

## Learning to Accept Conflict

### Top 10 Practice Tips About Conflict

#### Elder Mediation Training Webinar Series

Ami S. Jaeger, MA, JD

Noelle Graney, JD

© 2012 BioLaw Ethics Institute. All Rights Reserved.

1. Conflict is inevitable -- how you respond to conflict makes a difference.
2. In response to conflict you can choose whether to escalate, deescalate, avoid, compromise, collaborate, to request mediation.  
*Credit:* Communication from Greg Abell, October 9, 2012, [www.soundoptionsgroup.com](http://www.soundoptionsgroup.com).
3. The challenge for elder care professionals is that conflicts are often:
  - a. Multifaceted, layered, and complex
  - b. On-going
  - c. Stubborn
  - d. Deeply involved with identity and values
4. Causes of conflict:
  - a. Data conflicts
  - b. Interest conflicts
  - c. Structural conflicts
  - d. Value conflicts
  - e. Relationship conflicts*Credit:* Moore, Christopher W. *The Mediation Process*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1986.
5. Mediation skills are powerful tools you can use to cope with and resolve conflict. Mediation supports people in conflict coming together with an open mind and willingness to negotiate. The challenge is to engage, discover, and be curious in order to navigate conflict in new way.

6. Identify shared interests to find mutually beneficial solutions.  
*Credit: Bennett, Mark and Joan Gibson, A Field Guide to Good Decisions: Values in Action, Praeger Press, Westport, CT, 2006.*
7. Understand the underlying causes of conflict and you will be empowered to respond effectively.
8. Use mediation to reach solutions where the individuals in the conflict--including you--control the outcome.
9. It is ok to be uncomfortable with conflict. Learning to be comfortable with conflict takes practice.
10. Request a mediator before you lose control over the situation and tempers flare.