

Faith-Based Mediation: What is it and does it matter?

by Leslie Short, Joyce P. Dugger

What is it?

Faith-based mediation will take on different meanings according to the mediator. The foundation of offering Faith-Based mediation must start with spirituality and not ones personal faith, yet allowing those entering into mediation know that their faith is honored in a sacred space, allowing them to be heard without it being brushed aside.

Before we investigate Faith-Based Mediation, “What is Faith?” The focus is to introduce Faith outside of the cofounds of a Church, Temple, Synagogue, and Mosque walls and allow those parties who have belief system to adhere their spirituality express, freely in a constructive sacred space. Which means wherever the mediation is held; takes on the essence of peaceful surroundings.

Faith is all-inclusive.

The principals of mediation does not change, therefore the mediator must be knowledgeable in world religions with the understanding of how the dynamics of community and faith plays a role and how conflict entwines with ones belief system. Resolution comes when the parties understanding the basis of ones decision-making may be by using faith as part of they're decision making process.

Each party participating in the mediation process whether it's an individual, families or a group, brings what they believe to the table. It's there mediation. It's our job to open the door and set the tone for them to speak freely and openly without judgment on their beliefs to the best of their abilities.

If we are mediators and not arbitrators then we cannot move people to the divine however, we can be the listening ear for the emotional call for spiritual awareness, direction and decisions making. Which means our “open ended questions” may need to be developed from our knowledge of varies teachings of faith.

Does it Matter?

Does Faith matter to you? Does spirituality matter to you? If so then it matters. However, we believe that those entering into Faith-based mediation are coming with compassion for all. (Mediator & participants)

Through the process compassion, may be the thread of the essence for an open dialogue. It goes back to the mediator introducing the words compassion, honoring, respect, listening, and spirit in their opening introduction, to set the tone of what will be the evolving practice of Faith-based mediation.

Leslie Short biography and additional articles: <http://www.mediate.com/people/personprofile.cfm?aid=1603>

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