

UNDERSTANDING FAMILY MEDIATION FROM A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE

Allan Barsky

Abstract: Social work has long recognized mediation as a function that falls within the purview of generalist social work practice. Since the 1980s mediation has been recognized in social work curricula as a distinct practice method. Mediation and social work share many techniques, values, and approaches. While social workers have much to contribute, particularly in the area of family mediation, mediation is a distinct profession with its own values, techniques, approaches, and professional persona. Whereas instructors for mediation training courses can present a single model of mediation, teachers in social work degree programs need to be aware of various models, their theoretical underpinnings, and their potential cultural and gender biases.

Abrégé: La profession du service social le reconnaît depuis longtemps : la fonction médiatrice est de son ressort général. Depuis les années 1980, le curriculum du service social reconnaît la médiation comme une pratique distincte. La médiation et le service social ont en commun beaucoup de techniques, de valeurs et d'approches. Bien que les travailleurs sociaux aient beaucoup à y apporter, surtout dans le domaine de la médiation familiale, la médiation est une profession distincte ayant ses propres valeurs, techniques, approches et visage professionnel. Alors que les instructeurs des cours de formation en médiation ne présenteront parfois qu'un seul modèle, les professeurs des programmes menant à un grade en service social doivent connaître divers modèles, leurs fondements théoriques et leurs biais potentiels du point de vue de la culture et des rapports hommes-femmes.

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