

Mediator Insights: Help

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Never be afraid to ask your mediator for help. We all need a little help sometimes.

To illustrate, let's consider Audrey Wood's *Silly Sally*, which is a children's book written in rhyme. I'd like to share a few excerpts.

"Silly Sally went to town, walking backwards, upside down."

"Along the way, she met a pig, a silly pig, they danced a jig."

Sally continues walking – that is walking backwards upside down – but now the pig has joined her. As she walks, she is joined by a dog and a loon.

And then:

"On the way, she met a sheep, a silly sheep, they fell asleep."

"Now how did Sally get to town, sleeping backwards, upside down?"

"Along came Neddy Buttercup, walking forwards, right side up."

Neddy sees them. And he stops to help.

How does he help? He tickles them to wake them up and then they all go to town "walking backwards, upside down."

Putting aside the rhymes and illustrations, which are a lot of fun, one important thing we learn from *Silly Sally* is that we all need a little help sometimes to get from here to there.

How does this message translate to mediation?



Sometimes we need help to get from conflict to resolution. That's why we mediate. But sometimes we need help for more specific reasons. When that happens, tell your mediator.

Does your client need help to process their emotions? Tell your mediator.

Does your client have unrealistic expectations? Tell your mediator.

Do you need help understanding the other side's views on something? Tell your mediator.

Do you recognize an obstacle to resolution? Tell your mediator.

Never be afraid to ask the mediator for help.

Don't be Silly Sally who was sleeping backwards, upside down.

Instead, speak right up and let the mediator be Neddy Buttercup.

You may just find your path to resolution.

Author's Note: As a mediator, I am a "forever student" always seeking new ways to help people find a path to resolution in mediation. As a parent, I have spent a gazillion hours reading books to my children. Oftentimes, these books teach me new ways to approach conflict resolution. In this case, Audrey Wood's "Silly Sally" inspired this post.

Disclaimer: Nothing contained herein constitutes legal advice nor does anything contained herein create a professional relationship.