

---

# Kluwer Mediation Blog

## Some Questions at the Turn of the Year....

John Sturrock (Core Solutions Group) · Monday, December 28th, 2020

There are times when one is not sure what to say or do, especially if one aspires not simply to repeat or anticipate what others might say or do.

What do you say when you don't know what to say? What do you do when you don't know what to do? As a mediator by profession, my response in practice to these questions would probably be to pause, in silence. And do nothing but rather wait to see what happens... In the vacuum of silence, all sorts of things may occur. It takes self-discipline just to hold that space.

And then, perhaps, I might ask a few questions, not always expecting an answer, at least not one expressed as such. As we reflect back on a year like no other for most if not all of us, it seems pertinent to ask ourselves about 2020 and what it might mean – and indeed what we might take forward from it. So, here are some questions upon which each of us might wish to reflect at the beginning of a new year.

What did we learn in 2020, about ourselves? Who are we, really, and what really matters to us? What did we learn in 2020, about our world – and the people in it, and indeed about our own place in it?

Looking back, what do we regret about what we have done or not done – by ourselves, and together with others? And what are we really grateful for? Why?

Who has been kind to us? How kind have we been to others? And to ourselves? How much love have we shared? Really shared?

How will our experience in 2020 change who we are in 2021? Indeed, how will it change *how* we are, in ourselves and with others? Why might that be important?

Who do we need to speak to soon? Think of someone...What do we really need to say? And who do we really need to listen to? Again, think of someone...What might we hear? What one thing might we do differently this year, as individuals, that will bring real hope to others?

As we reflect on all of this in our professional and personal capacities, and looking ahead, what role as peace-bringers do we each have in today's uncertain world? How will we actually fulfil that role in 2021? What is our unique contribution to our communities?

I was interested to read a [recent report](#) by **Carnegie UK Trust** reflecting on the role of kindness in

the healthcare response to COVID-19, entitled “**The courage to be kind**”. Its words speak to us all: “*the ease with which people now speak the language of kindness does little to diminish the tensions and complexities of embedding it in practice. ... the implications of kindness are radical and disruptive.*” The report emphasises the importance of leadership, a concern for others, and the benefits are clear: “*Leadership really matters, and compassionate leadership is associated with high performance, effectiveness, wellbeing and credibility.*”

In the best-selling book by the artist **Charlie Mackesy**, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, the horse says: “*Nothing beats kindness, it sits quietly beyond all things.*”. At a conference many years ago, I recall asking an older lady what you should do when you don’t know what to do. She replied: “*just do the kindest thing*”. Perhaps these words and our answers to the questions above may offer each of us a guide of sorts as we go forward into 2021, especially in those moments when we don’t know what to say or what to do. Happy new year!

*(This post is developed from a contribution to an event hosted by the International Academy of Mediators in December 2020).*

---


*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, December 28th, 2020 at 9:29 pm and is filed under [Reflective Practice, Scotland, Uncategorized](#)

You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.