

October is Mediation Month: Perfect Time to Resolve

With October as National Mediation Month, and October 17 known as Conflict Resolution Day, family law attorney and mediation specialist Alisa Peskin-Shepherd offers insight into how everyday people can use the tools and techniques of legal mediation to have healthier relationships and more success at work.

National Mediation Month is an effort to promote awareness of alternative resolution techniques both in the legal arena and in everyday life. The idea behind it is to encourage professional mediators like Peskin-Shepherd to hold public programs to educate people about peaceful conflict resolution.

“Even attorneys don’t really want conflicts to escalate,” says Peskin-Shepherd. “Our job is to bring opposing parties to the table and find a mutually beneficial resolution to whatever acrimony is plaguing their relationship. It can happen in all sorts of settings, not just in the courtroom – think about personal relationships, classrooms, workplace settings. How do we navigate conflict well and with a goal of peaceful outcomes every time?”

The legal system in particular is based on fairness and hearing all information before making a judgment, says Peskin-Shepherd. Every person should remember that mandate for fairness before entering into a high-conflict situation.

People face conflict constantly in their everyday lives. In fact, research shows that unresolved conflict represents the largest reducible cost in many businesses, yet it goes largely unrecognized – contributing to stress at work and greater risk to employee physical and mental well-being. The number of employees seeking guidance to resolve workplace conflict has consistently risen over the last decade.

Peskin-Shepherd can offer tips on how to use legal mediation techniques in everyday life toward greater personal happiness and success. These tips include the following:

- *The importance of listening.*
- *Using “I” messages.*
- *Letting the other party speak.*
- *Reflecting another person’s statements back to them.*
- *Taking cues from childhood lessons.*

She can also apply mediation techniques to specific relationships, including parent-child, spousal, workplace, and other common relationships.

With more than two decades of experience as a family, divorce and custody attorney, mediator and collaborative divorce practitioner, Alisa Peskin-Shepherd focuses on a mediative approach to resolving legal issues. Her proven strategies help clients transition from one situation to the next with ease. Her law firm, Transitions Legal, is based in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

An approved mediator statewide, Peskin-Shepherd is specially trained in a wide variety of legal focuses that aid her work with families. She has acted as a guardian-ad-litem, protecting the interests of children within the legal system, and has special training in domestic violence through the State Bar of Michigan Open Justice Commission. She speaks widely and leads workshops on topics related to divorce, counseling and mediation.

*Transitions Legal is located at 40900 Woodward Ave., Suite 111, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304-5116.
248:290:0560, www.transitionslegal.com.*