

## Constructive Approaches to Conflict (Key Takeaways)

There are different types of **dispute resolution** including:

- **Negotiation:** the parties communicate directly to resolve the conflict
- **Mediation:** the parties seek help from an impartial third party who does not give advice or make any decisions
- **Arbitration:** the parties seek help from an impartial third party who decides the outcome of the conflict
- **Litigation:** the parties resolve the matter through the legal system



Conflict resolution can help in supportive housing:

- **Pre-Conflict** – build conflict-resolution-inspired norms and skills into your general culture. These may include skills of listening, validating, empowering choices, demonstrating impartiality, and developing accessible processes; develop scripts, handouts, talking points, and resources to support this culture.
- **During Conflict** – improve your internal processes (which most likely are not perfectly impartial and include some form of arbitration) by incorporating conflict resolution practices; make referrals to free or low-cost mediators
- **During Escalation** – develop impartial plans and advanced preparation for challenging behaviors

**Effective agreements** are realistic, balanced, specific, sustainable, and updateable.



## Conflict Resolution Resources from the CUNY Dispute Resolution Center (CUNY DRC)

Since 1993, John Jay College has housed the City University of New York Dispute Resolution Center (CUNY DRC), a university-based academic center which serves as a comprehensive coordinating mechanism to advance research and innovative program development throughout City University as well as the New York City metropolitan area. As part of its ongoing operations, the CUNY DRC organizes conferences and training programs, provides technical assistance, conducts research, hosts visitors from around the world, produces research working papers, publishes a biannual newsletter, and maintains a listserv and an extensive database of those interested in dispute resolution in New York City.

Of particular note is the CUNY DRC's initiative called Make Talk Work which includes training workshops, special projects, and monthly city-wide meetings for scholars and practitioners in dispute resolution. The CUNY DRC's website is [www.jjay.cuny.edu/disputeresolution](http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/disputeresolution)

Visit [www.mhmediate.com/shnny-resources](http://www.mhmediate.com/shnny-resources) to receive quick-links to the following CUNY DRC Resources:

- **The NYC-Dispute Resolution Listserv** – regular updates of events in the greater NYC area and general discussion of conflict resolution
- **The Monthly Roundtable Breakfast** – on the first Thursday of the month, join us at John Jay College for breakfast and wisdom from a conflict resolution speaker
- **Tips for Becoming a Mediator** – resources to help aspiring dispute resolvers begin their training
- **Resources** – a broader list of conflict resolution resources

## Supportive Housing-Focused Resources (from MH Mediate)

MH Mediate offers trainings for staff and tenants, and process consulting, including tools and online programs. We help supportive housing organizations develop a conflict-resolution inspired culture. Our programs help you:



### Resolve Conflicts

MH Mediate incorporates conflict resolution practices in every training, and works to bring conflict resolution training to mental health contexts. Recently, we have received funding from the AAA-ICDR Foundation as part of a CUNY DRC project to train peer specialists in mediation, and we have offered conflict resolution trainings at several NYC supportive housing sites.



### Address Challenging Behaviors

MH Mediate teaches a framework to help you address challenging behaviors in an impartial, consistent, and effective manner grounded in your personal boundaries. Recently, the NY State Court System funded this training at three of their dispute resolution centers. The training covers emergencies, disruptive behaviors, and disconnects (aka capacity issues).



### Talk About Mental Health

MH Mediate's mental health communication trainings teach you to be sensitive to diverse mental health experiences, empowering when discussing mental health, and ready for specific types of conversations. Recently, AmeriCorps, the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee, and Columbia Teachers College have used this training.



### Become Accessible to Diverse Needs

MH Mediate trains practitioners of all kinds to become accessible to people living with diverse abilities and preferences. We apply a Universal Design approach to make conflict resolution processes and other processes accessible. Recently, we have been working with the American Bar Association to develop a web-based CLE program teaching accessibility.

## Mediation Referrals

Every county in New York has a Community Dispute Resolution Center (CDRC) that receives funding to offer free or low-cost mediation services. Visit [www.mhmediate.com/shnny-resources](http://www.mhmediate.com/shnny-resources) to receive quick-links to the CDRCs by county.

Contact [dan@mhmediate.com](mailto:dan@mhmediate.com) for assistance building referral relationships with the CDRCs.