

Live Programs

September 4 at 2:00 pm ET

Launch!

Task Force members

Kicking off the Virtual Summit, the Task Force members will introduce the concept of being relational and share previews of the talks.

September 6 at 4:00 pm ET

Live Q&A

Task Force members and presenters

We will gather in live format to entertain questions, reflect on the week, and introduce our monthly call series.

Schedule TBA

Dealing with Complexity: Creative Skills for Negotiators Under Time Pressure

Tessa Manuello

Why are some able to reach agreement faster than others? People in conflict have a natural tendency to value their own points of view. Under time pressure, their judgments and biases get triggered quicker. How can a negotiator deal with such complexities in dispute resolution? Creative skills can deepen the understanding of the conflict, increase collaboration and mutual growth and generate better outcomes. In this 30 minutes creative session, Tessa invites you to take on a journey into the art of negotiation, using improvisation skills to heighten your creative potential.

Beyond Deal Points: Contracts as Handbooks for Relational Success

Linda Alvarez

An interactive conversation about using contract negotiations and drafting to design sustainable agreements and building support systems for keeping the ongoing relationship on track and functioning positively (creating frame and framework for how the parties will relate (a) to one another and (b) to the core goals/interests/benefits they want to serve if/when faced with disruptive change).

Trauma-Informed Practice Principles to Improve Legal System Experiences for Clients & Lawyers

Helgi Maki

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What is trauma and why is it relevant to lawyers, clients, and legal systems? What does it mean to be trauma-informed? And what is a trauma-informed legal practice? We will explore why relationships matter when dealing with traumatic legal issues, learn what trauma-informed practices are being used and what we can learn from them. We will share practical tips and discuss the potential for best practices going forward.

Engaging Differences: Structured Negotiation and Disability Rights

Lainey Feingold

Structured Negotiation is about relationship-building. Litigation forces people into defined roles that preclude real relationships. Litigation forces people into defined roles that preclude real relationships. Structured Negotiation is different. The opportunity to get to know everyone around the table is especially important in disability rights. Disabled people are often stereotyped; this process breaks down assumptions and allows for actual listening. As a Structured Negotiation practitioner for over 20 years, "I can relate!" Structured Negotiation is a collaborative problem-solving strategy that has achieved significant results for over two decades in the field of disability rights. It is a process suited for other legal fields.

Structured Negotiation happens without lawsuits. But its tools are useful even once a case is filed. Tools include an opening (not a demand) letter that invites participation, mutually accepted ground rules, information and expertise sharing. A collaborative mindset – embodying patience, equanimity, trust, and empathy is critical.

Listening with Curiosity and Self-Power

D.G. Mawn

At the core of our capacity to assess conflict is our ability to listen with curiosity. At the core of our ability to support those who struggle is to listen for those entry points to engage. Finding our core calls us to be aware of how our previous experiences shape our attitudes and beliefs and impacts how we choose to act. This commitment to find your core, to transform communication into conversation requires trust to be transparent, offering acceptance not approval and recognizing with curiosity and patience the hope and grace of others so to enable them to share their power of self and to welcome your power.

Pre-Recorded Programs

Relating Across Mental Health Differences

Dan Berstein

Dan Berstein was inspired to become a mediator after his personal experiences living with bipolar disorder helped him appreciate the challenges we face connecting across mental health differences. In six minutes, Dan will help us overcome our assumptions so we can become more accessible to people with diverse mental health experiences and needs.

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Let's Get Uncomfortable

Nance L. Schick, Esq.

Let's explore implicit biases and the personal conflicts they cause. We will create awareness of our personal biases in the safe space of our minds, where we can begin to transform them. Then we'll suggest a way to reveal them off-line (compassionately), where transformation can really begin. We'll be using the Third Ear Conflict Resolution Process.

Justice and Beauty: The Big Picture of Art and Law

Olga Anastasi

Art and Law are concerned with questions of human existence. Law concerns the principles for the creation of social harmony between individuals. Art performs this task of preserving the most important part of human beings, the imaginative capacity. They both express the universal spirit of all nations while explaining the specific laws of countries. The creative process may help professionals to improve their skills and citizens to improve their life's quality.

Getting Proximate with Justice: Identifying Your Implicit Biases and Strategies to Counteract Them

Gail Silverstein

Bryan Stevenson, renowned civil rights attorney, argues that we must get “proximate” to injustice. Many live in segregated bubbles of people who are like us. Beyond blinding us to injustice, other detrimental effects occur, including becoming biased against those who are different than us and our close community. To counteract the workings of this pernicious implicit bias, an important step is to understand your own affinities. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore their affinities through a reflective exercise. Participants will leave the workshop with concrete ideas on how to counteract their affinity biases.

Death and Dying: Engaging with a Highly Emotive Topic

Rhiannon Thomas and Ninon van der Kroft

Wills and Estates practice is traditionally viewed as a highly procedural part of the law devoid of any feeling – an approach which we believe doesn't serve lawyers or their clients. When a client engages with the law or legal profession in this area it is usually because of a highly emotive event – the contemplation of their own mortality or the death of someone close. At the heart of the legal process there are difficult conversations about dying, death, loss and grief. This presentation aims to highlight the relational aspects of our interaction with clients in this area of the law.

Curiosity and Humility: Tools in Collaborative Practice

Pauline H. Tesler

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Collaborative professionals value the human connections that nourish and support us all. The artistry of collaborative practice evolved as lawyers learned to give up power and control, and to embrace humility, curiosity, self-reflective problem-solving methods, and a view to the future instead of the past. In this fast-paced talk by a leader in Collaborative Practice, we'll explore how the first two (humility and curiosity) create a relational environment for resolving conflict.

Honoring the Universal Human Experience of Dignity – How Assessing Conflict from a Dignity Perspective Promotes Possibilities of Resolution and Healing

Sharon B. Eckstein

Dignity. Not a word frequently spoken by attorneys, mediators, arbitrators or judges. Perhaps it is the legal world's focus on "proving a case," truth, precedent or legal principles. Yet, all legal disputes involve people. And all people share an essential need to have their self-worth and value as a human being honored. Adopting a dignity perspective enables mediators and attorneys to see beneath the surface of the dispute and to support the restoration of dignity to those involved in the conflict. This short webinar intends to spark your interest in assessing conflict from a dignity perspective, to increase your awareness of how dignity violations fuel conflict, and to share techniques that serve to honor and restore the dignity of all disputants.

A Fire Side Chat on Being Relational in Conflicts over Working (e.g. Service) Animals

Gary Norman and Debra Vey Voda Hamilton

We will focus on the reality of having a conversation, in lieu of "being correct." Among the fields which require organic resolutions, we believe those involving animals and their assistance to those with disabilities can benefit from relational discussions. We encourage the animal and the disability communities to be open to finding preventative methodologies for addressing conflicts. To this end, we have developed what we and our colleagues call "soft mediation" or "on-the-spot conflict resolution" tools. We'll explore the issue and share a practical toolbox, along with a call to action.

Communicating and Practicing Law without Defensiveness

Carolyn Wilkes Kaas and Melinda Gehris

This presentation explores the use of three forms of communication - questions, statements, and predictions - in order to defuse defensiveness in ourselves and others. Usually, we communicate using the Rules of War to protect ourselves and to "attack" others. Traditional adversarial lawyering methods trigger defensiveness because they are rooted in interrogation and persuasion. PNDC increases effective, heartfelt and relational interactions by lawyers. This presentation introduces the theory and methods of Powerful Non- Defensive Communication [PNDC], a process created by Sharon Ellison.

Are you Relational or Transactional?

Louise Phipps Senft

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How we affect our choices in how we relate to others and how we influence the way others relate to us. Prevent conflict from escalating and promoting quality interactions. We have a choice: to Be Relational or Transactional.

Relational Leadership

Kathy Story

Kathy Story will present a multidimensional model of resilience for lawyers: creating meaning and purpose in our work by using our strengths of behalf of a cause greater than ourselves, managing our energy, cultivating a growth mindset, connecting with others with emotional intelligence, and fully engaging with positivity in relationships and projects. This model is based on work in positive psychology, sports psychology, leadership studies, and neuroscience.

Lawyers as Couragekeepers: Seven Steps to Courageous Living and Law Practice

Debra Norwood

Lawyers as Couragekeepers: Seven Steps to Courageous Living and Law Practice is a short, lighthearted, wrap-up presentation for the Relational Practice Virtual Summit section on Positive Psychology. Her video describes seven steps lawyers can take to rid themselves of toxic habits and roles in order to embrace a more holistic way of being. Attorneys now have a toolbox to combat anxiety and embrace change in their lives by gaining the courage to become peacebuilders in modern day law practice.

Using the Science of Character for a Strengths-Based Perspective that Optimizes Relational Capabilities

Hallie N. Love

Learn your top strengths and the mental and emotional well-being benefits of using those strengths. Additionally, learn how to develop head strengths (like prudence, bravery, persistence, and self-control) and heart strengths (like kindness, gratitude, and social intelligence) in better balance. Further, learn to spot strengths in others. Using strengths in these ways leads to positive communication and relationships, allows for engagement of differences in a more positive way, and helps foster compassion and empathy, all of which provide a feeling of connectedness with others and humanity, and a foundation for better relational capabilities when negotiating and addressing conflict. Based on the Science of Character, developed by Dr. Martin Seligman and Dr. Chris Peterson, this program offers a perspective that focuses on what is best about human beings, and what we can do to be at our best.

Mindful Communication for Meaningful Relational Work

Cindy Pensoneau and Jean Handley

Mindful Communication (MC) is both a practice and a philosophy. As a practice, it offers a specific set of steps to address the complex and difficult situations that arise. As a philosophy, it provides the foundational reasoning that guides human interactions because every action, harmful or otherwise, is an attempt to meet a need. Mindful Communication looks beyond harmful behaviors and addresses

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their underlying drive which MC defines in terms of needs and recognizes needs as the underlying cause for human decision and action. Finding solutions is not about fixing “problems” or punishing bad behaviors; instead, it is about finding better strategies for meeting needs. This program will describe and model the MC eight-step process. The steps are divided into two sets of four. The first set of four steps is applied to acknowledge the other person and their needs – to empathize. The second set of four steps is applied to one’s self to acknowledge one’s own needs and feelings - to be honest and responsible for one’s self. When used in all levels of communication, MC facilitates deeper connection, understanding and empathy.