

Kluwer Mediation Blog

TED Talks I Have Enjoyed – And that Resonate with the Mediator in Me

Greg Bond (Bond & Bond Mediation / University of Wildau) · Saturday, February 24th, 2018

This blog is no more than a list of ten TED and TEDx talks that I have found inspiring and that relate to mediation, in the broadest sense of the word. I thank the friends and colleagues who recommended them to me, and recommend them on to readers.

Rita Preston, [Every Kid Needs a Champion](#). A school teacher talks about how it is relationships and human connection that matter in education. Her answer to teachers who flippantly say they do not like kids is that kids don't learn from people they don't like. Pierson advocates seeking to understand before seeking to be understood. Which resonates with me as a mediator and a teacher, not least because it is something I do not achieve nearly as often as I sometimes like to think I do.

Two talks by Julian Treasure, [5 Ways to Listen Better](#) and [How to Speak so That People Want to Listen](#). Treasure speaks in favour of a focus on meaning and concentrating on the moment. I contend that this experience of presence is too often in danger of being lost in today's world of communication technologies that allow us always to be somewhere than where we are actually present.

Valerie Hoeks, [Cultural Differences in Business](#). Hoeks talks about how going to and working in China changed her life, and how she mediates between two very different business cultures. A heartwarming plea for openness to the cultural other.

Celeste Headlee, [10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation](#). Enter every conversation assuming you have something to learn; true listening means setting aside yourself. Let your own stories go. This talk makes the argument from a journalist's perspective, and the open questioning method advocated is mediation at its purest: "How does that feel?"

Andrea Schneider, [Why Women Don't Negotiate and Other Similar Nonsense](#). This talk is based on empirical research, and Schneider skillfully presents her aversion to the clichés about gender as well as results that do suggest there are socially shaped differences between the ways in which women and men negotiate. Mediators take note and take care – drop all cultural stereotypes and listen for the differences that are really there.

Sherry Turkle, [Connected, but Alone?](#) Our increasing use of smartphone, tablet and laptop communications disrupts our real-time interactions. We create an illusion of companionship instead of facing the demands of friendship. This resonates with me because I see how the use of

smartphones etc. in meetings and in training and teaching has fundamentally changed for the worse the ways we engage with other. The ideal mediation: when these devices stay turned off until the mediation is done.

Atal Gawande, [Want to Get Great at Something. Get a Coach](#). Talking about how coaching improves doctors' performances and patients' health, Gawande recommends us all to ask people to observe our work and advise us on how to get better at it. Must be advisable for mediators too – we get too little feedback with ideas for improvement. Do we want it?

Hans Rosling, [Global Population Growth, Box by Box](#). The late Hans Rosling presents statistics as you have never seen them presented. A wonderful (and humorous) example of how to give clarity to complexity, which is where it connects to mediation. Puts my scruffy flipcharts to shame!

Ken Robinson, [Do Schools Kill Creativity?](#) One of the most popular TED talks of all time, and one of the funniest as well as one of the most urgent. This talk tells me that education must be about the real needs of learners and society. The work of mediators ideally focuses on the needs of the parties in mediation. The story Robinson tells of a young school girl discovering against the odds that her talent is dancing speaks volumes.

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