

Hello, and happy spring! You're receiving this Gazette because you've expressed an interest in Baltimore Mediation. Please add office@baltimoremediation.com to your address book so we can stay in touch!

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Thank you!



BEING RELATIONAL GAZETTE

Baltimore Mediation's Newsletter & Tips

May 2020



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER:

Dear Friends,

How about this remarkable vision! It's what Lewis Miller calls a **Flower Flash**. Flower Flash reminds us of what is **within each of us all along, our capacity as human beings**, bursting forth with color and life. Flower Flash is a **fabulous example of how we can Be Grounded and experience a shift in our thinking that allows us to see possibilities**. At a time when our world is shrouded in a dark shadow of death and fear, we are having new experiences of quiet and empty spaces in our lives-- both internally and externally. **These experiences can be cultivated, even when we are uncertain and even when we feel low or at odds with others. Being Grounded** allows us to be more open, **to see what we may have missed before or hadn't thought about**. Join us June 22-26, 2020 to learn the Relational Skillset and Transformation for how to foster more grounded thinking and outcomes for others in the workplace. Your most important workplace today might be your home...



*“What can we do to promote world peace?
Go home and love your family.”
- Mother Teresa*

Recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Mother Teresa was a different kind of mother to many, a perfect example of **Relational Leadership**, and a nurturer of ailing bodies and ailing souls alike. “People are starving for love,” she said, “because everybody is in such a great rush.”

During this unprecedented COVID 19 time, we've all had the **unexpected opportunity to “go home and love our families”**: to stop rushing, to truly see and deeply cherish one another again. Whether we share a dwelling with our families or are separated by distance, we've had more time to be together, with renewed appreciation, new bonds. There might also be old or fresh frictions. Each is an opportunity to look within, change or modify as needed or not, shed, or not, and claim or reclaim what is important. It is a perfect time **to practice being relational, and the quality of Being Grounded.**

For parents, this COVID time reminds us that the laboring of parenthood never ceases for young children as well as when we become parents to our aging parents. Parents are protective because they are fearful, fearful because they love a creation that is literally a part of them. Whether in tact or separated, a Being Relational mindset helps us to mobilize that fear into decisions that promote well-being. **The mantra Maybe Maybe Not is very useful.** It can help to ground us to inquire about our assumptions as well as our dreams and our dreads.

In addition to regular parenting, we are currently also **taking on the roles of other people in our children's lives during quarantine.** We've become teachers as we help our little ones navigate schoolwork and on-line learning, determined that they mustn't fall behind in their education. We've taken on the roles of counselor and therapist, attentive to our children's developing emotional and psychological well-being. We've taken on the role of coach and program coordinator, attentive to our children's physical development. Perhaps we've become more playful, **filling in for absent companions or outside activities.**

Our **high school seniors and college students** have had huge adjustments coming home, shifting boundaries on their time, commitments and independence. There have been hidden joys of new adult relationships for many families. Some college students returned home to find tensions high between their parents and the future uncertain.

Baltimore Mediation is dedicating this month to families and to

Being Grounded. I was asked to contribute to a new published book turned around in 3 weeks on Amazon! **Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic.** I chose the unique topic of college kids home with separating parents; you can find an excerpt of the chapter I contributed here. [LINK HERE](#). And the publisher has given me 50 books I can give away to friends and clients. **To support families and help them stay Grounded, this special give away is below, particularly for families and relationships heavily challenged or impacted by COVID and quarantine.** Keep reading for more details!

As for Being Grounded, check out Les Williams surprises in NYC families, we are also learning new ways to work better together with our work colleagues, customers, and clients. If you want the latest cutting edge approaches for handling challenges and conflict in your workplace, **join us in June for our VIRTUAL mediation and conflict transformation certified training with a focus on the workplace! Baltimore Mediation's award-winning 40-hour training, just around the corner: June 22-26, 2020!**

Sending love

Louise

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Each month, we highlight someone who exemplifies relational leadership. This month, we're focusing on **our own Louise Phipps Senft**, winner of **Maryland State Bar Association** and ***The Daily Record's* 2020 Leadership in Law award!** Out of over 100 nominations across the state of leaders in the law, Louise was selected by an outside panel of judges for her **professional achievement, community leadership, and mentoring.** See her thoughts on mediation training and working with legal professionals in the video below! And join us for our June training!



UPDATE:

Not out of fear, but out of love. Baltimore Mediation ceased all in-person business and social meetings as of March 13. **We have taken our entire practice VIRTUAL and it's better than ever! Mediations are virtual, inspirational Continuing Education workshops are virtual, and our 40 hour Certified Mediation Training Programs are VIRTUAL too!**

Join us on-line for an interactive **June 40-Hour Workplace Mediation & Conflict Transformation Skills Training**! We use Zoom, a tool for video conferencing. We've had great success holding virtual trainings and are excited about these new connections! See you there!

HIGH PRAISE FOR BALTIMORE MEDIATION'S 40-HOUR WORKSHOP!

What are our training participants saying?

See the clips below and **join us via Zoom for our award-winning training, June 22-26, 2020!**



"Shifted my paradigm!"
- Barry Williams Director



"A definite impact!"
- Mike Fry, Esq. Litigator



"Make progress!"
- Dylan Smith Program Mgr

Register Today!

If you seek to **grow your career success and enrich your personal life through quality interactions**, we want to accommodate you! Spaces are filling fast! Please **register soon** to secure your place. **Only five more spots as of this publication.** We are holding all trainings in a virtual setting using Zoom. We've had such success with this that we've been asked to teach other mediators how to do the same!
See you there!

*"I took a series of courses with
Baltimore Mediation with Lee (now
my husband). **You changed our lives!**
Lee and I were in our residencies. Now we are
physicians in large healthcare.
We love our jobs thanks to the communication skills
you taught us.*

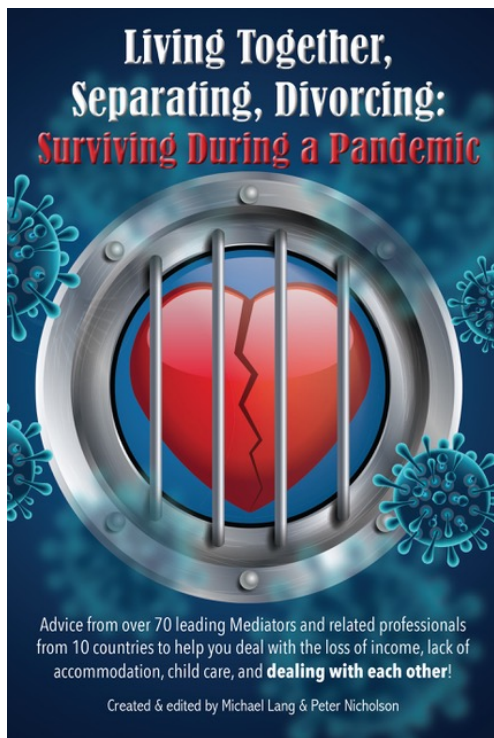
- Katherine Hoops. MD

**Learn what Katherine and Lee learned
at our JUNE 40-HOUR TRAINING!**

GRATITUDE.... ACCOLADES, HIGH FIVES!



In gratitude to mothers, whose awe-inspiring love, strength, effort and care nurtures the whole planet!



High fives all around to **Michael Lang, Peter Nicholson, and all 74 family practitioners** (from 10 countries!) whose collaboration has created a timely and helpful book for families feeling the stress and strain of coronavirus and quarantine. Available in paperback at Amazon, **Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic** is sure to be a generous resource for many in this time and far beyond. **Our own Louise Phipps Senft is one of the authors who collaborated on this book!** We're incredibly excited to offer a **free copy to the the first 50 Gazette readers who request one!** Email PR@ogx.ie. The subject line must read "BMC" in order to claim your free copy of the book! Please see details below.



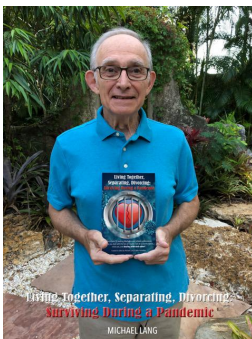
Join us for a Live Webinar May 15, 2020 and replays thereafter!

Excited accolades to our founder, **Louise Phipps Senft**, on being asked by MACRO (Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office) and the Maryland Judiciary to speak at their new MPME (Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence) **Webinar Series, Navigating ADR Online: Family Topics**. She will share her experiences using VIRTUAL mediation for families and share her **relational expertise** for how Family Conflict Resolution Practitioners across the state of Maryland can **support and empower families** during this stressful time **to find the potential in quality living together, with clearer boundaries**. Louise and our team have found that ZOOM provides many benefits to families before unknown, untapped. We're incredibly **proud to be a leader in virtual settings for mediations and trainings**. To register, click here: [Navigating ADR Online: Family Topics](#)



RELATIONAL RECIPROCITY

SPOTLIGHT: Michael Lang



Michael Lang retired recently from active practice after 40 years as a mediator! He hasn't retired entirely, however. Michael leads several monthly reflective

practice groups via video conference, presents webinars on reflective practice,

UPCOMING TRAININGS

We're still on! In a new and exciting format: On-Line Zoom!



and created a video series, *In Their Voices*. Videos in this series may be viewed [on his website](#) and on YouTube. Michael is also the co-editor with Susanne Terry of *The Guide to Reflective Practice in Conflict Resolution*, the first publication in the *Practitioners Guide Series*, a joint venture of the Association for Conflict Resolution and Rowman & Littlefield, published in 2019.

In the relative quiet of sheltering during the pandemic, Michael received an email from Peter Nicholson with a mad idea to **create and publish a book to help families strained by forced confinement and shoved suddenly into reconfiguring their lives by the impact of COVID-19**. Michael called Louise Phipps Senft and other mediator colleagues and less than three weeks later, we published **Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving a Pandemic**.

Michael's next collaboration will be a series of ebooks for people who are considering or in the process of separation and divorce, *Divorce and Separation: A Practical Guide to Making Smart Decisions*, produced with editions for every state. Michael has been a **leader in our field**, and retirement is not slowing his influence down one bit!

Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic

Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic is justly called a collaborative project. **Michael Lang** and **Peter Nicholson** gathered advice from **74 family practitioners from 10 countries** and **Louise Phipps Senft** was one of their collaborators they called upon. Together they produced a timely and helpful book for families who are under incredible stress as their lives have been turned upside down as a result of the coronavirus. You can find this fresh-off-the-press paperback **on Amazon**, and we plan to release it in digital format very soon!

June 40-Hour Workplace Mediation & Conflict Transformation Skills Training: Relational Conflict Theory and Mediation Skillset for Formal and Informal Workplace Conflicts and EEO Disputes, Understanding your Conflict Style, Understanding and Responding to Conflict in Workplace Systems, including online interactions

When: June 22 -26, 2020 @ 9am - 5pm

*Limited to 20 participants

Where: In support of in-person distancing, this **workshop will now be held via Zoom**, virtually! Come join us and **be inspired**.

Course Fee: \$1550

[Register Now](#)

Know Thyself: Conflict Transformation & The Enneagram as Catalyst

Join us for a **4-Hour Mini-Retreat and continuing education** focused on personality and motivation. We'll explore Enneagram Types and the different habits of mind that cause suffering and the unique gifts of Type that allow us to **live in joy and engage more effectively with others personally and professionally**.

When: Sept. 10, 2020 @ 1:30pm - 5:30pm

*Limited to 20 participants

Where: 1500 Union Ave, Baltimore, MD 21211

Course Fee: \$295

[Register Now](#)

October 40-Hour Mediation & Conflict Transformation Skills Training: Multiple Parties, Organizations & Representatives:

Completed within 3 weeks from idea to published book, [Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: Surviving During a Pandemic](#) offers practical advice and helpful tips to families who are

- *living together*, trying to manage parenting, working from home, home schooling and unsettled finances;
- *deciding to separate* while living together, managing the same relationship and financial challenges; and
- *separated or divorced* and grappling with new methods for co-parenting and dealing with changes in their economic situation for one or both.

In the outstanding collection of essays, there are **tips for managing disagreements, guidelines for handling children's needs, information about finances, and even a recipe for Quarantine Cookies.**

Everyone involved participated generously, invested their time and creativity to produce a book that we all hope will **make a difference**. None of those associated with the book will receive payment for their contributions. **Any proceeds will be donated to non-profit organizations serving families.**

There is a [companion website](#) and [blog](#) as well as a [Facebook page](#) devoted to news about the book and the collaborating authors.

To produce this book required the selfless efforts of over 80 people — authors, designers, editors, illustrators. All involved owe a huge debt to the efforts of Peter Nicholson and employees at his company, [OGX](#), who designed and produced the book, developed the companion website and created promotional materials.

OGX has graciously offered FREE copies of this incredible book to the first 50 Baltimore Mediation Gazette readers who email PR@ogx.ie. The subject line must read "BMC" in order to claim your free copy of the book! You will receive the book inPDF

Relational Conflict Theory and Mediation Skillset for Personal and Professional Use in Business, Family, Employment, Eldercare Conflicts, Mediation in the Courts, Working with Multiple Parties, Intro to Conflict Systems

When: October 19 -23, 2020 @ 9am - 5pm

*Limited to 20 participants

Where: The Inn at the Colonnade
4 W University Pkwy, Baltimore, MD 21210

Course Fee: \$1550

[Register Now](#)

December 40-Hour Fundamentals of Conflict Transformation and Mediation

When: December 7 -11, 2020 @ 9am - 5pm

*Limited to 20 participants

Where: The Inn at the Colonnade
4 W University Pkwy, Baltimore, MD 21210

Course Fee: \$1550

[Register Now](#)

format, compatible with any device!

You are, as always, invited to give the book to someone you know who could benefit.

See Louise's excerpt contribution to the book below!

LIVING TOGETHER, SEPARATING, DIVORCING: SURVIVING DURING A PANDEMIC (2020)

Can't We Just Get Along? When College Co-eds Flee Home during COVID 19 to a House Divided

By Louise Phipps Senft

As divorce mediators, we are well-versed with Mom's House/Dad's House situations and the reality of children being uprooted from having one home to now having two, even in the most amicable of divorces. A child no longer has *her* house or *his* house, and indeed children no longer refer to their houses as *their* homes. They say they're going to *Mom's House* or *Dad's House*. When COVID 19 forced colleges and universities across the country to close their dormitories and lock the gates of their campuses, it forced a mass exodus of kids fleeing home. For a number of these college kids, they thought they were going to *their* Childhood home, but many instead came home to a house divided, learning for the first time their parents were divorcing.

The situations were further exacerbated if the Co-ed wasn't an angel before they left to go away for college. There was no welcome party nor a support group for them when they arrived home. In some instances, the Co-ed's bedroom was already being turned into a home office, in other instances, it had been dismantled. The situations became tinder when a 19 or 21-year-old, used to being on their own at college, faced new house rules: no eating in bedrooms, no walking around late at night. What is a college kid to do?

Here are some learnings for parents and college Co-eds caught in the middle of these unforeseen - sometimes heartbreaking but always illuminating - situations.

1. Face-to-Face Dialogue is the premier way to go. It holds everyone accountable to each other when they understand the whole picture. Set a day, time, and place for the conversation, outside the earshot of younger children.
2. Whether you use a neutral mediator to help with the conversation or not, remember the main issue is between the college Co-ed and the parent who is remaining in the house. That said, it's a booby trap to not include both parents. These are 3-way conversations.
3. Before your date, create a structure with Pre-Conversation Goal Setting asking each person to write out their goals. Create two columns: goals for the next few weeks or months and goals for the bigger picture. Do not hold back your honest goals including Moving your Co-ed out to auntie's house or a hotel, Wanting cooperation, or Reducing volatility in the house. This will help your Co-ed prepare and not be caught off guard. Share these written goals a day before your conversation date. You and your soon-to-be-former spouse do not have to be on the same page.
4. It's likely your college Co-ed needs extra emotional support. Add to your goals, Assurance my Co-ed has resources for their mental health. Also add to your goals, To better understand the needs of my Co-ed.
5. When you meet, commit to focusing on the quality of the interaction itself, to

- understand each other despite your disagreements or challenges.
6. At your meeting, listen carefully to your Co-ed's goals, they are often tender. They are usually new information for you too, including, If I get kicked out, I'm afraid of being lonely. I just want to do well in school. Where am I supposed to go this summer? Or next Christmas? When I get married, I want to bring my kids home and have holidays in my home.
 7. Keep in mind: these are not simple conversations. They are about much more than just a plan for a tense living situation for a few weeks or months. You have the capacity to create greater well-being in the family.

Some might say it is cruel and selfish of parents in the process of divorcing to not figure out how to get along at least temporarily during COVID 19, put out a truce flag temporarily, and allow a haven for their college-age kids. Perhaps it is. Perhaps it isn't as others will never know the full extent of any family's history. What we do know is that *a face-to-face conversation that is focused on the quality of the dialogue with some thoughtful honest preparation ahead of time- shared ahead of time--yields swift and often compassionate outcomes. Structured relational interactions about these issues build capacity for the family.* Whether it's Mom's House or Dad's House, these 3-way conversations create an opening for My House, a more complete and restorative picture for the House Divided family.

Louise Phipps Senft, nationally recognized transformative family Mediator, Attorney, CEO of *Baltimore Mediation*, Distinguished Fellow in the *International Academy of Mediators*, author of Best-Seller ***Being Relational: The Seven Ways to Quality Interaction & Lasting Positive Change***, and Co-Chair of the Relational Practices Task Force for the *American Bar Association*.



Lewis Miller's impromptu **Flower Flashes** in NYC. **What fabulous examples of Being Grounded.** At a time when our world is shrouded in a shadow of death and fear, the quiet and empty spaces of our lives **internally and externally** can be cultivated. Look what surprises await! Flower Flashes remind us of what is within each of us all along bursting forth with color and life. "It feeds people's souls," he says. **We are so thankful for those who are committed to Conflict Transformation and who live with the Relational mindset: When faced with stress, Maybe, Maybe Not as we choose not to be open to possibilities, not limited in our thinking or our actions.**

TIP OF THE MONTH: THE SEVEN WAYS OF BEING RELATIONAL - BEING GROUNDED-

There are seven Ways to Be Relational:
Be Engaged ★ Be Centered ★ Be Grounded

This month, we are focusing on **Being Grounded**.

A great place to start when considering how to build your relational skillset in order to better prepare yourself to deal with challenges, especially challenges with those you love or need to get along with is to get grounded. **Being grounded is about how you think.** It included being self-aware, especially in regards to your assumptions you make. These assumptions can be about other people, yourself, your environment. Your assumptions drive your behavior. This can pose a problem as you interact with others you love, work with, don't like at all.

How you think often forms habits of mind. These patterns can limit your ability to interact in the way that is best for you and best for someone else. **It's not that the way you think is wrong. It's just often incomplete.**

Understanding your own patterns requires a strong desire to examine what is true about yourself with honesty and humility. Being Grounded also means being open to understanding what is true for others.

Being Grounded means being aware of your tendencies when they assert themselves in your thinking, recognizing when they are leading you to behavior that is not relational. That means behavior that is neither good for you or for the other person. You can learn to relax your assumptions by becoming curious. **Ask to get new information.** When your assumptions are checked out and explored, you can **act more deliberately** instead of reacting based on your habits. This also **helps others because they may have been reacting based on incorrect assumptions as well.** We call it **Relational Reciprocity**. The more grounded you are with others, the more grounded they will be with you.

Being Grounded can help you to change your habitual ways of thinking to more expansive, more complete ways of thinking. This helps you at work with colleagues and at home with your kids, your partner. It also helps you with your siblings and friends. Being Grounded and checking your assumptions will help you to be more relational

during conflicts, and will help small issues stay small.

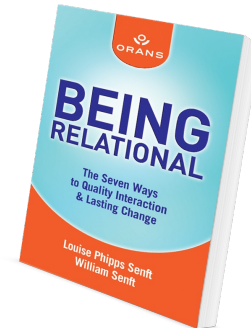
Interested in more? Call us for a *customized Being Grounded workshop!*

443-524-0833

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."
- Theodore Roosevelt

For copies of the **Amazon best seller** *Being Relational: The Seven Ways to Quality Interaction & Lasting Change* visit

- [Amazon](#)
- [Audible](#)
- [Barnes & Noble](#)
- **Independent bookstores!**



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