

Heart Talk Matters - supported Dialogues

with **Kate Raffin**

www.hearttalkmatters.com

What to expect

When you come together with Kate and the person/s you would like support to talk with, there are a few things that may help you understand what will happen.

Mediation has many forms, techniques and applications. Some forms include methods where partys are directed and advised towards solutions. Other forms include supporting party driven choices - (rather than lawyer based) and recognition of each other's needs and interests.

The training and experience Kate has with Nonviolent Communication Mediation fits within the mode of transformative Mediation where there is no pressure to come up with solutions. Space is provided for new ways forward to surface naturally as connection and mutual understanding are created. We will, however look for some 'doable' action steps (offers, proposals and requests) by the end of our time together if they haven't yet surfaced. These are simply next steps and not aimed at 'solving' the whole situation.

Often when we talk with each other about things that are important and sometimes painful, though we want it and it sounds simple, we rarely have the experience of “message sent - message received ” - ie we rarely have a sense that we have been fully heard or understood. To have the experience of feeling sufficiently heard and understood is one of the most important contributing factors to clear and respectful communication and does not require us to agree with each other.

How our time together will look :

By the time we all come together, Kate will have had a confidential private conversation with each of you. This conversation is mainly to ensure that there is sufficient understanding of the process and to check a willingness to come together with the other party/s with Kate's support. It is also an opportunity for you to ask any clarifying questions and share any concerns that you have about coming together and to discuss and arrange any support you may need in order to participate. This conversation is often referred to as a pre-mediation.

The next step is to schedule a time and place for us all to meet.

When we meet there are a few things that Kate will ask of you.

1. One at a time, Kate will ask you to **say one thing that you would like the other person to hear** from you.

Kate will then lend her training, skills and experience to check with you about what she is hearing and try to capture the significance of what you want to say, in terms of how you feel and what is important to you. Once you have agreed with what Kate is hearing, she will ask the other person to say back to you what they heard you say and then check with you if that is what you want heard.

2. Then Kate will ask the other person one thing that they want you to hear and she will try to capture the significance for them and **ask you to reflect back what you hear**.

This will not be a test of accuracy, nor will you be asked to agree with what the other person has said - it is simply trying to clear the communication airways between you both, supporting as much clarity 'and hearable' communication as possible.

Thus checking 'message sent - message received'.

The reason we use this process is that experience offers that slowing down and using this back and forth process is one of the most effective ways to support maximum understanding between people. Especially when there is conflict and emotions begin to run high which can make it hard to hear others and be heard in ways we'd like.

Kate works with a motto of **'the slower we go, the further we get faster'**.

It is recommended that you prepare to have more than 1 session as sometimes where there has been significant history of misunderstanding and conflict, it can take time to integrate what you hear each other say as well as any new clarity you have come to within yourself.

The impact of these sessions is often surprising and can vary from subtle to quite significant and immediate.

You will be encouraged to be as authentic as you are comfortable being while noticing what arises for you. Strong emotions are welcome and held as valuable indicators that there is something with much significance for you.

Once there has been sufficient exchange and understanding, the way forward naturally becomes clearer and fresh solutions are more easily found . These are often surprising.

3. For this reason, it is recommended that you **put aside any solutions you have for the time we are together** and be as open as possible to what may happen, even if you are certain you know what will occur.

All conversations will be held in full confidentiality. You will be responsible for what you bring to the mediation and what you take away as it is you who will be living with any changes or consequences. Kate will meet this in her role as facilitator to lend her skills to support you both to be heard for what is significant and has meaning to you in the clearest, most helpful ways. The aim is to support you to have the conversations that are important, though sometimes difficult to have.

Kate looks forward to hearing from you and welcomes any questions or concerns you may have, even during your time together.

Kate is a Nationally accredited Mediator and a Certified trainer with the Centre for Nonviolent Communication. www.cnvc.org More info about Kate - www.hearttalkmatters.com

Kate gratefully acknowledges the inspiration, learning and support from her teachers and colleagues Jan Blum, Ike Lasater, John Kinyon, Catherine Cadden, Jesse Wiens, Mukti Jarvis, Rowena Finnane, Miki Kashtan, Liv Larsson, Robert Krzysnik, Dominic Barter and Marshall Rosenberg.

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