



COMMUNITY MEDIATION CENTER OF RHODE ISLAND

Notes from the Carriage House Spring 2009 Newsletter

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

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The Center recently graduated a new crop of mediators from our semi-annual 36 Hour Basic Mediation Training. The trainees were an eclectic group, spanning the range from union representative to attorney, from university public safety officer to community activist. In the final Saturday of the last few minutes of the class, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences in the training. In some respects this closing exercise is my favorite part of the training. "Eye-opening!" said one trainee. One described mediation as a "beautifully simple process - but deceptively hard to conduct." "It feels great not taking sides, but instead being able to listen to both perspectives," commented another, who had begun the process with deeply entrenched ideas of "right" and "wrong." And, perhaps my favorite comment: "I feel gratitude at being able to take these skills back to my community."

Yes, the headlines are grim - "Providence's

nonprofits 'in jeopardy,' some 'likely to fail';" and this, from the Providence Journal's April 27, 2009 edition: "R.I. nonprofit groups caught in a pinch: Revenue down, demand for services up". A study commissioned by the United Way, in which Rhode Island nonprofits responded to survey questions (and in which this Director participated) designed to gauge the impact of the economic crisis on state nonprofits, reported an average decrease in income of 22 percent. Of those surveyed, 38 percent predicted they would end the fiscal year in the red.

And yes, CMCRI is feeling the proverbial pinch, too. That is why, as we prepare for the next likely round of budget cuts, I derive inspiration and sustenance from new mediators who use words like "gratitude."

An important part of the Center's vision is that through our work as mediators we will increase peaceful resolution of conflict and decrease violence throughout the state. Basic Mediation Skills Training is a first step in becoming an experienced, skilled mediator, problem solver and peace maker equipped to intervene in all manner of public and private disputes. There may be a shortage of funding sources, but there is certainly

no shortage of conflict. Put another way, there is also no shortage of opportunity for those of us who practice dispute resolution to make a societal impact by transforming conflict into cooperation.

And despite these difficult economic times - or perhaps because of them? - there is no better time to get trained as a mediator. *US News and World Report* named mediation one of the best careers for 2009.

To paraphrase a tale related by William Ury in his book Getting to Peace: Transforming Conflict at Home, at Work and in the World, a Chinese nobleman asked his gardener to plant a seed that would result in a rare and beautiful tree. When the gardener questioned his instructions, protesting that such a tree would take 100 years to flower, the nobleman responded, "Then we'd better plant it this afternoon."

Warm wishes for a wonderful Spring!

Abbie Jones-Herriott

A Call for Board Members

CMCRI is looking for people willing to join its Board of Directors by contributing time, energy, personal skills, expertise and networking contacts to advance the Center's mission. The Board is an informal, committed group with a sense of humor and fun. The Center is particularly in need of Board Members with PR or HR expertise, or significant community contacts. You need not be a mediator to join the Board! The Board meets 10 times per year, on the third Wednesday of each month, at 5:00 PM, and takes a hiatus during summer months. All Board Members make an annual financial (tax deductible) contribution, and CMCRI is proud to have a 100% giving Board. If you are interested in learning more, or in being considered for Board Membership, please call the Center at (401) 273-9999, or e-mail the Director at ajones-herriott@cmcri.org. Your name will be submitted to the Nominating Committee for consideration, and you will then be contacted by the Head of the Committee.

Calendar of Upcoming CMCRI Events

- June 12, 2009 - Communicating Compassionately in a World of Conflict**. Save the Bay, Providence, RI; 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM: CMCRI is sponsoring this training based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg and the Center for Nonviolent Communication and led by trainer Joe Brummer. The goal of this 7 hour workshop is to help participants transform conflict in the home, workplace, school and community into connection. The nonviolent communication skills trainees will learn in this workshop will help initiate difficult conversations with ease and confidence; create connections; conduct mutually satisfying negotiations; and resolve conflicts peacefully. **You do not need to be a mediator in order to attend this training**; this training is open to the public! The cost is \$65 for CMCRI volunteers and \$95 for the general public. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. This training has been approved for 6.5 Social Work CEU credits. To register for this training, please call (401) 273-9999 or email Victoria Moreno-Jackson at vmoreno-jackson@cmcri.org.
- The 2009 Bi-Monthly Mediators Meetings**: These meetings are held on the last Tuesday of alternating months. By popular vote our mediators have asked that the meeting time be changed from a breakfast slot (8:00 - 9:30 AM) to an afternoon slot (4:30 - 6:00 PM). CMCRI provides snacks and beverages at these meetings. E-mail reminders will go out beforehand announcing agendas and topics to be discussed. As always, please let us know if there are topics you would like to see discussed or areas you would like to learn more about during these meetings. The remaining 2009 meeting dates are listed below.

Calendar of Upcoming CMCRI Events (Con't.)

- **May 19, 2009 (PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DATE FOR THIS MEETING HAS CHANGED!)- CMCRI Bi-Monthly Mediator Meeting – Dealing with Lawyers in Mediations:** CMCRI, Providence, RI; 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM. Have you ever mediated a case where an attorney was present and dominated the process? Have you wondered how to successfully engage attorneys to assist with reality testing? Bruce Kogan, Professor of Law and Director of the Mediation Clinic at Roger Williams School of Law, will lead participants in an interactive workshop to address these, and other issues to help mediators improve skills around working with lawyers who are representing clients in mediations. This workshop will combine video demonstrations with discussion and fish-bowl role-plays. Please note: This workshop may be extended to 6:30.
- **July 28, 2008 :** Topic TBD
- **September 29, 2009:** **How to Utilize Reflection in Your Mediation Practice.** Location and time for this workshop are TBD, depending on the number of interested respondents. This workshop is back by popular demand! Former CMCRI trainer and current MIT Director of Student Mediation Ruth Kohorn Rosenberg will lead this workshop with the goal of assisting mediators both in debriefing with co-mediators, in reflecting on solo mediations conducted, and to help equip mediators with tools to improve mediation skills. If you are interested in attending, please reserve your space and RSVP by emailing Victoria at vmoreno-jackson@cmcri.org as soon as possible. This workshop will take place at CMCRI unless you receive an e-mail notification with an alternate space. Those signed up for the meeting will receive an e-mail confirmation two weeks beforehand. There is a suggested donation of \$10.00 to attend this workshop.
- **November 24, 2009 :** Topic TBD
- **SAVE THE DATE:** Two-Day **Facilitation Training** to be held on October 14 and 15, 2009. This will be a highly interactive training led by Loraine Della Porta, Esquire, Deputy Director of the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution. Loraine is a seasoned and nationally-recognized mediation and facilitation trainer. Stay tuned for further announcements and registration information.

Local Conflict Resolution Happenings

- **May 15, 2009 – Caucus vs No Caucus,** sponsored by the Rhode Island Mediators Association, Sheraton Airport Hotel, Warwick, RI; 7:45AM – 9:00AM. Join us for a dynamic presentation of two divergent views on whether to use a caucus. Some mediators always caucus; some mediators never caucus. Jeremy Howe, Esquire, and Bryna Bettigole, Psychotherapist, both mediators, will lead what promises to be a lively roundtable discussion of an important topic in the field of mediation. For more information or to register for this workshop please go to www.rimediators.org.
- **May 27, 2009 – Dealing with Power Imbalances in Mediation,** sponsored by the Rhode Island Mediators Association, Providence, RI. This workshop will be held from 5:30 – 7:30 at the Roger Williams University Providence Campus, on 150 Washington Street, and will include a light dinner. There is a fee for this workshop. For more information or to register for this workshop please go to www.rimediators.org.

CMCRI Mediator and Civil Rights Era “Foot Soldier” Returns to the Scene

Community activist, writer, and longtime CMCRI mediator David Riley was one of the many volunteers in the 1960's who dared challenge the status quo with nonviolent activism for equal rights and social justice. David's experience is a clear demonstration of how non-violence can prevail over violence, even during the most difficult times in history. Following his graduation from Vermont's Middlebury College, David traveled to Vicksburg, Mississippi during Freedom Summer on a mission to register African American voters and protest Jim Crow laws in the state. He worked with the Council of Federated Organizations, which provided an avenue for equal rights by organizing and demonstrating with non-violent means.

While in Vicksburg, David helped start and edited a newspaper called the Vicksburg Citizens' Appeal. The paper, which publicized news and events affecting the African American community, had to be printed in New Orleans because it was deemed too controversial by local printers. David says he was inspired to return to Vicksburg 45 years after the Freedom Summer after the then-young African-American doctor whom he worked with in Vicksburg contacted him over the internet two years ago.

This past winter David traveled back to Mississippi – his first visit since the summer of 1964 – and over the course of 5 days reconnected with some of the people with whom he had worked and whose lives had been in danger alongside his. The reunion between David and fellow activist Frank Crump was captured in a March 24, 2009 article appearing in the Vicksburg Post, and is partially reprinted below.

Together David and Frank Crump “braved the same types of threats and danger in Vicksburg broadcast to the world from other locales in the 1960s – gunfire aimed at council headquarters, bombings of known gatherings of COFO volunteers and phone threats.”

David and Frank “last saw each other during the summer of 1964 – the first of many turbulent seasons in a violent decade in Mississippi, across the South and in many large American cities.”

Riley was one of more than 1,000 out-of-state volunteers who flocked to Mississippi during Freedom Summer. Riley said the day he left home in Connecticut coincided with the indelible event of the Freedom Summer project, the June 22, 1964, disappearance in Neshoba County of civil rights volunteers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman. “They told us in Memphis for orientation we wouldn't be called cowards for not going,” Riley said.

A freedom school was set up at the Warren County Baptist Association . . . There, Riley, Crump and about 20 others registered blacks in the run-up to the formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. An early-morning explosion rocked the building Oct. 4, 1964, leaving a woman and her 2-month-old grandson injured. A dozen other locals and volunteers escaped unharmed. Riley, who maintained a bed inside the building, said he escaped injury because he happened to be at the home of Rosa and James T. Chiplin that night.

. . . “For a lot of us, it was an extremely powerful experience to be here,” Riley said, “But ones who lived there day in and day out and endured are the real heroes.”

(Article by Danny Barrett, Jr., Vicksburg Post: “Freedom Summer Pair Reunite Here, Recall Scary Time.” The full text of the article can be found at <http://vicksburgpost.com/articles/2009/03/23/news/doc49c7bc1d4619f997216133.txt>.)

Wish List



When you do an internet search, please consider using Goodsearch, a yahoo-based search engine, to help raise money for CMCRI. **Each time you do a search using Goodsearch, the website donates money to CMCRI.** The same principle applies if you do your on-line shopping through Goodshop.

Among the thousands of retailers who donate to non-profits through Goodshop are 1-800-Flowers, FTD, Garnet Hill, Zappos, the Gap, Abercrombie & Fitch, Target, Land's End, and Amazon.com. **If you plan on doing any online shopping for Mother's or Father's Day, we'd appreciate it if you would do it by going to the website: <http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx> and entering CMCRI as your designated agency.**

This website also has coupons for substantial discounts off certain products (like flowers for Mother's Day!). You simply continue your shopping as usual, and a portion of your proceeds will go to CMCRI. During these difficult economic times, every little bit of help is especially meaningful to non-profits, so if you don't contribute to CMCRI through Goodshop, please consider donating to another agency through this method.

Thank you so much in advance for considering shopping through Goodshop!

CMCRI continues to accept your EastSide Market Place receipts, for which we will receive 1% back. Please note that we are no longer accepting Shaw's Supermarket Receipts, as the company has instituted an electronic receipts program that works through your Shaw's card.

CMCRI STAFF

Abigail Jones-Herriott, Executive Director
Victoria Moreno-Jackson, Program Director
Elmis Navarro, Program Associate
Pamela Humphreys, Program Associate
Meri Kaufman, Administrative Assistant

COMMUNITY MEDIATION CENTER OF RHODE ISLAND

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We can be found on the web at:: WWW.CMCRI.ORG

THE COMMUNITY MEDIATION CENTER OF RHODE ISLAND

Presents

“Communicating Compassionately In a World of Conflict”

Friday, June 12, 2009 – 8:30 am until 4:30 pm

Trainer : Joe Brummer

Most of us have been educated from birth to compete, judge, demand, and diagnose — to think and communicate in terms of what is “right” and “wrong” with people. We express our feelings in terms of what another person has “done to us,” instead of taking responsibility for our feelings independent of another person. We struggle to understand our own needs in the moment, or to effectively ask for what we want without using unhealthy demands, threats, or coercion.

At best, communicating and thinking this way can create misunderstanding and frustration. And still worse, it can lead to anger, depression, and even emotional or physical violence.

Through this workshop, you’ll learn to transform the thinking, language, and moralistic judgments that keep you from the enriching relationships that you dream of. The 4-Part NVC process provides a unique, yet simple, framework to get “unstuck” in those trying moments.

You’ll start to resolve conflicts with ease more easily get what you want without using demands, begin to hear the needs of others with less struggle, strengthen your personal and professional relationships, and start living to your fullest potential.

Transform conflict in your home, workplace, school and community.

Based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg and the Center for Nonviolent Communication

In the workplace:

- Resolve Workplace Conflict easily and effectively
- Initiate difficult conversations with ease and confidence
- Improve workplace morale

In schools:

- Improve safety, trust and co-operation in the classroom
- Empower kids to resolve or prevent conflicts on their own
- Improve parent-teacher relations
- Create connections

In the home:

- Reduce family conflicts
- Hear the needs behind your child’s “no”
- Clearly express your needs in a way your family will hear
- Create more intimacy in your relationships

In the community:

- Effectively mediate cross-cultural concerns
- Transform enemy images into mutually satisfying negotiations
- Resolve conflicts peacefully

About the trainer: Joe Brummer has over 5 years experience in the field of conflict resolution, nonviolence and mediation. He has worked with the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence, the Community Mediation Center of RI and serves on the Juvenile Restorative Justice Advisory Board at CMCRI. He recently returned from the Winter 2008, International Intensive Training on Nonviolent Communication. Joe is also the Connecticut representative for New England NVC. You can view his website at www.speakcompassion.com.

Location: Save the Bay, 100 Save The Bay Dr., Providence, RI 02905

CMCRI has applied for CEU credits for social workers.

TO REGISTER: The deadline for registration is May 22, 2009

Registration is open to the public. Seating is limited. The requested fee for this training is \$95.00 per person and includes lunch and materials. Current CMCRI volunteer mediators may register for a reduced price of \$65.00.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Checks should be made payable to Community Mediation Center of Rhode Island
Please mail check or money order and registration form to:
570 Broad Street, Carriage House, Providence, Rhode Island 02907

Questions? Please call (401) 273-9999.