

CONFLICT & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Respecting Autonomy

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

- Fisher, R., & Shapiro, D. (2005). Respect Autonomy. In *Beyond Reason: Using Emotions as You Negotiate* (pp. 72–93). New York: Viking Penguin.

Questions

1. What do Fisher and Shapiro mean by “autonomy”? What does it mean to respect the autonomy of another person?
2. Fisher and Shapiro claim that you can use a lack of decision-making authority to actually increase your autonomy. How is that possible?
3. Why does respecting the autonomy of others during conflict resolution involve the process of negotiation rather than its substance? What recommendations do Fisher and Shapiro give for respecting autonomy, especially where there are “invisible” stakeholders involved? How is the I-C-N “bucket” system supposed to help with all this?
4. Putting all this together, why does respecting the autonomy of the other party encourage wise agreement?