

## We Can Work It Out!

August 2020



### **Mediator Musings: Solidarity**

Sara Barnes, Executive Director and Lead Mediator

The concept of solidarity is familiar to Island residents. We donate our belongings when tragedy strikes, come to the aid of one another when our help is needed. These public displays of solidarity are one of the many great things that bind us together as a community.

MV Mediation is built upon the concept of solidarity. Everything we do. Every day. Volunteers, who keep us functioning, demonstrate their solidarity with the community through their work. Mediation, conflict coaching, facilitation, committees, Board meetings, teaching, fundraising and everything else we do. It's all about solidarity with those we help, to lift each other up and support those who need the services we provide.

But. We can't put a poster up asking people to donate to the child custody mediation of the Jones family. We can't put a donation jar at the supermarket for the family facilitation process of the Smith family who are trying to figure out how to care for their elderly mom. At MV Mediation, the dilemma is this: all of our services are confidential. So the financial solidarity has to be based on the trust in our organization that our Island has developed .

We are over halfway to our goal of \$10,000 raised to offset waived fees. You know we do good work, helping others to resolve their conflicts. And MV Bank is helping by matching your donation. Will you help? The coming season looks to be a challenging one for many of our neighbors. Show your solidarity and help us to provide needed services to those who are having financial difficulties.



## Solidarity Fund

**Thank you Martha's Vineyard Bank for matching donations to the Solidarity fund through September!**

**Make your donations count!**

**The Solidarity Fund  
Will Allow Waiver of Community, Family and Coaching Fees Throughout  
2020**

[Donate Now](#)

### Upcoming Events

#### **Conflict Resolution Essentials Course**

This course is designed for those seeking new approaches to workplace, relationship, family, community and professional conflicts.

Tuesdays 4pm-6pm and/or  
Saturdays 10am-1pm  
September 8 - December 1  
Via Zoom

#### **Introduction to Mediation Course**

This course is designed to train those interested in the basics of mediation.

Thursdays 4-6pm  
November 12 - February 27  
Via Zoom

[See more information here](#)

#### **Financial Conflict Coaching Workshop**

We are excited to announce our first financial conflict coaching workshop: **Your Income and Expenses--Get it Together!** Open to all this workshop will provide guidance on understanding income and expenses, reading a pay statement, and includes tools for tracking and managing expenses.

## Upcoming Events

### The Productive Conversations Program

Are you part of a family with an older adult and you need to sort some things out? Are you having unproductive conversations about aging and elder issues? Is planning for the future with your adult children getting difficult? The Productive Conversations Program is a new initiative for families with older adults to work with a neutral facilitator. Participants will learn about conflict resolution skills, discuss family conflict history and plan together for the future. Send us an email if you and your extended family would like to participate in this pilot project.

[Website](#)

### Parent Mediation Program

If you need help talking with your spouse or partner, we are part of the Statewide Parent Mediation Program (PMP) providing parents--married, unmarried, divorced or separated--with up to 4 hours of free mediation. MVMP Family and Divorce mediators can provide you with mediation sessions to discuss parenting issues custody schedules, financial decisions, communication or to renegotiate existing plans. Please contact the office to schedule an intake call. We are here to help.

[Family and Divorce](#)



## Family Self-Isolation May Be Safe, But It's Not Without Its Issues

Guest Article by Emma Grace Brown

If you're like many of us, you're not 100 percent sure how, exactly, the coronavirus spreads. We are bombarded with so much information, much of it conflicting, that self-isolation seems like the best option. And it is, particularly for families with one or more members with a weakened or otherwise compromised immune system. Unfortunately, as much as we love our spouses and children, spending day in and day out together does have its downsides.

Keep reading for more information on how to alleviate tension and ensure everyone has the space to cope with isolation on their own terms.

### Go Outside

Many bars and restaurants may still be closed, but nature remains open. And there is no better place to socially distance than the outdoors. The best part about being outside is that it can help alleviate the symptoms of nature deficit disorder, which occurs when we spend too much time inside. So, if you can, play with the kids in the backyard, plan an overnight camping trip to your favorite National Park, or head to the beach.

### Go Solo

Even though time at home is an exceptional opportunity to bond with your family, even the youngest kids need some time alone. Look for some activities you can each do by yourselves. This might be something as simple as taking a walk around the neighborhood or enjoying a good book and a warm bath. Younger children might enjoy reading as well, and a graphic novel is an excellent introduction to literature. Do yourself a favor, however, and check your preferred title's Amazon reviews before you buy to ensure it's appropriate for the intended reader.

### Learn How to Communicate

This one might seem like a no-brainer, but the closer we are to one another, the less we tend to communicate. Unfortunately, not expressing your emotions in a productive manner can lead to resentment and hurt feelings. The Art of Manliness's relationship experts Brett & Kate McKay asserts that great communication is an intentional act. When you need to have a conversation, avoid laying blame. Don't dig up history, and try not to compare your spouse or children to others. If you're one of the many couples that has found that sticking to close quarters has wounded rather than renewed your relationship, get in touch with the MV Mediation Program, which can help you get through a separation or divorce with less stress.

### Engage in Art

Even if you and your spouse have excellent communication skills, that does not mean the children have yet picked up on how to get their point across. One way they can, however, is through art. There are plenty of art projects you can do with children that can help them express their emotions. One example is to have them paint a picture with the color that they feel. And if you have a child with a learning disability, artistic expression is perhaps one of the easiest ways they can communicate without feeling threatened.

### Watch Your Workday

Working from home is a significant source of stress that can cause a rift in your family dynamic. Pay close attention to how you feel while you work, and don't be afraid to take breaks. Fifteen minutes to have a cup of coffee with your spouse or to play catch in the yard with your children can give you a clear head and help you be more productive so you don't have work weighing you down during your family time. Forbes offers many other stress-reduction tactics for those of us working at home but stresses that self-compassion is the key.

As much as we love our families, we have suddenly been thrust into a situation where we are together all the time. We are spending more time than ever with those we love, and that can quickly lead to aggravation. But you do not have to let the stress of self-isolation cause a divide between you and the ones you love. Go outside, paint a picture, and pay attention to how you feel when handling non-family-related tasks. These small steps may be just what you need to keep the peace until you are all ready to venture into the world together again.

At MVMP our slogan is ***We Can Work it Out***, Would you like to borrow this slogan?

Feel free. ***You Can Work it Out!*** We are here if you need our help.

**ROCKLAND**  
**TRUST**

Charitable Foundation

**MARTHA'S**  
**VINEYARD** **BANK** 

**CAPE**  
**COD** **5**

Foundation



Thank you for the amazing support of our donors and sponsors and to Rockland Trust Foundation, Cape Cod 5, and Cronig's Market for their continued support.

Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program  
MVMediation.org  
508-693-2999



Visit our Website

Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program

Email not displaying correctly?

[View it in your browser](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)