



**Association for
Conflict Resolution®**
VOICES, CHOICES, SOLUTIONS

Conference at a Glance

Wednesday, November 5

8:00 AM	—	5:00 PM	Conference Registration/Info Desk Open
8:00 AM	—	9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	—	2:45 PM	Community Day (onsite)
9:00 AM	—	10:30 AM	90-Minute Breakout Sessions
10:30 AM	—	11:00 AM	Break
11:00 AM	—	12:00 PM	Plenary Session
12:00 AM	—	1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM	—	2:00 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
2:00 PM	—	2:30 PM	Break
2:30 PM	—	3:30 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
3:30 PM	—	4:00 PM	Break
4:00 PM	—	5:00 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
5:00 PM	—	7:00 PM	ACR 25 th Silver Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, November 6

8:00 AM	—	5:00 PM	Conference Registration/Info Desk Open
8:00 AM	—	9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	—	10:30 AM	90-Minute Breakout Sessions
10:30 AM	—	11:00 AM	Break
11:00 AM	—	12:00 PM	60-Minute Breakout Session
12:00 PM	—	1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM	—	2:15 PM	Plenary Session
2:15 PM	—	2:30 PM	Break
2:30 PM	—	3:30 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
3:30 PM	—	4:00 PM	Break
4:00 PM	—	5:00 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
6:00 PM	—		Philadelphia Dine Around

Friday, November 7

8:00 AM	—	1:30 PM	Conference Registration/Info Desk Open
8:00 AM	—	9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	—	10:30 AM	90-Minute Breakout Sessions
10:30 AM	—	11:00 AM	Break
11:00 AM	—	12:00 PM	60-Minute Breakout Sessions
12:00 PM	—	12:30 PM	ACR Annual Meeting & Presidential Installation
12:30 PM	—	1:30 PM	Presidential Lunch
1:30 PM			Conference Concludes

25 YEARS OF
BRIDGING DIVIDES

CELEBRATING PROGRESS AND THE
FUTURE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

IN-PERSON CONFERENCE:
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | PHILADELPHIA, PA
NOVEMBER 5-7, 2025

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Double Platinum:



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Detailed Conference Agenda (*subject to change*)

Wednesday, November 5

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Room **Conference Registration and Information Desk Open**

8:00 AM to 9:00 AM Room **Breakfast**

9:00 AM to 2:45 PM Under-ground **COMMUNITY DAY (Onsite at Temple University)**
See page 16 for agenda

9:00 AM To 10:30 AM Room **Public Policy Pickles from Different Perspectives**
Dianne Olson, Jeni Goff, Susan Goodwin

This panel will include three different levels of third-party neutral experience – emerging practitioner, mid-level career practitioner and senior-level practitioner. They will grapple with an environmental policy conflict and how they would address it as an ADR professional from their different perspectives. The panel will discuss an issue where there are competing needs and interests over how to manage a natural resource such as water delivery and conservation of a system that is in short supply. The panel will highlight the various insights we have at different points on our career paths. The panel will engage the audience in a dialogue by eliciting questions and ideas on options for designing a collaborative process to address the challenges.

Room **Spiritual Intelligence: It's Not What You Think**
217B *Peter Tokar*

Conflict Resolution (CR) practitioners have long realized that impactful CR is not a matter of intelligence, but intelligences. Practitioners already embrace Cognitive Intelligence (IQ), Emotional Intelligence (EQ), and Cultural Intelligence (CQ), but what few CR practitioners realize is that there's a new scientific intelligence "kid on the block," Spiritual Intelligence (SQ). And "No!" it's not about religion, and "No!" you don't have to be religious to benefit from it. Currently, a common polling response targeting spirituality is, "I don't consider myself religious, but I do consider myself spiritual." Are conflict resolution practitioners failing to tap into a powerful dimension of their clients' lives/psyche? Might Spiritual Intelligence be the next intelligence tool in your practitioner toolbox?

Room **Reintegration & Regeneration: Honoring Our Tools, Our Selves, and the Moment We're In**
217C *Katrina Nobles, Liz Davis-Frost*

This session is about honoring the full complexity of who we are—because the work we do is deeply shaped by our identities, lived experiences, and the cultural contexts we come from. As our communities, institutions, and the world around us become more complex, rapidly evolving, and inherently precarious, our tools must stretch to meet the moment. Through storytelling and critical self-reflection, we'll revisit foundational practices not just as tools we offer others, but as ways to stay grounded and aligned ourselves. Reconnecting our inner work with our outward practice creates space not just for resilience, but for regeneration—for ourselves and the communities we serve.

9:00 AM To 10:30 AM	Room 220	<p>From Triggered to Transformed: Reimagining Conflict Through a Trauma-Informed Lens <i>Carrie Freshour</i></p> <p>This interactive workshop offers a trauma-informed framework for navigating conflict in high-stakes environments—workplaces, communities, and beyond. Participants will learn to identify trauma responses that often escalate tension, decode defense mechanisms, and practice language that fosters safety and clarity. Grounded in psychological safety and inclusive practices, this session equips mediators, leaders, and practitioners with healing-centered strategies that shift conversations from reactive to restorative. Walk away with tools you can use immediately—and a renewed understanding of how unresolved trauma impacts conflict, power dynamics, and resolution.</p>
	Room 217D	<p>Conflict Philosophy™ & the ALIGN Framework: A Transformative Model for Equity-Centered Conflict Engagement <i>KJ Williams, Antasia (AJ) Williams</i></p> <p>In this interactive session, we introduce Conflict Philosophy™, an equity-centered model that challenges traditional ADR by centering values, emotional intelligence, and systems awareness. Through our practical tool, the ALIGN Framework—Attune, Listen, Identify, Generate, Name—participants will explore how to develop personalized and organizational philosophies that make space for power, identity, and culture in conflict. This session blends deep reflection with applied practice and equips attendees with tools to reimagine conflict as a catalyst for repair, accountability, and meaningful change.</p>
10:30 AM to 11:00 AM	Room 200	<p>Break</p>
11:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Room 200	<p>Plenary Session – Navigating the Shift from Public Programs to Private Providers: Upholding Shared Values in a Changing Landscape <i>Javier Ramirez</i></p> <p>As ACR marks 25 years of bridging divides, this session explores how the field of conflict resolution continues to evolve— especially as capacity is shifting toward private providers as federal ADR agencies are minimized and grants withdrawn. Javier Ramirez will share what’s changing in practice and considerations for the ADR community, while providing the context for what questions are largely unanswered in this changing landscape. How do we preserve the public good while trying to meet new demands? What lessons from publicly accessible ADR can inform private practice? How do we ensure that privatization doesn’t dilute the commitment to equity and access? How can mediators continue to embody the spirit of the Model Standards, a mediation field and ACR staple, in increasingly complex, digital, and privatized environments?</p>
12:00 PM to 1:00 PM	Room 200	<p>Lunch & Section Meeting</p> <p><i>Section mtg attendees: Prepare your lunch Rm 200; take lunch to section meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness – Room 217C

Thank you to our Gold Level Sponsor for this year’s Keynote Address:



1:00 PM
to
2:00 PM

Room
220

Bridges, Not Battles: Conflict Resolution Skills for Conscious Parenting

Sarah Kauffman, Michael Rust

Parenting is full of emotional moments—and not just for the kids. Whether it's power struggles, tantrums, sibling rivalries, or bedtime negotiations, conflict is a natural part of family life. But it doesn't have to become a battlefield.

"Bridges, Not Battles" is an interactive workshop designed to equip parents and caregivers with practical tools to navigate conflict with clarity, compassion, and confidence. Grounded in the principles of conscious parenting, this session explores how to respond rather than react, how to connect before correcting, and how to model the emotional intelligence we want our children to develop.

Through real-life scenarios, guided reflection, and simple communication strategies, you'll learn how to:

- Stay grounded when emotions run high
- Turn conflict into a teachable moment
- Set boundaries without shame or blame
- Foster mutual respect and problem-solving at any age

Whether you're parenting toddlers or teens, this workshop will help you build stronger, more cooperative relationships—one peaceful bridge at a time.

Room
217A

How Might Labor and Employment Issues Be Addressed in Today's Environment Given Recent Changes in Federal Policies?

Marvin Schuldiner, William Dwyer, Lucille Alfano, Dean Burrell, Jonathan Cohen

The second Trump Administration brought sweeping changes in policies and enforcement of federal labor and employment law. Long-standing agencies such as the FMCS and the NLRB have been functionally hobbled. Policy and personnel changes have impacted the EEOC. Lawsuits over labor and employment issues percolate through the courts, further impacting federal policies and enforcement. Yet, these workplace disputes continue, impacting millions of workers and employers. Join us for a panel discussion highlighting the latest updates on these topics and how these disputes can still be addressed.

Room
217B

Forgiveness in Mediation: Bringing Closure to Conflict

Eileen Barker, Diane Sherwood

Conflict is not fully resolved unless there is forgiveness. At its core, forgiveness involves the healing of hurt and anger while releasing animosity between the parties involved. Unfortunately, many mediations end without addressing the deeper issues fueling the dispute and rely on partial solutions or monetary settlements instead. When parties harbor a desire for revenge, it further complicates matters and can perpetuate conflict, even when a settlement has been reached. This session will explore how mediators can reset the table. Learn strategies to guide parties toward genuine healing and resolution, fostering an environment where repair can occur. By prioritizing emotional closure, mediators can turn disputes into meaningful opportunities for growth and understanding.

Room
217C

The Language of ECCR: Reframing the Field for the Future

Eva Schiffer

This interactive World Café session will explore the future of Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) as a niche and potentially endangered field—one whose relevance and value must be made clear to a broader public that may not share its language or underlying assumptions. Together, we'll examine how ECCR is perceived by future practitioners, impacted communities, and decision-makers, and reflect on the language, framing, and in-group norms that may unintentionally create barriers. Can ECCR speak the language of this era—one that resonates with others' needs, priorities, and lived realities?

<p>1:00 PM to 2:00 PM</p>	<p>Room 217D</p>	<p>Insights on Conflict: Six perspectives and Why They Matter <i>Ken Fox</i></p> <p>Conflict practitioners have access to a range of process response trainings and insights. Less available is attention to the front-end of conflict work: the underlying insights into conflict itself that is foundational to cultivating practice skills. Based on the presenter’s forthcoming book <i>Perspectives on Conflict: Insights for Professional and Personal Practice</i>, this session reviews six different perspectives on conflict: the body; the non-conscious mind; the strategic mind; language and symbols; the social construction of meaning; and social systems, structures and the conflict ecosystem. The presenter then relates the various perspectives to conflict practice and ways to cultivate greater practitioner insight.</p>
<p>2:00 PM to 2:30 PM</p>	<p>Room 200</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>2:30 PM to 3:30 PM</p>	<p>Room 217C</p>	<p>Survivor & Service Provider Perspectives: Restorative & Transformative Justice as an Alternative Option for Survivors of Sexual Violence <i>Jaycie Hricak, Sydney Chin</i></p> <p>This panel will provide service provider and survivor-led perspectives on making the case for expanding education and accessibility around justice alternatives in the wake of harm. We will include the most recent data around rates of sexual violence, advocate for alternative justice options, of restorative and transformative justice processes, and why these processes may align with survivors’ needs after trauma from an intersectional feminist lens. The workshop will offer tangible calls to action and ways to get involved, supporting the work of survivors advocating for justice pathways that catalyze healing. Panelists represent the global coalition, Survivors for Justice Reform (S4JR).</p>
	<p>Room 217A</p>	<p>The Rise of Community-Police Mediation Programs: Valuable Insights Gained Through Networking <i>Kate Otting, Shaphan Roberts, Tonya McClary, Daisha Muhammad, Chris Weber</i></p> <p>As municipalities see value in mediation for repairing community-police relations, a growing cohort of administrators found community within the community-police mediation ecosystem. Administrators from Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Phoenix will share lessons learned, through building their respective programs and supporting one another.</p> <p>Panelists will discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse mandates and practices • Benefits for community and police • Facilitated conversation framework • Common challenges and roadblocks • Fostering buy-in among community and police • Compelling data and anecdotes • Mediator selection, training and assessments <p>This panel of professionals, from diverse backgrounds and communities, will examine how mediation offers a balance between community voices and law enforcement practices.</p>

2:30 PM
to
3:30 PM

Room
217B

Expanding Your Practice: Becoming a Forgiveness Practitioner

Eileen Barker, Diane Sherwood

Have you considered adding 'Forgiveness Practitioner' to your skill set? Forgiveness can be woven into the mediation process, it can come after mediation or it can stand alone as its own transformative journey. One powerful truth is that forgiveness only requires one person. That means even if one party is not ready to forgive, healing can begin if the other is. As a Forgiveness Practitioner, you'll guide individuals through the forgiveness process, offering them a path to healing and peace. Discover how you can get trained, build your practice, and serve your community by offering this deeply meaningful and life-changing approach to conflict resolution.

Room
220

The Power of Presence in Conflict Resolution: How to Reprogram the Mind to Resolve Conflicts

Inely Cesna

This transformative session explores the vital role of Presence—a state of heightened awareness—in improving human dynamics and resolving conflict. Presence empowers individuals to identify and release unconscious limiting narratives and internal blockages that often distort interpersonal interactions and perpetuate conflict.

Participants will learn how cultivating Presence can bring clarity to these hidden dynamics, creating space for deeper understanding and authentic connection. The course examines entrenched reactive behaviors and defensive patterns that, while initially protective, can restrict personal growth and obstruct effective conflict resolution.

Through reflective practices and guided inquiry, attendees will learn to uncover and reframe the unconscious narratives that drive their responses to conflict. The program supports the conscious reprogramming of these patterns with more empowering and constructive inner narratives—ones that foster resilience, empathy, and lasting transformation in the face of discord.

Room
217D

From Conflict to Civility: Bridging the Divide Between Compliance and Culture in the Modern Workplace

Sharon Harrington

In today's polarized workplaces, unresolved conflict and incivility often lead to costly legal claims and fractured teams. This session explores how conflict resolution practitioners can bridge the divide between compliance and culture by using civility as a proactive tool. Drawing on decades of experience investigating EEO complaints and facilitating organizational communication, Sharon Harrington shares real-world insights and strategies to move organizations beyond legal checklists toward meaningful behavioral change. Participants will gain practical tools to help clients reduce conflict, rebuild trust, and foster inclusive environments where fairness and communication support long-term resolution.

3:30 PM
to
4:00 PM

Room
200

Break

4:00 PM
to
5:00 PM

Room
217A

Embodying Conflict Resolution - Cultivating Center to Manage the Stress of Doing Conflict Work

Brian Blanke

Practicing Conflict Resolution is stressful. We are dealing with people in conflict, often acting from their worst selves. As practitioners, our own bodies can be under pressure from those in conflict (as well as from the larger social conflicts we are all living through). Not surprisingly, we can become reactive, triggering a fight, flight, or freeze response, that undermines our work. This is a practical, concrete and experiential session where you will learn 1) to identify your stress pattern and 2) to use practices to shift to center, viscerally experiencing how you can reorganize your system to create more choice and to cultivate a more powerful personal presence.

Room
206

Co-Parent Coaching: Creating a New Chapter for Families

Amy Armstrong

Coaching is a powerful intervention worldwide in business, leadership, personal development, and wellness—and a valuable resource for dispute resolution. Rather than giving advice, International Coaching Federation-aligned coaching helps clients gain clarity, confidence, and sustainable solutions rooted in self-awareness and self-determination. This presentation will cover key coaching principles, including ethics, training, and its benefits alongside mediation. Join us to explore how coaching can enhance your practice and empower clients to navigate conflict with dignity and insight.

Room
217C

Appreciative and Integrative Intelligence for Culturally Competent Conflict Resolution

Jude Antonyappan

Lasting and mutually beneficial conflict resolution is inherently linked to the quality of life of individuals, groups, communities, and organizations. However, options to resolve conflicts, are focused on narrow outer layer issues instead of the underlying perceptions and experiences regarding the central and peripheral issues of the conflicts. Dealing with compartmentalized issues without the required appreciation for the totality of the lived in experiences and the understanding of those who experience the conflicts, result in outcomes that are temporary and partial only to resurface in more complicated forms down the line. This session introduces the conceptual frameworks of appreciative and integrative intelligence and the associated tools for facilitating and effectuating empowering conflict resolution processes in organizations, communities and groups.

Room
217D

Entrepreneurship Toward Starting Your Conflict Resolution Startup or Growing Your Business

Eileen Petzold-Bradley

This session introduces practical strategies and entrepreneurial insights to help conflict resolution professionals successfully launch or grow their own practices. Based on an upcoming book by the presenters, the session draws from original research with successful conflict resolution entrepreneurs across the U.S. Participants will learn actionable steps and business development concepts tailored to the unique needs of ADR professionals. Whether you're just starting out or seeking to scale your impact, this session will inspire and equip you with tools, advice, and lessons from some of the most successful leaders in the field—celebrating innovation and the future of conflict resolution practice.

4:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Room 217B	<p>Bridging the Divide: Listening for Feelings, Needs, and What Matters Most <i>Beth Myers</i></p> <p>This interactive session introduces a simple, bilingual tool that helps people name and acknowledge feelings and needs—bringing clarity, calming the nervous system, and de-escalating tension to support more grounded decisions. Using Listening Game Cards, participants will practice deep listening and gentle curiosity to strengthen their awareness of self and others. Mediators and ADR practitioners will sharpen their ability to listen for what matters most to clients and to frame open-ended questions that reach the heart of the conflict. Whether working with individuals, families, or groups, the resulting insights support more collaborative dialogue—bridging divides and making space for meaningful problem-solving and relationship repair.</p>
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5:00 PM to 7:00 PM	Room 200	<p>ACR 25th Silver Anniversary Celebration Reception</p>
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<p>Thursday, November 6</p>

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		<p>Conference Registration and Information Desk Open</p>
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8:00 AM to 9:00 AM	Room 200	<p>Breakfast</p>
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9:00 AM to 10:30 AM	Room 217A	<p>Time as a Third Party: Expanding and Contracting Time to Meet the Moment <i>Kimberly Horndeski, Mary Dumas</i></p> <p>We often talk about process, but what if time itself is one of the most overlooked parties at the table? In this dynamic panel discussion, experienced mediators and engagement practitioners will share how they use time intentionally to build trust, support relationships, and guide groups toward resolution. We'll explore how slowing down can diffuse tension, how stretching time can foster empathy and relationship building, and how urgency—when timed well—can spark a breakthrough. Panelists will share real-world examples from land use conflicts, community dialogues, and multi-stakeholder negotiations where “rubber time” techniques made a difference. Attendees will gain insights into time as a third party in the room—and leave with practical tools for using time as an ally in even the most complex situations.</p>
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	Room 217B	<p>Working to Build Equity in Volunteer Mediator Pools: Strategies and Resources <i>Cassie Lively, Israel Putnam, Stephen Sullivan</i></p> <p>Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR) and Resolution Systems Institute (RSI) will share learnings from CCR’s recent project, funded by the AAA-ICDR Foundation, to reimagine its Mediator Mentorship Program (MMP). CCR is a community mediation center in Chicago, and the MMP is the program CCR uses to recruit, match, mentor, and retain volunteer mediators. CCR has struggled to build a volunteer mediator base that reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. Building on findings from an Equity Audit completed in 2023, CCR’s project made substantial changes to volunteer recruitment and matching. Panelists will discuss audit findings and how the project was responsive to addressing them, as well as successes, challenges, and lessons learned. RSI conducted a project evaluation and prepared a resource guide for other centers, and will share key insights.</p>
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9:00 AM
to
10:30 AM

Room
217C

Ethics: Live and In-Person: Exploring Challenges for Neutrals and Attorneys in Mediation

Jennifer Gartlan, Ken Rosenbaum, Elizabeth Chaney, McGavock Reed

A panel of mediators and attorneys will present three live role plays that pose ethical and skills challenges and invite the audience to react. The scenarios will touch on topics such as confidentiality, impartiality, and candor. The session will explore the ethical challenges and best practices from both mediator and counsel perspectives.

Room
217D

From Reaction to Prevention: Proactive Facilitation Skills for ADR Practitioners

Paul Caffera, Catherine E. A. Caffera

Too often, ADR is invoked only after disputes have severely damaged relationships and organizational effectiveness. In this 90-minute, hands-on workshop, you'll learn and practice proactive facilitation modalities that strengthen connections, surface needs, and improve communication—before conflict takes root. Leave with ready-to-use exercises and a peer-driven plan to embed these techniques in your own practice, shifting your role from “firefighter” to “architect” of healthier workplace interactions.

Room
220

Dialogue and Dissensus: Deepening our Dialogues by Leaning into Difference

Maya Townsend

Ideally, dialogue practices create trusting, humanist spaces in which participants can co-construct meaning (Botero + Obregón, 2011). However, the word dialogue has become corrupted and simplified, often serving as a stand-in for simple communication. As dialogue is practiced today in many venues, it embodies the popular US-American belief that conflict should be avoided and that differences should be deemphasized in favor of finding common ground. In the quest to achieve harmony, dialogue practitioners sometimes gloss over important differences – points of view, life experiences, emotions, and so on – that are critical to strengthening relationships and developing a coherent understanding of the situation.

Dissensus interrupts the assumption that disagreement should be worked through as quickly as possible (Kristiansen & Bloch-Poulsen, 2010). Instead, it assumes that diversity of opinion and life experience is invaluable and that wisdom can be discovered by exploring differences. In this interactive session, we explore several ways of inviting dissensus into our dialogues and conversations. Participants will gain exposure to two dissensus techniques:

1. The Deep Democracy Four Steps for Productive Meetings
2. The Deep Democracy Moving Conversation

In addition, we will create a database of other tools, identified by participants, that can be used to support healthy dissensus.

10:30 AM
to
11:00 AM

Room
200

Break

11:00 AM
to
12:00 PM

Room
220

Opportunities and Challenges in Resolving Wrongful Termination Claims

Lisa Pomerantz

Many disputes arise between employers and employees when employees are terminated for performance or economic reasons. Sometimes, employers have not done their due diligence, or a termination decision is based on biased or incomplete information. Often, employees are not aware of their rights or obligations under applicable law or previously signed agreements. Both sides have economic and reputational interests at stake. This session will discuss the resulting challenges and opportunities presented in resolving termination related disputes through negotiation or mediation.

11:00 AM
to
12:00 PM

Room
217A

Mediation for Civil Rights Resolutions

Alana Burman, Mila Pilz, Christopher Young, Stephanie Menezile

Discover how mediation serves as a vital instrument in safeguarding individual rights and resolving conflicts in this engaging session. Mediators and the Director from the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission's Division of Mediation and mediators from the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights will share their expertise and experiences in utilizing mediation as a tool for conflict resolution.

The session will highlight the Pennsylvania panel's focus on addressing disputes across various settings, including communities, workplaces, and within the framework of EEOC contracts. Additionally, mediators from New Jersey will present their "Know Your Rights" initiative, demonstrating how collaboration with community organizations and educational institutions empowers residents to become informed and assertive in defending their civil rights. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of mediation's role in fostering equitable and harmonious communities.

Room
217C

Mindfulness for the Conflict Resolution Professional: Secondary Trauma and Competency

Kim Milone

As conflict resolution professionals, we work with our clients in high stress situations. When we witness their stories, some of which may involve trauma, we our ourselves can feel what is called "secondary trauma" or "vicarious trauma." This may impact our ability to function well in the moment and perhaps even create new emotional wounds that we carry home with us at the end of the day. In this 90-minute workshop, I'll introduce you to several mindfulness, meditation, and breath work techniques that may help you deal with stress, apply (self) compassion, and even metabolize your emotions without suppressing them.

Room
217B

Teaching Children Conflict Resolution Skills as an Alternative to Violence

Joyce Kauffman, Hrach Gregorian

This session will present the results of a two-year program to teach elementary-school aged children, ages 6 through 11, conflict resolution skills and basics of reconciliation so that they turn away from violence. The program involved creating and implementing a new curriculum specifically designed for this-age children. We piloted the program with children in Ward 7 in Washington, D.C. and then implemented it in an elementary school in Ward 8, one of the most violence-prone areas in DC. We have been evaluating and tracking the children to determine the impact of participating in the program on the participants.

Room
217D

Partnerships for Peace: The Role of Strategic Networks in Combatting Hate & Extremism

Randy Duque

There is an interagency partnership in Philadelphia that addresses hate. It has improved the sense of safety among various vulnerable groups and the collaboration between government and community. Learn about this initiative and hear from partners about its importance in combating hate and extremism in the city.

12:00 PM
to
1:00 PM

Room
200

Lunch & Section Meetings

Section meeting attendees: Prepare your lunch plate in Room 200 then take lunch to section meeting.

- Community & Restorative Practices – Room 217C
- Education, Research, & Training (ERT) – Room 217D
- Family – Room 206

1:00 PM to 2:15 PM	Room 200	<p>Plenary Session – It’s a Philly Thing: A Citywide Conversation on Conflict and Community <i>Randy Duque; Kendra Van de Water; David Brown; Quaiser Abdullah, Moderator</i></p> <p>Philadelphia is a city defined by its activism, collaboration, and commitment to justice. This plenary brings together leaders from civic, grassroots, and governmental sectors to explore how communities across the city are navigating conflict, fostering connection, and building pathways toward equity. Rather than focusing on crisis alone, panelists will reflect on the systems, partnerships, and cultural practices that shape conflict engagement in Philadelphia.</p>
2:15 PM to 2:30 PM	Break	
2:30 PM to 3:30 PM	Room 220	<p>Campus, Clinic, and City Hall: Institutional Responses to Conflict <i>Tiffenia Archie, Shakeya Forman, Ariella Werden-Greenfield</i></p> <p>Institutions play a pivotal role in shaping how conflict is addressed. This session explores how ombuds offices and related models are advancing conflict competence within hospitals, universities, and local government. Attendees will learn how these structures promote transparency, improve internal culture, and provide confidential, accessible conflict resolution services.</p>
	Room 217A	<p>Peace by Piece: Local Strategies for Community Safety <i>David Brown, Deion Sumpter, Jamie Meekins, Shondell Revell</i></p> <p>This session highlights collaborative efforts to build safety and trust in Philadelphia neighborhoods. Rather than focusing solely on violence prevention, presenters will explore how public health frameworks, community relationships, and data-informed practices are shaping sustainable solutions. The session emphasizes community resilience, strategic partnerships, and the long-term vision of peacebuilding in urban contexts.</p>
	Room 217B	<p>Future Tense: Youth Voices and Conflict Resolution <i>Kendra Van de Water, Mabari Byrd, Tricia Jones, Randy Duque</i></p> <p>Young people are reimagining conflict engagement in real time—from classrooms to communities. This session centers youth-led and youth-informed approaches that foster agency, emotional intelligence, and healing. Presenters will share models that equip young people to manage conflict constructively, support peers, and advocate for systems change.</p>
	Room 217C	<p>Sacred Spaces, Shared Ground: Faith Communities and Conflict Resolution <i>Sara Zebovitz, David Krueger, Edward Livingston, Quaiser Abdullah</i></p> <p>Faith communities continue to serve as powerful spaces for connection, advocacy, and healing. This session features interfaith leaders and city representatives who are advancing conflict resolution and justice initiatives grounded in spiritual values. Participants will explore how faith-based frameworks can bridge divides, support communities in crisis, and build collective resilience.</p>
2:30 PM to 3:30 PM	Room 217D	<p>Reentry with Dignity: Conflict Transformation after Incarceration <i>Assata Thomas, LaTrista T. Webb, Lewis Maye, Atif Bostic</i></p> <p>For individuals returning from incarceration, conflict often intersects with housing, employment, family reunification, and systemic bias. This session examines how restorative practices and conflict transformation approaches are being integrated into reentry strategies to support healing, accountability, and belonging. Presenters will highlight how policy and practice can be aligned to center human dignity.</p>
3:30 PM to 4:00 PM	Break	

4:00 PM
to
5:00 PM

Room 206 **You Had Me at Hello: Strategic Networking in the Digital Age**
Tara Fishler

You may know that networking is key to growing your business, but how has networking changed in the digital age? If you go to in-person conferences, do you often get business cards that sit in a pile? In on-line workshops, how do you network? Join this workshop for practical tools to build contacts and enhance your opportunities. Come away with your strategic plan, new connections, and action steps to achieve your goals!

Room 217C **Transformative Dialogue: Co-Creating Conversations in Communities and Organizations**
Erik Cleven

Thirty years after the publication of *The Promise of Mediation*, transformative theory has been extended to new areas like dialogue. Transformative dialogue is a process where participants make the decisions about the process, content, participation and outcomes of dialogue. But how does this work in practice? This workshop will introduce the basic principles and premises of transformative theory and show how they can be applied to the organization and facilitation of dialogue in communities and organizations. The workshop will focus especially on where and how to begin and on dealing with challenging situations.

Room 217B **Laying the Foundation: Lessons From “Be Your Best Self”**
Jessica Fleisher, Nicole Josephson

Jewish Family & Children’s Services of Northern New Jersey (JFCS) will present findings from its school-based social-emotional learning program, “Be Your Best Self.”™ Designed to enhance children’s ability to navigate peer conflicts, de-escalate challenging situations, and promote positive attitudes and behaviors, JFCS staff will share insights gathered over two years of implementing the program in an after-school setting and discuss the future of conflict resolution programming for youth. The presentation will include a demonstration of a sample lesson from “Be Your Best Self.”™ This initiative is generously funded by the JAMS Foundation and the Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR).

Room 217A **Beyond Mediation: Developing an Enhanced Workplace Mediation Service**
Toby Guerin, Aisha Samples

Launched in 2020, the Workplace Mediation Service at the University of Maryland, Baltimore is now entering its sixth year of operation. This workshop will explore the evolution of the program and highlight its unique aspects which include a shared-neutral roster, employee conflict management workshops, and discovery chats. Looking back, the presenters will highlight keys to the program’s success and unique challenges. Looking forward, the presenters will identify opportunities for growth to meet the changing needs of employees and the institution. Issues of measuring program impact, ethics, case management, and roster management will be highlighted.

4:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Room 217D	<p>Mediating with Mindfulness - The Solace Way <i>Jen Mitchell Love</i></p> <p>Traditional mediation often focuses solely on legal outcomes, overlooking the emotional, energetic, and spiritual layers that are present in every human conflict. Mediating with Mindfulness: The Solace Way introduces a revolutionary approach that integrates mindfulness, energy awareness, and heart-centered communication into the mediation process.</p> <p>Rooted in 19 years of legal experience and 10 years of mediation and holistic wellness work, the Solace Way empowers mediators to hold sacred space for clients — transforming divorce and conflict resolution from destructive experiences into portals for empowerment, healing, growth, and love.</p> <p>This session will offer practical tools to protect your own energy as a mediator, guide clients toward authentic agreements rooted in self-awareness, and support a shift in human consciousness through your mediation practice.</p> <p>Join us to learn how mindfulness isn't just an add-on — it's the new foundation for conflict resolution in the next evolution of human connection.</p>
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6:00 PM	Philadelphia Dine-Around	
5:30 PM	EPP Happy Hour followed by no host dinner at 7:00 PM (details at Info Table)	

Friday, November 7

8:00 AM to 1:30 PM	Conference Registration and Information Desk Open
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8:00 AM to 9:00 AM	Room 200	Breakfast
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9:00 AM to 10:30 AM	Room 217A	<p>Crossing Carefully: Ethics as the Foundation of Bridging Divides <i>Sharon Press, Terry Wheeler</i></p> <p>In a world of complex disputes and diverse perspectives, ethical clarity is essential for mediators who guide parties across challenging divides. This interactive session explores how ethical standards serve as the foundation for effective mediation in court cases, employment conflicts, divorces, and more. Through real-world scenarios and guided discussion, participants will examine the Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators and the newly revised Model Standards for Family and Divorce Mediation, and reflect on how ethical decision-making fosters trust, neutrality, and resolution. Whether you're a seasoned mediator or new to the field, this session will deepen your understanding of ethics as a practical tool for bridging divides.</p>
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	Room 217B	<p>What's Faith Got to Do With it? Mediating and Consulting with Faith-Based Organizations <i>David Brubaker</i></p> <p>Faith-based organizations--including congregations, historically religious universities, and faith-based nonprofits--represent a unique opportunity and challenge for mediators and consultants. Regardless of one's own religious perspective, how do we incorporate rituals and practices that are important to a particular tradition? This session will draw on the presenter's own experience of working with religious traditions ranging from a Southern Baptist church to a Hindu Ashram, and will also incorporate learnings from participants. Faith-based organizations are a huge potential arena for conflict transformation, but working successfully in that arena requires a skillset and sensitivity beyond the traditional role of "neutral third party."</p>
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9:00 AM
to
10:30 AM

Room
217C

The Future of Public Policy ADR in a Polarized World

Susan Goodwin, Kimberly Horndeski, Dianne Olson

The use of collaboration and ADR for Federal agency policy making, especially in the environmental arena, has been a common practice for the past few decades. EPA, US DOI, US ACE have convened and funded hundreds of collaborative processes, often with the support of agency ADR offices. Building “Coalitions of the Unalike” to achieve results that no one authority could obtain on its own has always had its challenges and mixed results. With the drastic cuts in federal agency staff and diminishing authority of federal agency experts, what will the landscape for environmental collaboration and conflict resolution look like? This just might be the time to shape and possibly redefine our field. What does the future hold? Will state and local processes become more important? Who will convene and build Coalitions of the Unalike for collective action to resolve our society’s wicked problems. This panel will use the facilitation technique, liberating structures, to dialogue and brainstorm ideas together.

Room
217D

Inclusive Listening: A Local and Global Tool

Akida Jones-Mensah, Tracee Ford, Allie Matheu

This is a dynamic and interactive skill-building exercise appropriate for people new to and familiar with Inclusive Listening. Tracee Ford, mediator and trainer for over 20 years, and Akida Jones, reentry mediation program director and trainer, will work with participants to identify ways we can use Inclusive Listening to support collaborative decision making whether in interpersonal or international conflicts. Participants will walk away from this exercise with an introduction and refresher to Inclusive Listening, creative ideas for when, where, and how to use Inclusive Listening, along with materials to support them after the training.

10:30 AM
to
11:00 AM

Break

11:00 AM
to
12:00 PM

Room
217D

Using AI in My Disputes? The Comparison of Perceptions Between Mediators and Clients

Yeju Choi

This study compares how mediators and potential clients perceive and accept using AI in their disputes through the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). These findings highlight the levels of technology acceptance between mediators and clients, compare the similarities and differences in their perceptions and acceptance, and analyze the factors that may drive such similarities and differences. This nuanced understanding of acceptance will inform the design of targeted interventions to address each group's concerns.

Room
217C

Conflict Resolution Skills: Our place in the Public Square and Campus Quad

DG Mawn

The session explores the question: What is our role and responsibility, if any, in facilitating the current discourse in the public square and on school campuses? Anchored in the U.S. Constitution’s guidance provided by the First, Fourteenth, Twenty-eighth Amendments, how can the skills of conflict resolution practitioners (mediation, de-escalation, facilitation, negotiation, conflict coaching) raise the value of listening to learn, not listening to affirm in a way that invites those in conflict to engage. This is essential to have all involved recognize, support, value and utilize the differences and similarities that become apparent and then to move forward together to address areas of injustice.

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Room 217B	<p>Teach, Train, Transform: A Comprehensive Conflict Resolution Approach for Youth <i>Elizabeth Peterson, Lisa Bennett</i></p> <p>We will present a community institution-based model that embeds conflict resolution and mediation practices into schools and juvenile courts, offering sustainable, youth-centered alternatives to punitive measures. Using our local community as a case study, we will share a comprehensive approach to juvenile conflict resolution structured around three tiers: Teach, Train, and Transform. “Teach” introduces conflict resolution education in elementary schools, helping young students build foundational communication and problem-solving skills. “Train” prepares a cohort of middle and high school students as peer mediators, equipping them with the tools to facilitate resolutions among their peers. “Transform” incorporates mediation into the juvenile court process as an alternative to Harassment Prevention Orders, allowing youth to create sustainable plans to move forward without lasting legal consequences. We will share how we build and maintain partnerships with schools and courts, and explore how we overcome challenges to implement a successful model.</p>
	Room 217A	<p>Beyond the Classroom: Using Experiential/Laboratory-Based Group Dynamics Workshops to Transform Conflict Management Education <i>Neil Katz, Ronda Ress</i></p> <p>This presentation advocates for reforming the standard curriculum of graduate programs in Conflict Management in the United States, aiming to more closely align academic training with the practical demands of professions such as medicine, counseling, and education. A central recommendation is the inclusion of experiential and laboratory-based courses that replicate the emotionally complex environments in which conflict management practitioners must maintain effectiveness, composure, and adaptability--especially in dealing with group dynamics. The presenters will explore the structure and key pedagogical components of a long-standing workshop, “Leadership, Power, and Authority,” grounded in the “Tavistock Model”, and delivered over a forty-year period. They will also present qualitative interview data that underscores the workshop’s role in enhancing the professional preparedness of practitioners in the field.</p>
12:00 PM to 12:30 PM	Room 200	<p>ACR Annual Meeting and Presidential Installation</p>
12:30 PM to 1:30 PM	Room 200	<p>Presidential Lunch</p>
1:30 PM		<p>Conference Concludes - Safe Travels home!</p>

COMMUNITY DAY

Wednesday, November 5

Hosted by ACR's Community Mediation & Restorative Practice Section
Onsite at Temple University

9:00 AM to 9:15 AM	Room: Welcome and Introductions Under-ground <i>Nayela Esmail</i>
9:15 AM to 9:45 AM	Room: Self-care and Resiliency Under-ground <i>Wolf Smith, Conflict Resolution Center, St. Louis</i> <i>Katie VonDeLinde, MSW, LCSW, Lecturer, Washington University in St. Louis</i>
9:45 AM to 10:15 AM	Room: Local Community Mediation Panel Under-ground <i>Nancy Giacomini, CORA Good Shepherd Mediation</i> <i>Jennifer Swan, Interim Chair, Philadelphia Chapter ACR, CEO Black Swann Solutions LLC</i>
10:15 AM to 10:30 AM	BREAK
10:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Room: Intersectionality of Democracy Promotion and Anti-hate Work, and the Role of Conflict Resolution Specialists Under-ground <i>Leah Brown, Law Student and CRE Specialist at CORA Good Shepherd Mediation, Philadelphia, PA</i> <i>Mindy Burrell, PhD, Researcher and Professor at the Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University, Arlington, VA</i> <i>D.G. Mawn, President, National Association for Community Mediation and Co-Founder of the TRUST Network</i>
12:00 PM to 1:00 PM	LUNCH
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM	Room: World Café: Conflict Resolution Specialists at the Forefront of Democracy Promotion Under-ground <i>Susan Berg, Executive Director, The Community Mediation Project, Bucks County, PA</i> (Acknowledgement to World Café Community Foundation; License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en)
2:30 PM to 2:45 PM	Room: Wrap-up and Closing Under-ground <i>Nayela Esmail</i>
