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“Mediation –Help Paving the Way out of Crisis”.

Presenter

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The Potential of Mediation for Crisis Preparedness

Crises loom in many contexts, such as in families because of divorce, inheritance or aging issues; in companies dealing with economic adaptations; in communities struggling with growth vs. environmental considerations; nations that experience political disarray, etc.

In this presentation I highlighted and analyzed some basic elements of the philosophy and methodology of mediation that are not only significant to solve conflicts and finding ways out of socially induced crises, but are just as essential to prevent such a crisis.

My aim was to emphasize the point that mediation’s basic philosophical approach is also a means to prevent destructive crisis – whatever its dimension. Some of mediation’s characteristic philosophical and methodological components or elements I selected to illustrate my point were:

Autonomy

Respect, attention, presence

Systemic analysis and examination

Mutual understanding

Creation: Widening the points of views and opening up possibilities, seeing crisis as a chance

Cooperation: Contribute to focusing the outlook towards the common good and away from personal or group interests

Future: Emphasis on the changeable future rather than on the past;

These elements can prepare people to deal with any crisis that may come their way more constructively and thus mitigate it, or, better yet, prevent it.

Because the general understanding of the value of mediation's inherent philosophy as a means to prevent crisis is a societal and educational challenge, I attempted to stimulate participants to develop ideas how to widen the circles of persons and institutions in their society, in their environment, that are knowledgeable about mediation and are "mediatively" skilled in order to be better prepared to deal with looming crises and to see its chance for cooperative solutions – before it even hits hard.

Biographical Information

Dr. Noa Zanolli is Swiss and lives in Bern. Trained as an elementary school teacher and a social anthropologist she is also a qualified mediator. Since 1986 she has been specializing in conflict resolution and mediation, with a focus on conflict resolution education and peacebuilding. Her website is: HYPERLINK "http://www.reconfigure.ch" www.reconfigure.ch.

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