

---

# Kluwer Mediation Blog

## Remembering who really does the work

Sabine Walsh (Sabine Walsh Mediation) · Monday, May 5th, 2014

This isn't going to be a long post but sometimes it only takes a few words to bring the point home. Recently I had a tough week. Tougher than usual anyway. Session after session of pain, anger, disappointment and frustration left me feeling a little burned out and generally fried. I felt like I had been working hard. Then I received an e mail from a client with some information I had requested which made reference to the poem I have reproduced below, which reflected the client's perception of how things were at the moment. It was a poignant and effective reminder of who really does the work in mediation.

No matter how much energy and effort we put into our mediation work, we still have the luxury of looking in at the conflict and the emotions it brings with it from the outside. No matter how hard we think about how to frame our questions or interventions we still don't carry the responsibility for the decisions that must be made. And no matter how long we spend with the conflict and those in it, we still get to go home and leave it all behind.

It is too easy to underestimate the courage and determination it takes to face into the complexity of mediation when one's life is taken over by painful feelings and when communication no longer works. To sit down and face the person perceived as the cause of all the problems and try to find a middle ground. To even be in the same space as them without being overwhelmed.

As mediators we must remember that we are only helpers, witnesses, guides. However hard our work might feel it is nothing compared to that of our clients.

You and I

By Roger McGough

*I explain quietly. You  
hear me shouting. You  
try a new tack. I  
feel old wounds reopen.*

You see both sides. I  
see your blinkers. I  
am placatory. You  
sense a new selfishness.

I am a dove. You  
recognize the hawk. You

offer an olive branch. I  
feel the thorns.

You bleed. I  
see crocodile tears. I  
withdraw. You  
reel from the impact.

Enough said.

---


*To make sure you do not miss out on regular updates from the Kluwer Mediation Blog, please subscribe [here](#).*


### **Profile Navigator and Relationship Indicator**

Includes 7,300+ profiles of arbitrators, expert witnesses, counsels & 13,500+ relationships to uncover potential conflicts of interest.

Learn how **Kluwer Arbitration** can support you.

Learn more about the newly-updated *Profile Navigator and Relationship Indicator*



 Wolters Kluwer

This entry was posted on Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 7:54 pm and is filed under [Clients](#), [Communication](#), [Conflict](#), [Family Mediation](#), [Mediation Users/Clients](#)  
You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

