

THE MAGIC IN MEDIATION

A SEARCH FOR SYMMETRIES, METAPHORS AND SCALE-FREE PRACTICES

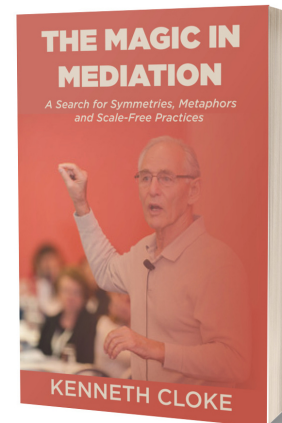
BY KENNETH CLOKE

Once again Ken Cloke pushes us to think beyond the conventional boundaries of conflict resolution. This time he goes so far as to propose a unified field theory. His ideas are dangerous. Read them at your own risk — and the reward is great!

—William Ury, coauthor *Getting to Yes*

Anyone who has mediated is likely to have experienced the magic of mediation, and would very much like to do so again. But if asked where this magic came from, how it happened, what it consisted of, and how they might replicate it, most would be hard pressed to answer.

To identify the sources of magic in mediation, we need to learn by metaphor from other disciplines and professions, and search for ways of translating successful small-scale techniques into scale-free methodologies that can be applied to mid- and large-scale conflicts. We are actively creating wars, pandemics, and environmental conflicts that cannot be resolved or prevented *except* globally, collaboratively, and meditatively, using scaled-up, higher order dispute resolution skills. This is the core mission and calling of conflict resolvers around the world. And as these problems and conflicts have no borders, neither should our efforts to resolve them.



Magic happens not only because of what we *do*, but who we *are*; *in spite* of everything the parties have said and done to each other, all their anguish and pain and trauma and loss, all their failed efforts and hopelessness. Why? Because we know, in our minds and hearts that magic is *possible*, and are ready to step into their hatred and fear and darkness and uncertainty, to search for it there. In mediation, we allow ourselves, for a moment, to *become* the magic they are seeking, merely because they do not yet understand that the magic is *already* inside and between them.

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