there are two or more people or two or more sides of the same person. The second thing that has to happen because I think you can, we can all understand that you can have two or more people and not have a conflict and therefore there has to be another ingredient.

And the second ingredient is that they have to have a disagreement. They have to disagree over a set of issues. So, this is very useful also and it leads us into a series of techniques that we can identify for analyzing issues, brainstorming solutions and working our way through the disagreement. But it turns out that here's where things begin to get a little interesting. It turns out that you can have two or more people who have a disagreement and not have a conflict. The conflict can simply remain at the disagreement level. And people can agree to disagree and there isn't any problem between them. And as a result, it's necessary now for us to identify a third ingredient in the conflict.

And the third ingredient is the presence of some form of negative emotion; fear, anger, jealousy, grief, loss, guilt, humiliation, whatever it might happen to be. And the importance of this, particularly for people who are working in government institutions and I think in the workplace in general and I think especially also working in Veterans issues, is for us to recognize that nearly all of the conflict that we experience has an emotional component. And the difficulty is that we then have to ask, "What is the basic rule in most work places regarding the expression of intense, negative emotion?" And the answer in most work places is just, don't. The rule in most organizational cultures is that you set emotions to one side and you process disagreements but you don't process emotion. And I think that there are two good reasons for this. The first reason is most people in the workplace lack the skills needed to be able to process those emotions and the second is, it is very difficult to process those emotions and continue to have a relationship with the person that you processed them with that hasn't been tainted somehow by those emotions. So if you're having to work with somebody on a day by day basis, it's a little difficult to process emotions and then go back the next day and sort of continue to have a regular routine working agreement. So, this however does not include mediators, who, to some extent, are outside the ordinary chain of command and who need to, it seems to me, develop the capacity to respond to

intense emotion and the skills for doing so. And here again we have another problem. And you can get to this by asking another question. And the other question is, “What do you learn in law school and what do you learn in business school and what do you learn in other professional schools regarding how to handle intense emotion?” And the answer is, you don’t learn anything or if you do learn anything, what you learn is how to channel them into an intellectual discussion or an analytical conversation about the problem, but not how to work with the emotion itself. And the problem is you can’t just analyze emotion as a way of resolving them. There is logic to emotion but you have to understand the logic entirely, separately.

So these are the first three elements in conflict but it turns out that there are some other elements. These are sufficient to create a conflict but there are other elements that enter in that we haven’t really identified. If we think of two or more as a category of element, we can describe that as a kind of physical description of the conflict and what you get if you simply sit down with someone and you separate them from each other and you calm them down, the most common level of resolution that you achieve is simply de-escalation and stopping the fighting. If you move to the second element, we can describe this one not as physical but as mental and what you get if you analyze the issues and you work with the disagreement and you brainstorm solutions and you come up with different ways of handling the issue, the level of resolution you get fundamentally is settlement. Meaning, people can settle the issues. But there’s an enormous difference between stopping the fighting and settling the issues and there’s an equally enormous difference between settling the issues and what happens when you work through the emotional component of your conflict, which is in my view, what leads to resolution.

So we now have a physical category, a mental category and an emotional category and what we have as outcomes are stopping the fighting or de-escalation, sort of settlement and resolution. But beyond these it turns out there are a series of other steps that you can go through. And if you just look at how much of the dispute is resolved. If you assume that when you are in conflict, 100% of your energy is going into that conflict; if you stop the fighting you get a certain percentage of your energy back. If you settle the issues you get more energy back but you still don’t have all of it back because you haven’t worked through the emotional component. If you work through the emotional component, you get another huge chunk of energy back but you still don’t have all the energy that you need because some part of your energy is tied up in your memory of what happened to you and there has to be some way of processing your memory of what happened. Even if you have come to a place where you no longer feel angry about the other person, it doesn’t mean that it’s totally over for you; that your memory has in any way disappeared or had anything happen to it. And the level of resolution that corresponds to working through your memory of what happened to you; is forgiveness.

But now, going back to the list we created before. If we have one element that is physical and another that’s mental and a third that’s emotional, what do we call this one that results in forgiveness? And my view is you can call it, if you want, spiritual. You can call it energetic. You can call it attitudinal. There are a whole series of different words that you can use to describe it but fundamentally what we are trying to do is get to a deeper level of resolution that allows people to really let go of the things that happen to them but not in a way that allows those things to happen again. And that’s the trick. And here’s where we have to take a look at some advanced techniques in terms of how to process your

memories of what happened to you in a way that on the one hand don't condone what took place or on the other hand, keep you tied in a knot as a result of what happened.

There are two more levels that we can get to it seems to me. The first level is going even deeper than forgiveness. You can forgive someone and at the same time every time you see them a little knife goes right through your heart. So, it turns out in my view, that the very first thing that people shut down when they experience a conflict is what we can call a kind of open heartedness. A willingness to just be open-minded and open-hearted with the other person. And I think of what happens at this level, not as stopping the fighting, or de-escalation or settlement or resolution, or forgiveness but reconciliation. And forgiveness you can do on your own but reconciliation requires the two of you together to do something. And here again, this is a deeper level of conflict resolution than the one that we've imagined. It doesn't grow out of any analysis of sort of mediation but it does grow out of an analysis of conflict and the nature of conflict. And there's one final deeper level even then this one. Even then full and complete reconciliation, which is where you've come full circle and you are back with that person and there is no conflict left whatsoever, not even 1% of the conflict is left. That's full and complete reconciliation. And this is what people in marriages and families go through frequently. Many of us have multiple forgiveness's, reconciliations that happen in the course of a week.

But there's one deeper level, still and the deeper level still comes from a completely different view of conflict. And what we've been doing is going deeper and deeper inside the person who is in conflict but we now have to look at this entirely differently and recognize that every conflict takes place in a context, in an environment, in a setting, within a culture, within a system or within an organizational structure and the system, the environment, the context, the setting, the back drop, the stage on which the conflict takes place, these are not conflict neutral. These have an impact on the nature of the conflict and if all we do is simply get to a place inside each of the individuals where they have reconciled completely, we may not have recognized that the system itself may have been the source and cause of the conflict from the beginning. It may actually have had very little to do with the individuals. For example, in most organizations there is a kind of pyramid, a kind of hierarchy, in which information flows from the top to the bottom but it's more difficult for the information to get from the bottom to the top. Evaluations are done mostly on people who are beneath you in the hierarchy rather than on people who are above you in the hierarchy. And as a result, what happens is, you can predict that certain kinds of conflicts will arise in this kind of organizational structure. You can predict that when an organization is divided horizontally into different departments, for example, a department that is oriented to, let's say marketing or sales and another department that's oriented to production or to human resources. These departments may see things entirely differently, in fact, that's their purpose, is to allow for a certain amount of specialization to take place within the organization. And therefore, a certain number of conflicts can be described as systemic within that organization. And these will show up in the form of chronic conflicts, repeated conflicts that address the same issues over and over again. Problems for example between supervisors and employees over work assignments. When the supervisor is the one who gives the employee the work assignment and let's say the supervisor may not have it exactly mathematically correct in terms of how many work assignments are given to one person as opposed to another person. This could be a potential source of conflict. There are others as well.

There are conflicts on teams; there are conflicts within professions, a whole series of different conflicts that can be described as systemic. And from this point of view, we have a mechanism that we call conflict resolution systems design that looks at the systemic sources of the conflict and what it produces as an outcome is not stopping the conflict or settlement or resolution or forgiveness or reconciliations. What it produces is prevention and this, I believe, is a kind of overall global picture of what conflict tells us about how to go about resolving it.

The idea, the central core idea really is to start at one level and use the techniques that are appropriate to that level, usually it's the most basic level because the people are fighting actively, engaged with sort of battling with each other. There isn't much you can do to resolve the underlying emotional issues or even to get the settlement but the techniques, for example, caucusing, that will help you with sort of calming people down and separating them from one another and de-escalating, are not going to help you when it comes to resolving emotional issues because people have to hear from each other in order to get complete resolution at an emotional level. And the techniques that are available to you to resolve emotional issues are not going to get you to forgiveness, etc. So, a variety of interventions, based on each component of conflict, has a specialized set of techniques that are required in order to implement it. And each of these can also lead to a different style of mediation, so we know about the directive style of mediation, which is essentially settlement oriented. And we know about the transformational style and we know about various other styles and each of them essentially corresponds to, in my view, an aspect of conflict, an element or component of conflict, that we need to dismantle in order to take the conflict apart completely. Now here's where I believe this leads us. I believe it leads us in the direction of a larger understanding of the actual possibilities of conflict resolution. I think that we're still at the very beginning stage of understanding how this process works. I don't believe that we've developed anywhere near a full set of techniques for processing it at any of these levels. But the most basic level are the ones we understand the most about, everybody knows, more or less, how to calm somebody down, how to lower their tone of voice, speak more slowly, separate people, listen carefully and empathetically to them and that's not that difficult to learn. It's a little bit more difficult to figure out how to get the settlement. There's a larger and more sophisticated set of techniques there and as you go up that scale or down the ladder whichever you want or you prefer, more and more techniques are required. More skills are required. And in addition to that, more time is required, more permission is required, more energy is needed, in order to be able to resolve disputes at those levels.

I guess I just wanted to start with that as a general description of what I see as an overview of the project of conflict resolution and then what I'd like to do is hear a little bit from you about the specific issues, problems and difficulties that you're encountering, in the work that you're doing in the V.A. and where are the places where you get stuck in trying to mediate disputes and what do you see as some of the areas where additional skills might be needed. So I'd like to invite any questions that anyone has and let me know if any of this has been useful for you, etc.

Caller: Karen Bryant in W.L.A.

Ken: Hi Karen.

Caller: Karen Bryant: Thank you so much for what you just had to say. I was writing as fast as I could. How do you suggest when you talk about emotional, calming people down, emotionally, what are some of the techniques that you do for that?

Ken: Ok, great. Let me give you a kind of a basic sense of this and I'll tell you one I used yesterday. The most important thing with regard to emotion, is to recognize that in order to really understand what the emotion is, you have to listen to it long enough for it to begin to transition or to drop down to a deeper level. Let me give you an illustration. This is a kind of favorite illustration of mine. If you imagine for a moment that you have a small child who's just walked out into a busy street and there are cars whizzing back and forth and you immediately run out and you grab your child, drag your child back on to the sidewalk and now you're getting ready to say something to your child. What is the tone of voice that you are likely to adopt? What emotion are you likely to infuse in whatever you say to your child?

Caller: Karen Bryant: I would be frantic.

Ken: Yeah and what would you say to your child?

Caller: Karen Bryant: What do you think you were doing?

Ken: Yeah and what tone of voice are you adopting when you're saying that?

Caller: Karen Bryant: Very authoritative.

Ken: Yeah and would you also say angry?

Caller: Karen Bryant: Yes.

Ken: Yeah, so here's what is actually happening. It turns out that you are actually being quite brilliant using anger as an emotion because what you're doing is, based on this analysis, one; what your child did was dangerous. Number two, nothing happened to your child as a result of doing that dangerous thing, therefore, number three, your child may do it again. So, number four, it would be a good idea to attach a little bit of pain to what your child just did so that when thinking about doing it again, your child will decide not to do it because of the pain that they experienced after doing it. So, what you'll do is use anger as a way of inflicting pain in your child so your child will think twice before going out on the street again. Make sense?

Caller: Karen Bryant: Absolutely.

Ken: Ok, so now we have to ask, "What was the emotion that you experienced immediately before you expressed anger?"

Caller: Karen Bryant: So much love that you didn't want them to get hurt.

Ken: Ok, but we're going to get to there but we have to go gradually. So fear is what you were experiencing just before you expressed anger. Meaning, below anger is fear. How often is that the case? Often enough, so that you can ask the question, when someone is angry, "What are you afraid

will happen?" And if you ask that question and fear is actually beneath the anger they will drop into the fear. From anger they will move directly into fear. And now what are you afraid of? And the answer is you're afraid of loss, of pain, of grief of guilt for what you did for your child or for the loss of your child. So beneath anger is fear and beneath fear is the perception of the possibility of grief and loss and pain and guilt. So we now have at least three different levels that we're at and it turns out that there's a fourth and you went to the fourth level right away. The reason why you would feel pain, loss, grief, guilt all of those things is because you love your child. If you didn't love your child you might not feel those things. So now we have four fundamentally different conversations you can engage in with your child. One is don't you dare do that again with a lot of anger attached to it. Two that scared the heck out of me. Three, if anything bad had happened I would feel awful and four I love you so much I don't want anything bad to happen to you. But if you want to get them out of the street, use conversation number one. Because it's the one that's going to work the best but here's the point of this digression. You can move directly from anger to caring because here's a very, very simple statement, nobody gets angry in conflict over things they don't care about. Therefore, we can have two different conversations. One is what you're angry about and two is what you care about. Which one would you rather talk about in your conflict? And the answer is everybody would rather have a conversation about what they care about, then a conversation that keeps them stuck in anger. And all you have to do is ask someone, "Why do you care so deeply about that?"

So here's the conversation I had yesterday. This is a divorce mediation in which the wife wants to get divorced and the husband doesn't and he is angry at her because she had been having an affair for two years and he is incredibly angry at her and he will not let her take the child with her on vacation because he doesn't want to give her anything. And so, basically, what I said to him was, "I can hear the anger in what you're saying. Are you also feeling a lot of pain?" And he just began to cry. He just burst into tears. Because directly beneath the anger, and I could hear it in his tone of voice and I could see it in his eyes and we were then able to talk about how his, the pain that he was experiencing was the result of the fact that he still cared about her. And the object of this process was to get to a place where they could walk away from each other and still care on one level about what happened to each other but not care what the other person decides to do and not want to punish them. So, that's the idea basically in terms of processing emotions. There's a lot. I've written a fair amount about it. In fact, I just finished the third edition of a book called, "Resolving Conflicts at Work" that will be out in March and it has a chapter, in fact the second edition also has a chapter on, dealing with emotion. But also I've written a book called, "The Crossroads of Conflict" which gives this analysis and lists a number of different things that you can do to move people to a deeper level of authenticity regarding their emotion. Because looking back on it you can see that with regards to your child, anger was not your deepest emotion at all, it was very superficial and relatively trivial compared to the really deep thing which is how much you love your child and how frightened you were and how awful you would feel if something terrible happened. Now in truth all of these are bundled up together but it helps to separate them out so we can figure out techniques that correspond to each level. I hope that helped.

Caller: Karen Bryant: Thank you so much.

Ken: You're welcome.

Caller: Karen Civitate: It's a lot easier to see it from, when you're talking about your family, what we're dealing with in the workplace is a place where a lot of people don't want to acknowledge that there's an emotion that should even be a part of the mediation and what type of techniques do you think that we could use in a workplace setting where that's one of the biggest challenges?

Ken: Yeah. Virtually, every intervention in mediation can be thought of as existing on a sort of scale from less to more intense, stronger vs. lighter touch and for example, it's possible in the workplace setting to ask as a question, "if you had all of this to do over again, what you would do differently and why?" Or, "if you had 20/20 hindsight, what would you do differently?" Or, here's another one that I like a lot in the workplace, "what kind of relationship, what words would you use to describe the kind of relationship you would most like to have with each other?" And if somebody uses the word professional or collegial, break it down and say what does that word mean to you? And if somebody says, "I want a relationship that's respectful," that tells you that that person feels disrespected, by something that happened. If they say, "I want a relationship that's honest," that person feels lied to. And now you have two things; one is a direction to go in and the second is a fundamental emotional component that you can figure out how to resolve because the opposite of respect is humiliation. So, then that's an emotion. So somebody must have done something that made that person feel humiliated. And then what you can begin to do is to try to create a conversation in which that person feels more respected than they did before. And you can use the word respect repeatedly throughout the mediation. Let's create a solution that respects what both of you are interested in achieving. Right? So, all of those interventions are not really psycho-therapeutic, so people don't object to them. I think also it's permissible in mediation to do some things that particularly in caucus that you can't do in a general session but you can definitely kind of transition into becoming a conflict coach. And what you can then do is to say, just ask questions like, "was that scary for you?" You have to ask them in a kind of innocent way but most people will allow you to do that in my experience. Now I'm in a little bit different position than you are because I'm really outside as to workplace mediations and so I have a lot more permission to violate the cultural rules than you do. Another thing I think that you can do is if you have a situation that is highly intense and emotional, you can ask people in the very beginning, "What kind of resolution would you most like to achieve through this process? How would you describe it?" And then what will become clear is you can't do that unless you have permission to go deeper into what people are feeling and then you can ask for explicit permission, "can we talk a little bit about how both of you have been responding emotionally to each other? Is that acceptable to you?" And sometimes people will say yes to that as well.

Here's another question that allows you to raise emotional issues indirectly in a way that it doesn't appear to people to be inappropriate and that is to very simply ask, "What does that mean to you?" "When he says that to you, what does it mean in terms of what your concerns are or whatever, however you want to phrase it. But when you go to the meaning of something, usually that includes an emotional component. And if you listen carefully, you'll be able to figure out what it is. Does that make sense? I hope that helps.

Caller: In terms of breaking the cultural rules, when you enter into mediation in a place where you've never been before, how do you manage to break those cultural rules?



Ken: What I think you basically want to do is to make a kind of assessment of what the cultural rules are in the place where you are working. And there is a culture of conflict in every workplace and the culture of conflict tells you how angry you can get before you're going to get fired. And everybody knows the answer to that question and everybody on this call knows the answer to that question. You know how much permission you have to criticize your boss and what I think is important wherever you can do it, is to surface those cultural roles.

So, here's a question that you can sometimes use to determine a set of cultural expectations regarding your role as the mediator. Just simply ask people at the beginning of the mediation, "What role would you like me to play?" And what you will surface are a set of cultural expectations regarding the role that third parties should play in conflict resolution process or that they expect or want you to play. Another thing that you can do is you can ask people, "What is the culture in your workplace regarding this type of problem? Regarding listening, regarding criticism, regarding giving people feedback, regarding emotional expression, any number of different things." Just ask people, "What is the culture in your workplace regarding this problem?" And they will tell you what the culture says. You can also put people into teams in the workplace and identify for example, within the VA, "what is the culture of conflict regarding what you're supposed to do if someone does one thing to you and what you're supposed to do if somebody does something different, etc. So, those are a couple of interventions.

Sometimes it's possible to alter the culture of conflict in the workplace in a very small way and mediation is already a kind of confrontation with an adversarial culture which is one that has been in place for hundreds of years really in most workplaces. So to some extent mediation is already a little bit outside the cultural norm. And because it's new, it's possible for us to say, "Here's what we need in order to be able to resolve disputes." And one of the things that would be helpful would be to make presentations and in the course of your trainings, just identify the fact that sometimes it's necessary, in order to resolve a dispute, to go into what is happening emotionally between two people or what is happening emotionally internally within one person. That's just an essential element if we're going to resolve our disputes and if you can't do that, then you have at least one hand tied behind your back. And if they want to be effective they should give you more permission to move in that direction. Is that helpful? And are there anymore questions?

Caller: Karen Civitate: Can you discuss the participation of the representative? When they're helpful and when they're not and what to do with them when they're emotionally involved?

Ken: Yeah. This is a really difficult problem and I think that the problem occurs regardless of the nature of the representative. Sometimes it's an attorney, sometimes it's not. Sometimes it's a family member and sometimes it's just someone who's representing an idea or a principle. But when you're representing something, you don't know how to actually, you sort of make decisions. It turns out that there are some people who have had strokes that have paralyzed the emotional processing centers of their brain. And when that happens it turns out that they can't actually make decisions. Isn't that interesting? You think that decisions are logical but it turns out that without the emotional processing parts of your brain, you can't summarize that information very well. You can't determine what your priorities are. You can't figure out what means the most to you and so representatives aren't able to do

that because of the way that we have sort of developed the representation process and of course this development has taken place at least since Roman times. So, it has a long history to it and we're not too likely to change that. At least not immediately. But collaborative law is one of the places where there's a shift taking place and what I would say is that the most important thing to develop is a collaborative law analog in the representation process within the agency. So that instead of thinking of themselves as sort of adversarial attorneys, representatives are trained in a collaborative law approach in which they become essentially advocates but not in an adversarial way, in an interest based way. And in a way that actually assists their clients to reach agreements with one another rather than the opposite. Here's what representatives basically can do when they're really tuned in to the mediation process. They can hear and summarize what the opposing party has said that's useful and helpful in reaching an agreement. And when they do that, when the representative says, "here's what I understand you're saying and I really appreciate it and I agree with this point that you're making," it really strips the process of a lot of the unnecessary, adversarial posturing that's taking place. So, that's one illustration.

What basically, I think, you have to do if that doesn't work is try to talk directly to the parties. Now this is a little bit dangerous because the parties don't necessarily feel comfortable talking to you or each other without the representatives in the way. But the best way of doing it really is to just open the conversation with a question that the representative can't answer. Like for example, "can you tell me a little bit about yourself personally before you begin?" Or, "what words would you like to be able to use to describe the agreement," or whatever the intervention might be. So, that's an illustration of one element with regards to representatives. But basically, it's not a very satisfying approach because what we are really required to do is to change the nature of representation itself and that requires, I think, a collaborative approach to representation. And that's going to take some years to develop. But I think we've got the time and we certainly have the need to do it. And the collaborative law movement is one that's been very successful in doing it. So I hope that helps.

Any other final questions or comments?

Caller: Roy Anderson in Temple, Texas: I was wondering what training might be slated so that they can get us who are union representatives as well as trained mediators, so we can pull off that second hat during mediations and particularly under circumstances related to the question that was just asked previously.

Ken: Yeah. Well let me just say that I've done a number of trainings for union representatives and agency representatives and they're very powerful. The best training I would say would be one that the agency would put on itself for union reps. and agency reps. in mediation and basically if you had for example, a conference, you could invite speakers to come in or trainers to come in and actually train people. And I think it would be better to do it within your own agency rather than just in general. But if you're interested in doing something a little bit different, there is a 3-day collaborative law training for representatives. Most of them will be attorneys, but that doesn't mean it has to be, that's going to be taking place in Phoenix, Arizona, February 24, 25 & 26. So anybody who wants to come to that would be welcome to come to that. There's some kind of collaborative law association that's putting it on. I don't know how much it costs or anything.

Caller: Karen Civitate: As we finish up the call, perhaps you could send me that information. We do have some internal training for unions that we do put on and we can get that information out to everybody, as well as if you pass on that information from Arizona, we can pass that on to everybody as well in our newsletter.

Ken: I will do that Karen. And let me also say, I think that all of us as mediators have seen situations where a really good representative can have a dramatic impact on a mediation, very positive and constructive impact and it's not that difficult to learn these techniques but it requires you to shift your idea of what you're doing from which is something that I think is possible from looking out for the short term, narrow self-interest of the person, to looking out for the long term, larger self-interest of that person and everyone else in the workplace by building better relationships and better communication and more collaborative capacity to solve problems whenever they occur. That's the basic idea I think. So I will send that off to you Karen and I hope this has been helpful for you. We haven't had a lot of chance to exchange ideas but I've learned a little bit about what some of your concerns are and that's really helpful and I want to thank you all very much for tuning in and taking time out of a busy day to listen to this. And thank you Karen for inviting me.