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Mediation

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A mediator is a neutral person who steps in to a conflict situation, and helps everyone involved to talk and listen to each other, in order to find a solution that works for everyone.

Story

Judith went to her local community mediation service because she received a letter from her neighbour Andrew complaining that Judith was making too much noise. A mediator came to visit Judith at home, in order to understand how she felt, and then visited Andrew in the flat below to hear his point of view. The

mediator listened to both sides of the story but did not take sides or suggest solutions. Then the mediator, Andrew and Judith all met in a community centre to talk about the situation together. With the help of the mediator, Andrew was able to tell Judith how angry he was about the noise he heard, and Judith explained how she sometimes paced the floor when she got anxious. Having cleared the air they agreed some things that they each could do to improve the situation. They also agreed how they would communicate if problems arose again.

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Hints & Hazards

Mediation is for disputes where no laws are being broken, but where people are still distressed by the conflicts between them. It works best when both people are willing to listen to each other, make a plan to solve the problem and stick to it. Mediation is less likely to work when one or both parties are determined to win at all costs or are not able to make an agreement and then carry it out.

One job retention specialist teaches mediation as part of the repertoire of job retention specialists. Go to www.mediationuk.org.uk to find your nearest community mediation service and ask your local college or university about training courses in mediation skills.