

Peer Mediation Session



Six Steps in the Mediation Process

- STEP 1: Agree to Mediate
- STEP 2: Gather Points of View
- STEP 3: Focus on Interests
- STEP 4: Create WIN-WIN Options
- STEP 5: Evaluate Options
- STEP 6: Create an Agreement

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Please note: These conflict simulations were culled from over 150 written and oral interviews from the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Clinton Middle School in Anderson County, TN. These were actual He Said/She Said conflicts these students faced during the 1998-1999 school year. A few of the simulation situations came from descriptions in books, TV talk shows, or personal conversations with teachers and middle school students in other parts of the country.

Simulation #1 of 11

© 1999 for re-telling by Debbie Dunn inspired by an interview with a middle school boy

Trevor was going out with **Jennifer**. Bill was going out with **Anne**. **Jennifer** and **Anne** were best friends.

Trevor started making eyes at and flirting with Bill's girlfriend, **Anne**. **Anne** didn't much like this at first because she was committed to her own boyfriend.

Anne went up to her best friend, **Jennifer**, and said, "*I wish you would tell your boyfriend, Trevor, to stop flirting with me.*"

This made **Jennifer** feel jealous and mad. She went up to **Anne's** boyfriend, Bill, and lied, "*Bill, Anne is flirting with my boyfriend, Trevor. I wish you would get her to stop.*"

Now Bill felt jealous and mad at **Anne**. He broke up with **Anne**. When Trevor heard what he considered to be good news, he broke up with **Jennifer**. Trevor and **Anne** started going together. After that, **Anne** and **Jennifer** were no longer best friends.

Write a Peer Mediation role-play with the goal of having **Anne** and **Jennifer** become friends again.

Simulation #2 of 11

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You feel desperate or anxious about being considered popular. You long to be accepted by your friends. You're afraid to be yourself because you fear if they knew something personal or secret about you, they would turn away from you in disgust or they would make fun of you in some way.

You're so anxious to be accepted that you found yourself giving in to some form of peer pressure either to drink, smoke, take a dare, try drugs, sell crack, pull a prank, shoplift, or some other thing you feel to be wrong. As a result, you have gotten in trouble with your parents or guardians or caregivers or with the police or with school officials or with other people whose opinion you value.

You're afraid to let people know you're really smart or you have good grades because they may put you down for being a '*brain*' or a '*nerd*' or a '*teacher's pet*' or some other negative label. Or you're afraid to let people know you have trouble maintaining good grades as they may label you '*dumb*' or '*retard*' or some other negative label. Perhaps you have a speech impediment or problem or something else different about you that causes other kids to make fun of you.

You're afraid to say "**no**" to your friends as you're afraid they won't like you anymore.

Perhaps you wear the '*wrong*' clothes or do something else perceived as wrong that keeps you from being accepted. In any case, you don't have the social status you would like to have so you feel depressed or mad or are easily insulted.

Choose one or more of the above suggestions and create a Peer Mediation role-play about you and someone who has attempted to make you feel less than so he/she can feel greater than you and others.

Simulation #3 of 11

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Someone has spread a false rumor that you put down **Student X**. This is absolutely not true. They are simply trying to get you in trouble with **Student X**. Perhaps the rumor claims you said **Student X** was *'two-faced'* or you made fun of his or her appearance. Or perhaps the rumor claims you called **Student X** a name or something worse. You tried to check your facts and let each person know that you never did any of those things. Obviously, you didn't do a far-reaching enough job because **Student X** came and cussed you out for putting him or her down.

Write a Peer Mediation role-play between you and **Student X**. In the role-play, trace who started this false rumor in the first place.

Simulation #4 of 11

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Someone has spread the rumor that you plan to fight **Student X**. You never said that and you have no such intention. But everyone, including **Student X**, believes that this rumor is true. Now **Student X** wants to go through with the fight and wants to set up a time and place. You still don't want to fight **Student X**; however, you don't want to look like a *'wimp'* or a *'wuss'*.

Or let's say that you have personal convictions that the Golden Rule is how you wish to conduct your life. You would like to take the personal stance that fighting is an activity you prefer not to take part in; however, you don't want people to accuse you of being a *'wimp'* or a *'wuss'*. You are capable of fighting and are probably strong enough to win, but you simply feel fighting is not the best way to handle a conflict. Unfortunately, **Student X** has challenged you to a fight. You wish to get out of this without a punch or a kick having to be exchanged.

Choose one of the two situations and write a Peer Mediation role-play about you and **Student X**.

Simulation #5 of 11

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You're upset because someone has made fun of your parents or your guardians or your caregivers or someone else in your family. Your parents may be divorced or perhaps they never married. You may live with a foster family or you may be adopted. You may have step-parents or grandparents or somebody else other than your biological parents raising you.

You may have someone in your family who is gay or lesbian. You know they are not bad and you resent someone making fun of them simply due to lack of understanding.

You may be a different religion from most of your friends and you resent them making fun of you for having religious practices they don't understand.

One parent may be black and one parent may be white making you bi-racial.

Perhaps somebody in your family is disabled and you feel sensitive when someone makes fun of him or her or someone else with a similar disability.

Choose one or more of the above suggestions and create a Peer Mediation role-play.

Simulation #6 of 11

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Someone has put down one of your good friends, your best friend, your boyfriend, or your girlfriend in some manner. You wish to stand up for your friend but you don't want those verbal put-downs to now be turned in your direction. Or perhaps their verbal put-downs of your friend or friends makes you feel insulted personally as you feel they are questioning your choice of friends.

Or perhaps one of your friends tells you something bad about one of your other friends and vice versa and now you feel put in the middle.

Choose one or more of the above situations and write a Peer Mediation role-play.

Simulation #7 of 11

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Someone has spread a rumor that either you had lice, you smelled, you farted, you wet or messed your pants, you picked your nose in public, you never showered, you never shaved your legs or underarms, you needed to use deodorant, or some other sanitary habit.

Or perhaps someone put you down because you had braces, you wear glasses, you have pimples, you wear too much make-up or perfume or cologne, or you had a *'bad hair day.'* Or perhaps they make fun of you because you dress in unusual styles. Or perhaps they put you down for where you live or if you don't have much money.

They spread these rumors to try to smear your reputation so that you won't be well liked or respected.

If any of these situations were true, you would strongly prefer that one person come and talk it over with you privately and in a nice way. If it's not true or if it's something not within your control (*such as wearing braces or glasses or having pimples or your economic status*), you want these demeaning rumors stopped.

Choose one or more or a combination of these situations and write a Peer Mediation role-play between you and the main instigator of these rumors.

Simulation #8 of 11

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You have heard that people only put other people down because the only way they know how to feel greater than is to try to make you feel less than in some way. Nevertheless, it has hurt your feelings or insulted your integrity or personhood when they have put you down in some way.

You have also heard that bullies are truly cowards on the inside. They work hard at bullying or intimidating others so you won't find out how deficient or insecure they truly feel on the inside. Nevertheless, you feel afraid of them or you have found yourself being a victim of their abuse.

Choose some form of the above and write a Peer Mediation role-play about how you wish to no longer be verbally, emotionally, or physically abused.

Simulation #9 of 11

© 1999 for re-telling by Debbie Dunn inspired by some interviews with middle school girls

Lauren was furious. A certain boy, Michael, had asked her to go to a movie. She said no because she remembered what he had done to the last girl he had gone out with.

When Michael was ready to break up with that other girl, he started spreading rumors that she was easy and had got into some sexual activity with him and some other guys in the past.

Lauren knew that other girl well enough to realize that this was most likely a lie. Therefore, Lauren wisely decided that she didn't want to have anything to do with Michael.

Unfortunately, Michael was so angry that she refused to go out with him that he started to spread all kinds of rumors about her. First, he said she was a lesbian. Then, he also spread rumors that she also had gotten into some sexual activity with him and some other guys. The rumors spread like wildfire through the school. Not one of them was true.

Some of her friends defended her innocence. A few of her so-called friends believed the rumors and helped spread them further. One of the main people who helped spread these rumors was Amanda who had always disliked Lauren for some reason.

Either write a Peer Mediation role-play between Lauren and Michael or between Lauren and Amanda.

Simulation #10 of 11

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Someone has given you the strong impression you have been put down. It was not just the word or words that gave you the idea this was happening. Even more, it was **THE WAY** those words were said. The combination of facial expression, body language, tone of voice, and volume all worked together to make you feel hugely insulted and hurt. You would like this to stop.

Write a Peer Mediation role-play about this request.

Simulation #11 of 11

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You're upset because someone has made fun of you. Perhaps they feel you are too short or too tall or too fat or too skinny.

If you're a girl and you don't happen to have a boyfriend, they try to label you by calling you a 'lesbian' or 'lesbo' or 'dyke' or 'ugly' or the 'b word' or some other name intended to hurt. Or perhaps they accuse you of being a 'lesbian' because you're always spending time with your female best friend. If you're a guy and you don't happen to have a girlfriend, they try to attach labels to you by calling you 'gay' or 'queer' or 'geek' or the 'f word' that rhymes with bag or 'ugly' or some other name intended to hurt.

Or if you're a girl and you are popular with boys, they may feel jealous and start negative rumors about you saying you're a 'b', you sleep around, you're pregnant or have had an abortion, you're a 'player', you cheat on your boyfriend, or some other negative rumor intended to smear your reputation. If you're a boy and you are popular with the girls, they may feel jealous and start negative rumors about you saying you're a 'player', you cheat on your girlfriend, you're a 'jerk', you're 'gay', or some other negative rumor intended to make you feel mad, sad, or insulted in some manner.

Perhaps they make fun of you because you have a different-sounding name. Perhaps they make fun of you because you need extra help in reading, writing, math, or some other school subject. Perhaps you're real shy but people just assume your quietness means you're a snob. Perhaps your parents or guardians or whoever your caregivers are can't afford to buy you clothes like the 'preps' or popular kids wear. Perhaps you have a physical handicap of some kind.

Choose one or more of the above suggestions and create a Peer Mediation role-play about you and someone who has attempted to make you feel less than so he or she can feel greater than you and others.



**Use the fill-in-the-blank
9-page Peer Mediation script
that follows to
create your role-play.**

STEP 1: Agree to Mediate

Mediator ①: My name is _____.

Mediator ②: My name is _____. What are your names?

DISPUTANT #1: My name is _____.

DISPUTANT #2: My name is _____.

Mediator ①: Here is how mediation works. We are here to try to help you come up with your own solution to your problem.

Mediator ②: We don't take sides. We are simply here to help you come up with a solution that will satisfy you both.

Mediator ①: We have seven rules. **Rule #1:** You need to be willing to try to solve your problem through mediation.

Mediator ②: **Rule #2:** Only one person talks at a time. If you think of something you wish to say and it is not your turn to talk, write down your ideas on this piece of paper. Then when it is your turn to talk, you can share your ideas at that time.

Mediator ①: **Rule #3:** There should be no name-calling or put-downs.

Mediator ②: **Rule #4:** You both need to tell the truth.

Mediator ①: **Rule #5:** There is to be no physical fighting, yelling, or throwing things. As soon as any of that happens, the Peer Mediation session will be terminated and the Mediation Coordinator will take over. *(Point out the Adult Monitor sitting in the room.)*

Mediator ②: **Rule #6:** Everything of a personal nature must be kept confidential. We would be fired as Mediators if we ever told anyone what happens in this session. You both need to agree to keep each other's private business a secret as well.

Mediator ①: **Rule #7:** If something you say would harm you, each other, or anyone else, the Mediation Coordinator *(point out the Adult Monitor sitting in the room)* must report it to the principal.

Mediator ②: Do you have any questions about the seven rules?

DISPUTANT #1: No.

DISPUTANT #2: No.

Mediator ①: Please sign this contract indicating that you understand and agree to follow all seven rules.

Fill in the blanks on the top of the form.

Fill-in-the-blank Peer Mediation role-play - Page 2 of 9

Peer Mediation Contract

Date: _____

Peer Mediator #1: _____ Peer Mediator #2: _____

Disputant #1: Name _____ Grade ____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Disputant #2: Name _____ Grade ____ Homeroom Teacher _____

PROBLEM: The two disputants listed above came to Peer Mediation with a problem dealing with:

I agree to follow these seven rules of Peer Mediation:

Rule #1: I am willing to try to solve my problem through mediation.

Rule #2: Only one person talks at a time.

Rule #3: There should be no name-calling or put-downs.

Rule #4: We both need to tell the truth.

Rule #5: There is to be no physical fighting, yelling, or throwing things.

Rule #6: Everything of a personal nature must be kept confidential.

Rule #7: If something I say would harm me, each other, or anyone else, the adult monitor must report it to the principal.

Disputant #1 signs here

Disputant #2 signs here

Disputant #1: _____ Disputant #2: _____

SOLUTION: The two disputants agreed to the following options:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

AGREEMENT: The two disputants agreed that they will do the following should this happen again:

Disputant #1: _____ Date _____

Disputant #2: _____ Date _____

STEP 2: Gather Points of View

Mediator ①: *(Turn to Disputant #1 and ask:)* Please tell what happened from your point of view.

DISPUTANT #1: *(Allow Disputant to tell his or her story without interruption. Take notes of the main ideas that you hear.)*

Mediator ①: *(Turn to Disputant #1 and ask:)* Is there anything you would like to add?

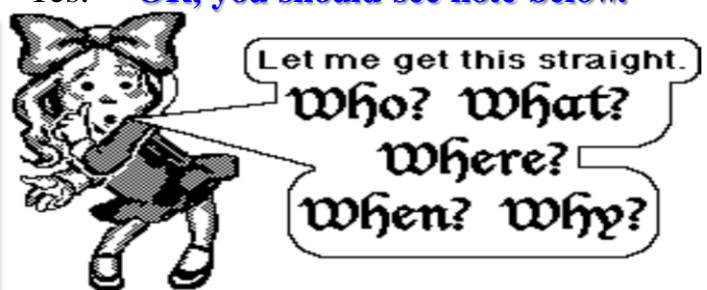
DISPUTANT #1: *(Allow Disputant to tell any additional details of his or her story without interruption. Take notes of the main ideas that you hear.)*

Mediator ①: *(Mediators need to restate complaint in your own words. Please keep all your statements as positive as possible.)* This is how I understood your side of the story.

Did I understand you correctly?

DISPUTANT #1: *(The Disputant has the opportunity to correct any details of his or her story that might have been misunderstood. If the story was understood correctly, then it is time for the other Disputant to speak.)* Yes. **OR, you should see note below.**

Note to Mediator:
Did you understand their entire story?
If necessary, ask them questions:
Who? What? Where?
When? Why?



STEP 2: Gather Points of View

Mediator ②: *(Turn to Disputant #2 and ask:)* Please tell what happened from your point of view.

DISPUTANT #2: *(Allow Disputant to tell his or her story without interruption. Take notes of the main ideas that you hear.)*

Mediator ②: *(Turn to Disputant #2 and ask:)* Is there anything you would like to add?

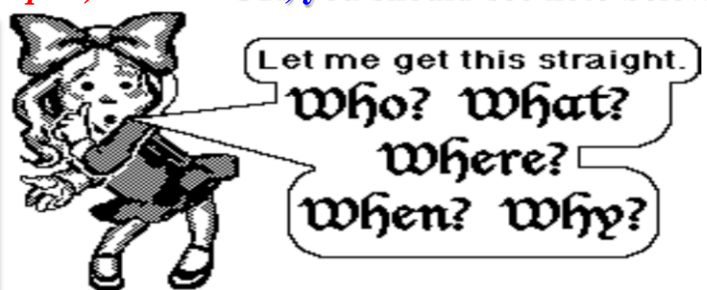
DISPUTANT #2: *(Allow Disputant to tell any additional details of his or her story without interruption. Take notes of the main ideas that you hear.)*

Mediator ②: *(Mediators need to restate complaint in your own words. Please keep all your statements as positive as possible.)* This is how I understood your side of the story.

Did I understand you correctly?

DISPUTANT #2: *(The Disputant has the opportunity to correct any details of his or her story that might have been misunderstood. If the story was understood correctly, then it is time for Step 3.)* Yes. **OR,** you should see note below.

Note to Mediator:
Did you understand their entire story?
If necessary, ask them questions:
Who? What? Where?
When? Why?



STEP 3: Focus on Interests

(This step is intended to plant the idea that each disputant has something in common with each other. This step is based on the Basic Needs of each individual.)

William Glasser's
Five Basic Needs

- > SURVIVAL
- > BELONGING
- > POWER or RESPECT
- > FREEDOM
- > FUN



It sounds like you were frustrated because you would like to have ...

- Choose Two:**
- RESPECT
 - BELONGING
 - FREEDOM
 - FUN
 - SAFETY

Mediator ①: *(To Disputant #1)* It sounds like you were frustrated because you would like to have _____

Mediator ②: *(To Disputant #2)* It sounds like you were frustrated because you would like to have _____

Mediator ①: So you both would like to have a little more _____

and you both would like to have more _____.

Mediator ②: So you both want some of the same things.

STEP 4: Create WIN-WIN Options



Please note: Both Mediators need to encourage disputants to come up with a total of 4 or 5 really good suggestions.

Mediator ①: Okay, the fourth step of mediation is to come up with a **WIN-WIN** solution that will please you both. To do that, you two will brainstorm some solutions to try to solve this problem.

Mediator ②: There are three rules to brainstorming. **Rule #1:** Say any idea that comes to mind, even if it might sound silly or hard to accomplish.

Mediator ①: **Rule #2:** Let's not judge or discuss any of the ideas until a little later. Your ideas will be written down so we can look at them as a group during Step 5 of mediation.

Mediator ②: **Rule #3:** Be real creative. Try to come up with as many ideas as possible so we have lots of options.

Mediator ①: *(Turn to both disputants as you ask this question:)* Do you agree to follow these three brainstorming rules?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Do not continue until both disputants have agreed to follow the three brainstorming rules.)* Yes.

DISPUTANT #2: *(Do not continue until both disputants have agreed to follow the three brainstorming rules.)* Yes.

Mediator ②: Okay. Let's brainstorm! What could you do to resolve this dispute?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Encourage this disputant to share as many ideas as possible.)*

DISPUTANT #2: *(Encourage this disputant to share as many ideas as possible)*

Mediator ①: *(Turn to both disputants as you ask this question:)* What other ideas could we write down that might make your relationship with each other better from now on?

(Continue on back side of this sheet of paper, if necessary.)

STEP 5: Evaluate Options

Mediator ②: Okay. Now it is time to evaluate those options. I will read off what you two came up with.

(Read aloud the entire brainstorming list.)

Mediator ①: Which of these solutions have the best possibilities of working?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Give each disputant a chance to choose which options work best for him or her. The goal is to pick options that they both can agree to.)*

DISPUTANT #2: *(Give each disputant a chance to choose which options work best for him or her. The goal is to pick options that they both can agree to.)*

Mediator ②: Could any of these options be combined?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Give each disputant a chance to choose which options work best for him or her. The goal is to pick options that they both can agree to.)*

DISPUTANT #2: *(Give each disputant a chance to choose which options work best for him or her. The goal is to pick options that they both can agree to.)*

Please note: Ask the next question after you have the options worded in such a way that both disputants feel comfortable with the verbiage and also a sense of ownership with the solutions.

Mediator ①: Does this agreement resolve the major problem between you?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Give each disputant a chance to respond to this question. Make adjustments if necessary. Then, write these agreements in the contract.)*

DISPUTANT #2: *(Give each disputant a chance to respond to this question. Make adjustments if necessary. Then, write these agreements in the contract.)*

STEP 6: Create an Agreement

Fill out the Solution part of the contract.

Mediator 2: You are both agreeing to ... *(Read off the options written on the contract.)*

Peer Mediation Contract

Date: _____

Peer Mediator #1: _____ Peer Mediator #2: _____

Disputant #1: Name _____ Grade ____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Disputant #2: Name _____ Grade ____ Homeroom Teacher _____

PROBLEM: The two disputants listed above came to Peer Mediation with a problem dealing with:

I agree to follow these seven rules of Peer Mediation:
Rule #1: I am willing to try to solve my problem through mediation.
Rule #2: Only one person talks at a time.
Rule #3: There should be no name-calling or put-downs.
Rule #4: We both need to tell the truth.
Rule #5: There is to be no physical fighting, yelling, or throwing things.
Rule #6: Everything of a personal nature must be kept confidential.
Rule #7: If something I say would harm me, each other, or anyone else, the adult monitor must report it to the principal.



Disputant #1: _____ Disputant #2: _____

SOLUTION: The two disputants agreed to the following options:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Mediator 1: When we finish the final step of our discussion, we will need you both to sign the contract indicating that you are willing to follow through on this agreement.

Follow-Up Step

Mediator 2: The final step is to discuss what you can each personally do to prevent this kind of thing from happening again.

Mediator 1: *(Turn to Disputant #1 and ask:)* What about you? What can you do to keep this from happening again?

DISPUTANT #1: *(Allow Disputant to respond to this question. Once his or her statement is worded in its final form, write this follow-up agreement on the contract.)*

Mediator 2: *(Turn to Disputant #2 and ask:)* What about you? What can you do to keep this from happening again?

DISPUTANT #2: *(Allow Disputant to respond to this question. Once his or her statement is worded in its final form, write this follow-up agreement on the contract.)*

Fill out the Agreement part of the contract. Disputants should sign the contract.

AGREEMENT: The two disputants agreed that they will do the following should this happen again:

Disputant #1: _____ Date _____

Disputant #2: _____ Date _____

After signing the Contract

Mediator 1: Please understand that the major goal of Peer Mediation is to learn to resolve your own conflicts before they get too big to handle on your own.

Mediator 2: We want to thank you both for coming to Peer Mediation and for cooperating in this process.

Mediator 1: Congratulations for working to reach a **WIN-WIN** agreement.

