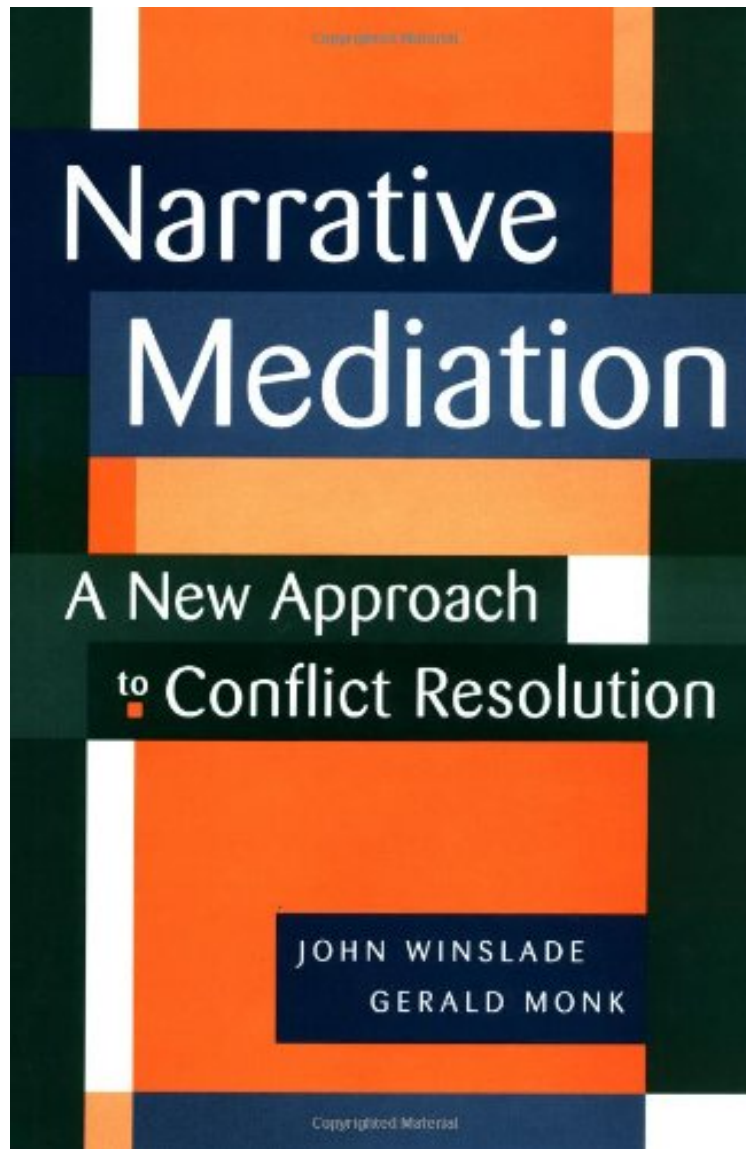


## Narrative Mediation : A New Approach to Conflict Resolution

*John Winslade, Gerald D. Monk, Gerald Monk*  
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**John Winslade, Gerald D. Monk, Gerald Monk : Narrative Mediation : A New Approach to Conflict Resolution**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Narrative Mediation :  
A New Approach to Conflict Resolution:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant, simple approach to cut through conflict at the outsetBy  
BluzfanAs a Family Law attorney studying techniques for successful Collaboratve Divorce, I had the good fortune to  
attend seminars where Gerald Monk and John Winslade presented and demonstrated their Narrative Mediation

technique. Divorcing couples often are overwhelmed with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, betrayal, hostility, and sometimes a bit of mental illness, substance abuse and other various factors impairing their judgment. Applied to my particular field, Narrative Mediation enables opponents to set their angry stories to the side before they have let go of them, and recognize their own self-interest in discussing a resolution to their conflict. If you have an opportunity to attend a live presentation, don't miss it. If you're looking for a seminar speaker, seek them out. 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A Social Constructionist Mediation Book By Jurgella John Winslade and Gerald Monk are two social constructionists out of New Zealand who, according to their own jacket flap, are "leading figures" in the narrative therapy movement. Theirs is an interesting book with an interesting thesis: instead of seeing mediation as a problem-solving process where competing interests are resolved, they see it as a process where competing "stories" (or narratives) of the conflict are "deconstructed" and an alternate story is reconstructed. That alternate story is fashioned in large part out of a recognition of the culturally-influenced power relationships between the disputing parties, and with awareness of the cultural biases of the mediator as well. This theory specifically acknowledges one of the real weaknesses with conventional mediation, which is that mediators often struggle to maintain the detached neutrality that is expected of them. The narrative approach also seeks to recalibrate the relationship between the disputants instead of simply solving a particular problem. This grounding in social constructionist theory is both the strength and limitation of this book. First of all, the book is a bit jargonistic in places, as befitting a text with this philosophical underpinning. I would have enjoyed less of the philosophical treatise and more extensive real world examples of how this kind of mediation would actually work in practice. In addition, there is a problem with the theory itself, and that is that it blurs the traditional distinction between mediation and therapy. Since both authors emerged from the Mediation Therapy movement, this may be inevitable, but it is nonetheless problematic. While mediation that has a therapeutic objective may be useful at times in settings like divorce mediation (or other disputes where the parties are likely to maintain long-standing relationships), it is not likely to be appropriate in a business setting or for the resolution of small-claim type disputes. 12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Settlement Through Alternative Stories By Jon Linden In one of the finest general mediation books I have ever read, Winslade and Monk present a new perspective on the mediation of disputes. In a departure from the more structured models of mediation presented in the past, these authors introduce a revolutionary approach to the manner in which mediation is approached. Their theory basically shows conflicts in light of the "life discourse" that people bring to the dispute. The application of "Narrative Mediation" is embodied in the concept, that it is the "story of how the conflict developed" from all parties perspective that is the MOST relevant factor in the deconstruction of the actual underlying issues which make up the conflict presented in each case. The mediator's role, is to allow the parties to describe these factors and through their stories, to reveal their personal positions and their personal influences of their lives that have created the situation and also, give commentary, albeit often unwittingly, as to the manner in which an "Alternative Story" can be developed, that will allow those parties to reconstruct a relationship and a resolution. While it is certainly true, that the method suggested by Winslade and Monk in their book is more effective when the parties will have an ongoing relationship, it still represents a new and fresh look at the ways in which mediators help facilitate the solutions to the presenting problems. Even though the method seems more suited for such things as continuing employee/employer relationships or the aftermath of divorce, many of the topics covered still have tremendous value and application, even in cases, such as EEOC sexual harassment or constructive or wrongful discharge situations, that seem at least on the surface to be a purely "needs based" type of negotiation, where the parties never want to see each other ever again, post settlement. Regardless of the type of mediation or ADR a practitioner is involved in, this book represents an extremely valuable insight into a new potential approach to mediation of conflict. The book is recommended for all people in general, but particularly for those involved in resolution of conflict on any level and in any venue. The book is a valuable contribution to the growing library of material on the topic of conflict resolution and should be carefully read and integrated as part of any ADR practitioners skill set.

In this groundbreaking book, John Winslade and Gerald Monk -- leaders in the narrative therapy movement--introduce an innovative conflict resolution paradigm that is a revolutionary departure from the traditional problem-solving, interest-based model of resolving disputes. The narrative mediation approach encourages the conflicting parties to tell their personal "story" of the conflict and reach resolution through a profound understanding of the context of their individual stories. The authors map out the theoretical foundations of this new approach to conflict resolution and show how to apply specific techniques for the practical application of narrative mediation to a wide-variety of conflict situations.

"A groundbreaking book bringing together ideas of social constructionist theory, narrative therapy, and mediation. The authors develop a very clear framework toward understanding this approach with case examples provided. I found this book useful to me both as a practitioner and as a researcher." (Jerry Gale, director, MFT Doctoral Program, Department of Child and Family Development, The University of Georgia, Co-PI Mediator Skills Project Jerry Gale, director of the MFT Doctoral Program, Department of Child and Family Development, The University of Georgia, Co-

PI Mediator Skills Project) "An important "must-read" for anyone who is contemplating mediation. John Winslade and Gerald Monk are consummately qualified to bring us this book that is rich in a social constructionist understanding and revolutionary in approach. Focusing on stories of respect, mutuality, consideration, and support, their suggestions can only lead to new possibilities of peaceful coexistence--on both personal and global levels." (Victoria C. Dickerson, cofounder, planet-therapy.com and coauthor, *If Problems Talked: Narrative Therapy in Action*)

**From the Inside Flap** Most professionals trained to resolve conflicts ground their efforts in the theory that people are motivated by a desire to fulfill their personal interests. Mediators work to assist disputing parties by discovering a shared interest, which will motivate each party to resolve their conflicts. However, despite the widespread use of this traditional problem-solving, interest-based model of conflict resolution, incidents of violence, international hostilities, and legal disputes continue to escalate worldwide. In this book, John Winslade and Gerald Monk introduce narrative mediation—a new paradigm in the field of conflict resolution and a radical departure from the traditional interest-based, problem-solving approach to resolving disputes. Winslade and Monk reveal how this innovative approach, which seeks out the conflicting parties' individual stories, can be applied to create lasting resolution for a wide variety of conflicts. At the heart of narrative mediation lies the goal of developing a context for creating a relationship that is incompatible with conflict. This transformed relationship is built on stories of understanding, respect, and collaboration. Using actual scenarios from their mediation practice, Winslade and Monk show how the mediation context is filled with strong cultural narratives influenced by ethnicity, gender, class, education, and financial status. The narrative mediation technique guides professionals and their clients to make sense of the complex social contexts that shape conflicts, and ultimately helps to create new possibilities for change. In accessible, everyday language, the authors reveal how to build a trusting relationship with the disputing parties, map the effects of the history of the conflict, construct new solution-bound narratives, and finally move toward consensus and resolution. Written for therapists, counselors, professional mediators, lawyers, students, and trainees in the field of dispute resolution, *Narrative Mediation* offers an innovative approach that opens a wealth of new possibilities for the resolution of personal, professional, and legal conflicts.

**From the Back Cover** Most professionals trained to resolve conflicts ground their efforts in the theory that people are motivated by a desire to fulfill their personal interests. Mediators work to assist disputing parties by discovering a shared interest, which will motivate each party to resolve their conflicts. However, despite the widespread use of this traditional problem-solving, interest-based model of conflict resolution, incidents of violence, international hostilities, and legal disputes continue to escalate worldwide. In this book, John Winslade and Gerald Monk introduce narrative mediation—a new paradigm in the field of conflict resolution and a radical departure from the traditional interest-based, problem-solving approach to resolving disputes. Winslade and Monk reveal how this innovative approach, which seeks out the conflicting parties' individual stories, can be applied to create lasting resolution for a wide variety of conflicts. At the heart of narrative mediation lies the goal of developing a context for creating a relationship that is incompatible with conflict. This transformed relationship is built on stories of understanding, respect, and collaboration. Using actual scenarios from their mediation practice, Winslade and Monk show how the mediation context is filled with strong cultural narratives influenced by ethnicity, gender, class, education, and financial status. The narrative mediation technique guides professionals and their clients to make sense of the complex social contexts that shape conflicts, and ultimately helps to create new possibilities for change. In accessible, everyday language, the authors reveal how to build a trusting relationship with the disputing parties, map the effects of the history of the conflict, construct new solution-bound narratives, and finally move toward consensus and resolution. Written for therapists, counselors, professional mediators, lawyers, students, and trainees in the field of dispute resolution, *Narrative Mediation* offers an innovative approach that opens a wealth of new possibilities for the resolution of personal, professional, and legal conflicts.

**[Headline]** A revolutionary mediation technique for resolving personal, professional, and legal conflicts In this groundbreaking book, John Winslade and Gerald Monk leaders in the narrative therapy movement—introduce an innovative conflict resolution paradigm that is a revolutionary departure from the traditional problem-solving, interest-based model of resolving disputes. The narrative mediation approach encourages the conflicting parties to tell their personal "story" of the conflict and reach resolution through a profound understanding of the context of their individual stories. The authors map out the theoretical foundations of this new approach to conflict resolution and show how to apply specific techniques for the practical application of narrative mediation to a wide variety of conflict situations. "A groundbreaking book bringing together ideas of social constructionist theory, narrative therapy, and mediation. The authors develop a very clear framework toward understanding this approach with case examples provided. I found this book useful to me both as a practitioner and as a researcher." Jerry Gale, director, MFT Doctoral Program, Department of Child and Family Development, The University of Georgia, Co-PI Mediator Skills Project

"An important "must-read" for anyone who is contemplating mediation, either as a receiver or as a provider. John Winslade and Gerald Monk are consummately qualified to bring us this book that is rich in a social constructionist understanding and revolutionary in approach. Focusing on stories of respect, mutuality, consideration, and support, their suggestions can only lead to new possibilities of peaceful coexistence--on both personal and global levels." Victoria C. Dickerson, cofounder, planet-therapy.com and coauthor, *If Problems Talked: Narrative Therapy in Action*