



CCND CONNECTION, Summer 2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael K. Conway, JD

Sometimes it is hard to know what to say when you come toward the close of your term and had the privilege to work with so many outstanding individuals who are dedicated to the mission of CCND. But not in this case: Well done! To all those who worked so tirelessly to make these past two years a great success and thank you for the honor of being your President.



Many of the articles in this newsletter will revolve around the Annual Conference that was held on May 31st at Quinnipiac University Law School. It was such a great privilege to listen to Woody Mosten and David Hoffman provide us with their years of experience and insight into this practice. These men looked to me as though they both could be retired somewhere, but yet, they continue to press forward, both as professors and practitioners in the Collaborative field. The word that was used by these very experienced professionals was “Kaizen” a Japanese word meaning improvement – especially in business to continuously improve your product or how you produce it. How can we take it apart and put it back together so that it is better than it was. That is at the heart of what we are doing and will continue to do.

Over the past two years we returned to in-person events, two conferences, a dinner meeting in New Haven, and other get togethers. Each time we met people commented on how good it was to finally meet in person again. We missed the comradery, and though Zoom and Teams made it possible to keep our practice and CCND viable, it could never be a substitute for our in-person meetings and networking afterwards.

One of the goals of taking on the presidency of an organization is to leave it in a better state than it came to you. I started my term at the tail end of an epidemic. Our immediate past president, Jennifer Champagne, had done a remarkable job keeping CCND on track through a time when everything was literally shutdown. As the world adjusted to an in-person life again, CCND was able, because of Jen’s efforts, to pick up where we left off and make its mark in the legal community through trainings, monthly meetings and outstanding presentations at the law school.

Due to our extraordinary success over the past two years, I am please to be able give our President-elect, Rosemarie Ferrante an organization that is thriving and has the wherewithal to expand CCND’s message to a larger audience. It will be no surprise to those who read this newsletter that CCND finds itself in this position because of Rosemarie. She has taken the initiative to organize and modernize CCND in many ways. Her support and unrelenting efforts to improve the quality of our organization will serve us well in the years to come.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that our Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2024. This year our program will include a Case Law Update by Attorney David McGrath. And as is our custom, we will be introducing and welcoming our new officers. I invite you to enjoy yet another in-person event.

There are too many people to thank – but I truly appreciated the support and effort of you all. Enjoy your summer.

Michael K. Conway
President, Connecticut Council for Non- Adversarial Divorce



Congratulations!



**CCND's 40 Hour Family & Divorce
Mediation training has been verified by
APFM, the Academy of Professional
Family Mediators!**

**Thank you Eva DeFranco and Louise Zito
for your commitment to offering an
unparalleled training,
*well deserved!***

WATCH VIDEO



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RECENT GRADUATES OF CCND TRAININGS

Congratulations!

Collaborative Divorce Trainees

WILLIAM BUMPUS
LEAH COBEAN
TATIANA DADYKINA
AMANDA FELDMAN
SENJA FOSTER
ZACH MASON
STEFANIE OLIVIERI
MEGHAN PARDI
SAMANTHA POWERS
JOANNE REINHARDT
LISA ROBINSON
MARISA ROTHSTEIN
CHERYL SIROTTA
LINDSAY WARD

Family & Divorce Mediation Trainees

WILLIAM BUMPUS
STACEY CASPARIUS
VICTOR CAVALLO
RUTH DWYER
CANDACE FAY
SENJA FOSTER
BETH KARASSIK
BONNIE LUFT
MICHELLE MCGUIRE
PAMELA MIRANTE
NILDA NEGRON-TORRES
STEFANIE OLIVIERI



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CCND 2024 CONFERENCE



On May 31, CCND hosted a fantastic event featuring a series of insightful presentations and discussions aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of professionals in conflict resolution and related fields.

The event began at 9 am with a welcome address by CCND President Michael Conway. The first session, led by Dr. Deb Gilman, focused on "Creating a Listening Atmosphere: Making the Intangible Tangible," highlighting the importance of fostering environments where disputants feel heard and supported.

Following this, Lili Vasileff delivered a presentation on "How Financial Innovation Is Impacting Divorce: For Better or Worse," discussing the dual nature of financial innovations and their implications for divorce proceedings.

After a lunch break, the event continued with a live presentation by Susan Guthrie, joined virtually by Woody Mosten and David Hoffman, titled "Bridging Foundations with Innovation: A Dialogue with Pioneers." This session explored decades of pioneering work and recent contributions to mediation and collaborative practice.

The day concluded with Susan Guthrie's session on "5 Ways to Ethically and Professionally Incorporate AI into Your Practice," which provided practical strategies for integrating AI into professional practices while maintaining ethical standards.

The event wrapped up with a networking session from 3:25 to 4:00 pm, allowing attendees to connect and discuss the day's insights.

Thank you to the Committee: Deborah Noonan, Rosemarie Ferrante, Beth Karassik, Nicole Bikakis, Robert Horwitz and of course to our Executive Director, Amy Stone!!

Thank you to all who attended!



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THANK YOU TO OUR ESTEEMED SPEAKERS!



Lili Vasileff



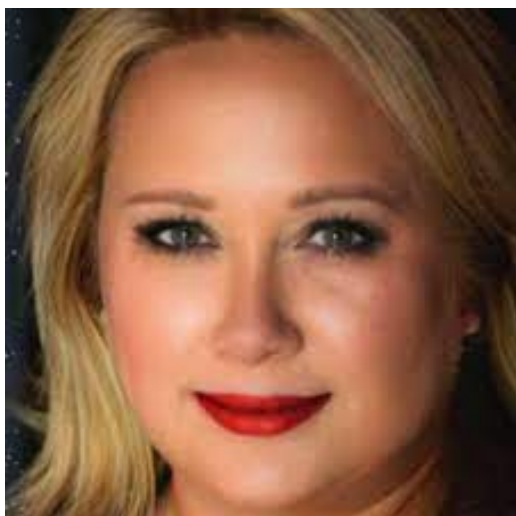
Forrest
"Woody"
Mosten



Susan Guthrie



David Hoffman



Deborah Gilman



Dr. Deborah Gilman: Creating a Listening Environment

Dr. Deborah Gilman emphasizes the significance of enhancing listening skills through understanding various listening styles and their impacts on communication. Her presentation offered tool to create a supportive environment that fosters effective listening, providing practical exercises and insights for improvement.

Understanding different listening styles is crucial. Relational listening emphasizes empathy and understanding others' feelings, while analytical listening focuses on evaluating the full message before forming a judgment. Task-oriented listening is concerned with efficiency and time management in communication, and critical listening involves evaluating the credibility and logical consistency of the message.

Interpreting and evaluating are key components of effective listening. Interpreting combines visual and auditory information to understand context and meaning, requiring the identification of main points, use of contextual clues, and awareness of biases and past experiences. Evaluating involves making judgments about the credibility, completeness, and worth of the information, encouraging critical thinking and proactive communication.

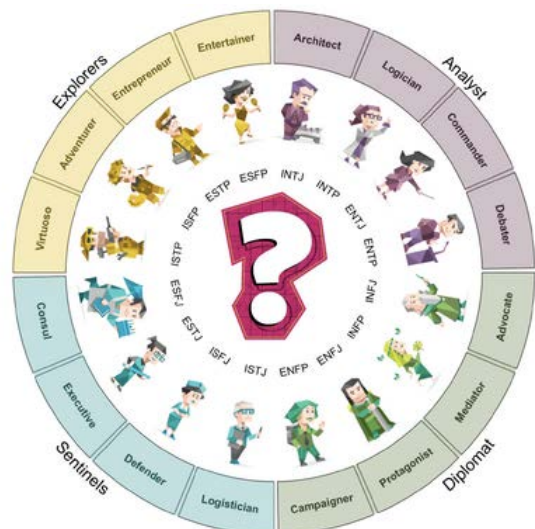
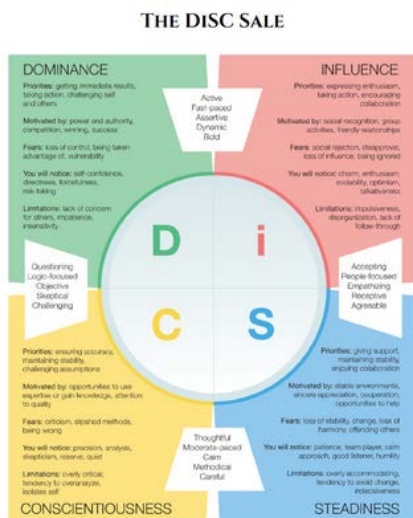
Working memory is essential for retaining and processing information in high cognitive demand situations, aiding in better recall and application of information. Additionally, understanding personality types through the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) can lead to more balanced and empathetic communication. Extroverts and introverts have different listening strengths and challenges, which can be managed to improve overall communication effectiveness.

Practical tips for improving listening skills include paying attention to turn-taking signals to maintain conversational flow, avoiding interruptions to ensure information is fully received and processed, using contextual clues to discern additional meaning, and being aware of relational, cultural, and situational contexts influencing communication.

For divorce professionals, listening is a key skill. Effective listening helps in understanding clients' needs, managing conflicts, and providing appropriate support and guidance during emotionally charged situations. By enhancing their listening abilities, divorce professionals can better navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and facilitate more effective communication between parties.

[Take the Myers Brigg Personality Test here:](#)

[Take the DISC listening Personality Test here:](#)



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Lili Vasileff, Financial Innovation in Divorce

Lili Vasileff's enlightening presentation explored the impact of financial innovation on the divorce process. Financial innovation, which involves creating new financial products, services, markets, or processes, is categorized into technological innovation, product innovation, process innovation, and business model innovation. The presentation emphasized the significant role of artificial intelligence (AI) in driving fintech innovations, highlighting examples such as PayPal, Funding Circle, and WeChat.

Key Highlights from Lili Vasileff's Presentation:

1. Technological Advancements in Services:

- **Robo-Advisors vs. Financial Advisors:** Lili explained the distinctions between automated, algorithm-driven financial advisory services and traditional human financial advisors. She emphasized how these innovations have altered client behavior, sometimes leading to feeling overwhelmed, confused and frustrated due to the myriad of available options, hidden charges, misleading sales.
- **Mobile Apps:** She discussed popular financial apps like Funding Circle, WeChat, PayPal, and Zelle, illustrating their impact on how individuals manage their finances and underscoring both their positive aspects and potential risks, including privacy issues and the dark web. Consumer adoption and use of fintech is second only to the use of the internet!

2. Technological Advancements in Products:

- **Artificial Intelligence:**
- Lili delved into the capabilities of generative AI software, highlighting its benefits such as increased speed, accuracy, creativity and accessibility.
- **Complex Assets & Digital Currencies:** She also covered the emergence of complex assets, such as digital currencies, valuation and liquidity are challenging to property division.
- **Tracking Digital Assets:** The presentation noted the importance of tracking digital assets in the context of divorce, an area that has grown in complexity with technological advancements.

3. Case Studies:

- Lili used five real-world case studies to illustrate the good, bad, and ugly aspects of these financial innovations. These examples helped underscore the practical implications of these changes and their effects on clients undergoing divorce. She stressed new frontiers for divorce professionals to learn, adapt and harness fintech tools.

4. Behavioral Impact on Clients:

- She observed that financial innovations have significantly altered client behavior, often ranging from impulsivity and dependence on fintech to paralysis in using it. The presentation underscored the need for financial planners to guide clients through these changes effectively.



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Our moderator and friend, Susan Guthrie was physically present in the room while Woody Mosten and David Hoffman joined via zoom from opposite ends of the country (Woody in California and David in Boston.) Despite their physical unavailability, there was a spontaneity about the way Susan moderated the discussion and their comments flowed with a casual, conversational tone. In response to Susan’s first question about his interest in “unbundled” legal services, Woody described his earliest experiences as a lawyer, some of which seemed like “news” to Susan notwithstanding her longstanding partnership with him in the Mosten/Guthrie Training Institute. Those exchanges further enhanced the spontaneity of this presentation. Similarly, the occasional banter between David and Woody, both of whom are self-described close friends and colleagues, served to invite everyone in attendance into their mutually respectful professional and personal relationship.

Describing his training and ongoing interest in Internal Family Systems (IFS), David noted how this process does not “pathologize” people in the way that the Diagnostic And Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) tends to do. This topic formed a context for discussing how he incorporates IFS into his practice and how he also relies upon his IFS training to manage himself as a Mediator and Collaborative Lawyer. Woody also briefly touched upon the Japanese concept of “kaizen” which is a principle that connotes constant, steady, continuous improvement as a reminder that we can all constantly improve ourselves and our practices.

Clearly, both of these gentlemen are well established, widely recognized experts in the field of non-adversarial conflict resolution. In addition to his practice with the Boston Law Collaborative, for many years David has taught courses at Harvard Law School in: mediation, legal profession/collaborative law; and diversity in dispute resolution. Likewise, Woody created and for many years taught a course at UCLA called “lawyers as peacemakers” and he continues to train thousands of professionals while maintaining an active professional practice. Both believe strongly that, as practitioners we should share generously the “wealth” of our knowledge, insights and ideas with each other. At one point, Woody quipped that we should “bury the copyright symbol!”

Without a doubt, both of these extraordinary teachers, practitioners and colleagues shared very openly and generously their knowledge and insights with everyone in attendance and their valuable contributions to the conference were thoroughly appreciated.



Susan Guthrie's presentation, "5 Ways to Ethically and Professionally Incorporate AI Into Your Practice," discussed the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in family law practice. She shared the current relevance of AI as it is increasingly essential in professional practice, with experts predicting that those who use AI will outperform those who don't. AI can enhance productivity, profitability, and client satisfaction.

Susan shared the latest advancements in AI and how these can support family law practices. This includes understanding the implications of AI on the profession and gaining insights into practical uses of AI tools.

Susan shared how evolving client expectations necessitate continuous learning, and shared the ethical and professional challenges posed by AI, such as regulatory compliance, data security, bias, and the impact on human judgment.

Susan introduced us to the ASPEN protocol (Awareness, Strategies, Preparation, Notice, Regulation) to help integrate any technology ethically into practice. She demonstrated how AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude can aid in developing strategies, creating practice protocols, and ensuring transparency.

Practical uses of AI in family law are detailed, including professional development, administrative tasks, client support, marketing, and in-session support. Susan stressed the importance of human oversight in using these tools.

The key takeaway was the importance of ongoing education and practice to maintain technological competence and ethical standards in AI use.

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Divorce with Respect Week 2022: Recorded Events



Kick off! Divorce with Respect week began with CCND President Jennifer Luse Champagne and CCND Board Member Deborah Noonan join Susan Guthrie, former CT attorney and host of the well-known Divorce and Beyond podcast to discuss what it means to divorce respectfully, how CCND and its members are committed to non-adversarial divorce and an overview of the week's event.



Connecticut Collaborative Divorce Group (CCDG) Zoom Webinar
During this information session, participants will have had the opportunity to hear about the collaborative process and ask questions of the professionals. Presenters: Yvonne Shoff, Katie Bissonnette, Traci Cipriano, Elaine Ducharme, and Brenda Larkin.



Collaborative Divorce of CT (CDCT) Comcast Live
This discussion focuses on college education and how it can be best addressed within the collaborative process. Presenters: Bob Opatzner, Sophie Koven, Vicki Volper, and Patricia Carrera.

We've updated our website! See our collection of videos- use them to educate your clients about non-adversarial divorce options!



HAVE NEWS?

Hosting an event? Writing an article?
Please share your news, so we can highlight you!



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Notes from the Board

Michelle Adelman, M.S.Ed



When I took my initial mediation training many years ago, I knew it was something that I was very interested in, but as a therapist, I also knew that it was something I would only feel comfortable doing with an attorney and/or a financial specialist. Many years later, when I read about and received training in Collaborative Practice, I was sure that I had discovered the perfect way that I could take my training and experience, and be a part of a team where everyone brought their individual expertise to the table. This felt like home- and this is how being a part of CCND feels- learning, collaborating, and engaging with other like-minded professionals who are all dedicated to supporting and strengthening families at a time when they are so vulnerable.

I joined the membership committee, and very much enjoyed reaching out and welcoming new members, as well as speaking with other professionals in CT, and encouraging them to consider joining CCND. When I began coordinating the Mentor Program, I was eager to let members know about the opportunities we have by receiving invaluable guidance from the very experienced members of our organization. I was also fortunate to work closely with Jen Champagne and Rosemarie Ferrante to create a training for CCND that focused on and reminds us all about why we do this work: so that the transitions these families go through have the smallest negative footprint on the children.

When I was approached to be a part of the CCND Board, I felt honored and excited, and as Secretary, I stay connected to the details of decision-making as they are unfolding. I am consistently amazed by the hard-working members of the Board who volunteer an immense amount of time and energy in an effort to bring the most updated and relevant information to ADR professionals throughout CT, and provide outreach and education to the families in CT.

Without question, the best part of being a part of the CCND Board is the connection with others who have become not only trusted colleagues as we traverse our complex work, but also friends, with whom there are shared sensibilities, and an unspoken understanding of what matters for our clients and for ourselves- our families.



Time to Update YOUR PROFILE



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CONFERENCE PHOTOS



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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

We are thrilled to unveil a jam-packed schedule of events designed to foster collaboration, enhance skills, and deepen our understanding of mediation, collaborative practice, and financial matters in divorce.

Special Training and Series

Louise Zito's 2-part series begins – "In Whose Best Interest or When to Call It Quits 3.0"

October 16 & November 13, 12 pm- 2 pm

This insightful series on handling difficult conversations about terminating or withdrawing from mediation and collaborative cases

Introductory Interdisciplinary Collaborative Training

November 7-12, specific times on website soon!

40-Hour Family Mediation Training

February 19-28, specific times on website soon!

In February, dive deep into family mediation with this comprehensive training led by Eva DeFranco and Louise Zito.

In-Person Dinner Series

November 7

Enjoy in-person networking and learning.

Join us for dinner with Dr. Abby G. Cole, where she'll present her research on collaborative cases.



Thank you to Syd Horowitz!
Syd shared his expertise at our
Spring Dinner meeting.

Self Awareness for Divorce Professionals

highlighted the need for divorce professionals to find and address our own strengths and weaknesses, to be aware of our attitudes and the behaviors resulting from them, including unconscious and unintentional biases.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



Annual Meeting
September 19, 2024
Dinner Meeting
Location TBD
David Griffin, JD
presenting
Family Law
Case Law Update

Monthly Member Only Events:

July 9, 2024 12 pm - 1 pm
Mediator Meet Up

August 13, 2024 12 pm- 1 pm
Collaborate & Connect

September 10, 2024 12 pm - 1 pm
CDFA Meet Up

October 8, 2024 12 pm - 1 pm
Mediator Meet Up

November 12, 2024 12 pm - 1 pm
Collaborate & Connect

and so on...



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MEMBERS!
**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING A
COMMITTEE?**
PLEASE REACH OUT!
PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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