Clarity and Transparency
Establish clear rules, ground rules, and expectations. Define role, process, and rationale/reasons as appropriate.

Objectivity/Neutrality
Separate people from the problem. Make observations and ask questions without judgement and evaluation. Build trust and create safe space for honesty and information-sharing. Model best practices. Consider requesting the assistance of a trained neutral.

Emotional Acknowledgment and Listening
Use active listening (open-ended and clarifying questions, summarizing, reframing, silence, etc.), EAR (empathy, attention, and respect) statements, affect labeling to practice empathy, build rapport, and help others feel heard and understood. Connect feelings to unmet needs as appropriate. Pay attention to nonverbs (tone, facial expressions, body language, volume, etc.).

Restorative Dialogue
Focus on harms, impacts, and needs through authentic sharing and uninterrupted listening. Utilize circles and scripted conferences to address individual and community/group perspectives. Using experienced and trained facilitator(s) is recommended.
Mediation and Interest-Based Problem-Solving (Private, informal, voluntary)

Gather information neutrally and help parties reach resolution. Use active listening (open-ended and clarifying questions, summarizing, reframing, silence, etc.) to move from positions/demands to a discovery of interests and needs. Highlight and reflect back shared interests. Create open and judgment free brainstorming sessions to explore options and eventually solutions. Using an experienced and trained mediator is recommended.

Planning/Prep/Follow up

Every situation and set of individuals is different and unique. Take the time to make a plan prior to speaking with others. Brainstorm timing, setting, seating, questions, participants, and any agenda for the conversation or meeting. Speak with all involved to gather every angle and perspective. Promote integrity with reliable follow through on action items. Follow up with parties to check-in and continue a conversation of what works well and what could work better.

Consultation and Resources

Don’t forget to reach out to any of the resource offices (CMDR, EAP, SWS, etc.) to meet different and overlapping needs. We are here to consult and assist in any way we can.