

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY PAULA YOUNG**

### **Leading the Way with our Mediation Skills**

All mediators are leaders. Here's why.

This past week, I started reading a new book called *The Athena Doctrine: How Women (and the Men Who Think Like Them) Will Rule the Future*, by John Gerzema and Michael D'Antonio. The book describes a big shift in expectations about good leadership that reflects the complexities of the problems we face, like global warming, the decline of ocean species, stagnation of the global and US economies, and wars and violence throughout the world. Those complexities also exist in local issues, like access to health care, good jobs, or affordable education.



The authors conducted a large international survey of 64,000 people, chosen to mirror the population of 13 countries that represent 65 percent of the world's gross domestic product. In an age of extended anxiety and low levels of trust in institutions and corporations, that survey revealed that people yearn for a different kind of leadership.

People want an expressive style of leader who shares feelings more openly and honestly; connects power with the personal; and is a long-term thinker planning a sustainable future rather than someone fashioning expedient responses. This leader is also decisive, resilient, inclusive, inter-connected, inter-dependent, collaborative, flexible, cause-focused (rather than self-focused), loyal, intuitive, understanding of other's needs and feelings, and able to assess various angles of a problem before taking final action.

This leader listens, learns, and builds consensus.

People have identified a very long list of desirable attributes. And most well-trained mediators possess all of them. No wonder so many of us see ourselves as agents of change. We are leaders by experience, inclination, training, and intention.

About a year ago, in anticipation of my role as President of VMN, I attended a training program at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, N.C. At the training session, I was quite surprised by how much of the programming, designed to improve leadership skills, was nearly identical to the training I provided students enrolled in my dispute resolution courses. That training focused on self-awareness, empathy, good communication, appreciating and managing differences, skillfull reading of others, meeting the needs of others and helping them to succeed, and flexible responses to the challenges you face.

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### **Shop to Benefit VMN!**

Go to:

[vamediation.org](http://vamediation.org) website and scroll down on the page.

On the right side you will see a link to [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

Click on the link and start shopping!

4% of your sales will go back to VMN at no additional cost to you.

You can even shop at Target through Amazon!!

In my dispute resolution course, I summarize the advice given by Robert Mnookin, Harvard Law professor and author of *Beyond Winning: Negotiating to Creative Value in Deals and Disputes* (2006). He suggests that skillful, interest-based negotiators will “lead the way” to a problem-solving approach, especially when working with less skillful parties. He also suggests using the following approaches to lead the way to integrative solutions for parties: building trust, developing real empathy for the other side; maintaining good communication; and adopting a belief that there is almost always the potential to create value.

How often do we, as trained professionals, engage in these approaches with all the people who enter our lives, whether disputing parties, loved ones, fellow employees, the grocery store checkout clerk, the angry customer, our direct-reporting employees, or our supervisors? The answer, of course, is most of the time.

Finally, an interview of Ken Cloke, as part of mediate.com’s series, “*The Mediators: Views from the Eye of the Storm*,” rounds out my thinking on this subject these days. See [http://www.mediate.com/articles/cloke\\_full\\_interview.cfm](http://www.mediate.com/articles/cloke_full_interview.cfm) (for members or subscribers). Appropriate responses to conflict were evolved over millennia – from warfare (power), to litigation (rights), to mediation (interests). He describes how the tool of protest (a power-based tool) used in the 1960s on behalf of civil rights, anti-war, and free speech movements needed to give way to the more nuanced approach of mediation and dispute resolution system design (about 19 minutes in to the interview). These collaborative and consensus building skills are required now because the world has shrunk so greatly that we can no longer conceive that complex problems can remain unresolved without them having an impact on each person, quite personally, whether the problem is global warming, nuclear war, or the death of oceans. He suggests that more sophisticated skills, knowledge, and subtlety evolve as we share an awareness that the old tools will not work in this more complex environment.

The authors of *The Athena Doctrine* reach the same conclusion. A more complex world requires a leadership skillset that mirrors many of the qualities of a good mediator. Our older ways of leadership are failing all of us. So my call to you is this: How can you lead in this more complex world?

*Paula*

## Fall 2013 Conference Information

The Virginia Mediation Network Conference Committee is busy preparing for the annual Fall Conference to be held at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, VA September 28-29, 2013.

VMN and EMU’s Center for Justice and Peacebuilding are co-sponsoring this event. The theme of this year’s conference is “Dialogues Across Divides.”

Speaker proposals are being accepted until June 15. (See story on page 5.) Visit VMN’s website for more information about submitting a proposal. [www.vamediation.org](http://www.vamediation.org)



## Recap of the 2013 Spring VMN Conference

Great venue. Great speaker. Great conversation. Great food.



“We hit another one out of the park!” The 2013 Spring Conference, co-sponsored by the Virginia Mediation Network and the Joint Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee, featured Sharon Ellison’s model of Non-Defensive Communication. Attendees described her as a fabulous, wonderful, well-informed expert who taught in an informal, exceptionally interesting, conversational style. She encouraged attendees to discuss concepts, ask questions, learn by example, and practice putting theory into practice. Nearly 130 people enjoyed the event held at the Alumni Center of the University of Richmond.

Sharon Strand Ellison, M.S., is the Director of the Institute for Powerful Non-Defensive Communication, an internationally recognized communication consultant, an award-winning speaker, and the author of *Taking the War Out of Our Words*. Her parenting-skill CDs, *Taking Power Struggle Out of Parenting*, won a 2006 Benjamin Franklin Award. Sharon is a pioneer in developing methods for eliminating defensiveness so people can communicate with constructive power. She was a nominee for the *Leadership for a Changing World* Award, sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Advocacy Institute.



Conference participants also enjoyed the networking opportunities, the beautiful room used for the presentation, the delicious lunch, and the lovely setting of the University of Richmond. Many remarked that the one-day format offered a great value well worth the travel expense and conference fee. Folks also liked the deeper focus on one topic. By the end of the day, conference attendees could earn six hours of general or family CME and two hours of ethics CME.



Lawrie Parker concluded the conference by offering a two-hour ethics class that was well attended by about 50 participants. Several conference participants described the ethics program as “well done” or “excellent.”

The VMN Conference Committee is already planning the 2013 Fall Conference, entitled *Dialogues Across Divides*. VMN will hold the conference September 28-29, 2013 at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, VA. The Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at EMU will co-sponsor the event. We are looking forward to experimenting with

this new venue, this new relationship, an expanded topic-focus, and the professional faculty EMU can provide. You can find the Call for Speakers on the VMN website at <http://www.vamediation.org/conference>. Also see the story on page 5.



If you would like to advertise for an opening with your organization in The Link, please contact the VMN office at [office@vamediation.org](mailto:office@vamediation.org) or call 804-754-4120.

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**Executive Director, The Mediation Center of Charlottesville (MCC)** <http://www.mediationville.org/>

The Executive Director will work with the Board of Directors to ensure the Center is able to achieve its mission's goals and objectives. The Director is responsible for implementation of the Center's strategic plan, fundraising, overall management and operation of the organization. The Director reports to the Board of Directors. This is an exempt position with a standard workweek of 30 hours.

**Compensation:** Initial salary and benefits equal to \$35,000 to \$40,000, dependent on experience, to be reviewed yearly.

**Primary job responsibilities:**

1. *Development:* Ensure that the organization has sufficient resources, both financial resources and personnel, needed to carry out programs by developing and implementing both short and long-term fund raising initiatives.
2. *Community Relations/Marketing:* Increase public awareness of mediation and of programs offered by MCC.
3. *Maintain a positive working relationship with* Dispute Resolution Services at the Supreme Court of Virginia, Virginia Association for Community Conflict Resolution, and other statewide mediation groups.
4. *Programs:* Oversee implementation and evaluation of current and new programs.
5. *Administrative/Financial and Human Resource Management:* Prepare and manage annual budget and maintain Center's financial records; maintain in a confidential and secure manner all records related to mediation cases; act as a resource for mediators; supervise and evaluate Center staff including mediators and other volunteers.

**Qualifications:** The successful candidate will have a combination of experience and education equivalent to a bachelor's degree, experience in a leadership position with a nonprofit or other organization; experience with budget development and fiscal oversight in a nonprofit, business, or government context; demonstrated success as a fundraiser; ability to communicate with a diverse array of constituencies, including donors, volunteers, judges and other court personnel, government officials, community coalitions, the media, and the general public; ability to balance with determination a diverse portfolio of responsibilities; possess outstanding leadership and interpersonal skills; and a demonstrated passion for public service. Law degree, non-profit experience, and previous experience with mediation are desirable, but not required.

**To Apply:** Please send a cover letter, resume, and three professional references by email to [hillisb@comcast.net](mailto:hillisb@comcast.net)  
Subject: **Executive Director Search, Mediation Center of Charlottesville: Attention – Galloway Beck.**

The position will remain open until filled.

## Fall Conference – Call for Speakers

The Virginia Mediation Network and the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University, are co-hosting the annual Fall Training Conference on September 28-29, 2013. The conference, entitled, *“Dialogues Across Divides”*, will be held on the scenic Eastern Mennonite University Campus in Harrisonburg, VA. We are looking for presentations that may fit into the following categories:



**Trauma/Emotion:** This may include, but is not limited to neuroscience, healing historical harms, working with veterans, forgiveness and emotional issues related to conflict.

**Strategic Peace Making:** This may include organizational and systems conflict theory and practice, negotiation, conflict consultation, and conflict coaching.

**Restorative Justice:** This may include programs in the criminal justice system, schools, religious organizations, workplace and communities.

**Ethics:** This is a 2-hour session that in some way reviews the Virginia Standards of Ethics for Mediators.

**Skill Building:** Any format that furthers the craft of mediation skill. This may include Peer Consultation, child support or financial workshops, basic mediation skills, and mindfulness in mediation.

Concurrent workshops (1.5 hours in length) will be scheduled for either September 28 or 29. Because we are a small non-profit organization we are not able to offer speaker honorariums or travel costs.

***Speaker proposals are being accepted until June 15.***

When submitting a program proposal, all attachments plus a brief, personal bio, must be included for consideration. For your convenience, the checklist for submitting proposals is outlined below:

1. **“Call for Speakers” Program Form—[Click Here to Download the form.](#)**
2. **ADR CME Application:** This form must be completed and returned with all other information so that continuing mediator credits can be applied for from Dispute Resolution Services at the Supreme Court of Virginia. Please note your signature is required on this form. If you do not have a way to electronically sign the form, you can either fax or mail this particular form to the fax number or address below.
3. **A brief bio of all speakers that are presenting.**
4. **Handouts, worksheets, role plays, etc. that you will include in your presentation.** Please review the CME application guidelines as specificity is required on this form. Handouts that you want participants to have during the session (that are included in the training manual that each conference participant receives) will need to be included.

**All handouts are required when submitting the program proposal as these materials are needed for both the CME and CLE application process.** All materials can be returned to the Virginia Mediation Network via email (with the possible exception of the CME application). You may need to fax or mail the CME application to the VMN office as this may not be a form that can be emailed.

Questions may be directed to Jennifer Phillips at [JPmediation@gmail.com](mailto:JPmediation@gmail.com)

Applications should be sent to the VMN office:

Email: [office@vamediation.org](mailto:office@vamediation.org)

Mailing Address:

3720 Parchment Circle, Richmond, VA 23233

Phone: 804-254-2666 Fax: 804-754-0801

## Welcome New VMN Members!

The following persons have joined the Network.

How about you? Do you know a mediator or other conflict resolution professional who could benefit from premier conferences and opportunities to network with like-minded professionals? Encourage them to join VMN.

### Welcome to our new members!!

Eric Coleman, Fairfax, Virginia

James R. Cross, Manassas, Virginia

James F. Cullen, Chesterfield, Virginia

Mahshar Ghazanfari, Fairfax, Virginia

Lisa Gottschalk, Chesapeake, Virginia

Gerald Kadonoff, McLean, Virginia

Kim Kristensen, Salem, Virginia

Glenn H. Stephens, Falls Church, Virginia

Doreene Thomas, Chesapeake, Virginia

### Time to Renew Your Dues for 2013!

Your 2013 Membership Application was mailed in December.

If you prefer—you can renew today online by [clicking here](#).

We have many exciting things planned for 2013—be sure to tell a friend or colleague about the value in becoming a member!

## Legislative Update

The Virginia General Assembly unanimously approved House Bill 1795 which amends the mediation confidentiality statute (§8.01-576.10 and §8.01-581.22) regarding child support cases, clarifying in what instances child support worksheets are to be submitted to the court. Governor Bob McDonnell has approved the bill as well. The Virginia Mediation Network Board of Directors, through its Legislative Committee, lent its support to the legislation.

The last paragraph of §8.01-576.10, the confidentiality statute, will be deleted on July 1, 2013, along with a corresponding paragraph in §8.01-581.22. The paragraph to be deleted reads “Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, in any case where the dispute involves support of the minor children of the parties, financial information, including information contained in the child support guideline worksheet, and written reasons for any deviation from the guidelines shall be disclosed to each party and the court, for the purpose of computing a basic child support amount pursuant to § 20-108.2.”

Mediators understood that the child support guideline worksheets should only be submitted to the court when the parties reached a signed, mediated agreement as outlined in §8.01-576.9 and §8.01-576.11). However there were others, including some courts, who interpreted the statutes as requiring that the child support guideline worksheets had to be submitted to the court regardless of whether the parties reached an agreement in mediation.

This interpretation put mediators in a difficult position because it seemed to contradict §8.01-576.11 which states that the child support worksheet should be included with any written child support agreement.

Another problem, as outlined in statute (§8.01-576.9), is that all a mediator can report to the court is whether the mediation orientation did or did not occur, whether mediation did or did not occur and whether an agreement was reached. Mediators were also concerned about ethical obligations of confidentiality.

The amendment now clarifies that when parties do not reach an agreement in mediation regarding child support any calculations on the child support guideline worksheets are confidential and will not be submitted to the court.



Did you know that the Virginia Mediation Network is on Facebook? Are you? If so, then “Like” us and begin sharing interesting articles and information from mediation and the conflict resolution fields. Or, start a discussion so other members can join in. One member recently posted an article from the Huffington Post about how Restorative Justice practices can help people in the wake of the Boston Marathon bombings. Another recently posted articles on how conflict and anger affect children, even sleeping infants. Join us on Facebook and become part of the discussion. Follow the link below. See you there!

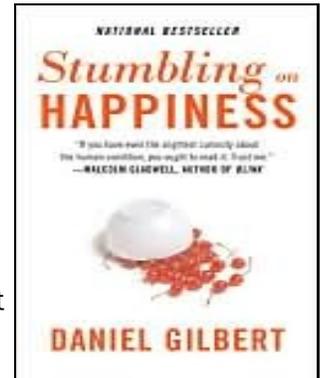
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Virginia-Mediation-Network/173148482716303>

## Fall 2013 Bookzone

### VMN BOOKZONE - NEXT SELECTION

*Stumbling on Happiness* by Daniel Gilbert, Vintage Books, New York (2006)

You think you know what makes you happy, but you are probably wrong! Dan Gilbert, a Harvard professor, draws on the fields of psychology, neuroscience, philosophy and economics to explore how well humans can predict future affective states. It turns out that by any objective standard, we're pretty bad at it. Insights from this witty, engaging book are immediately transferable to the practice of mediation, where people in conflict are making choices they believe will make them happier. Deepen your understanding of how the brain works to hamper the ability to choose what brings true satisfaction.



Available at Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Stumbling-Happiness-Daniel-Gilbert/dp/1400077427>

Please use the link to Amazon.com on the VMN home page at [www.vamediation.org](http://www.vamediation.org) and send some money back to VMN!

If you would like to hear Dan Gilbert discuss the "science of happiness," click on this link to hear his 20-minute TED talk. [http://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_gilbert\\_asks\\_why\\_are\\_we\\_happy.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy.html)

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