

# Why a fourth mediation model: opportunities and integration of the insight mediation model

## Por qué un cuarto modelo de mediación: oportunidades e integración del modelo de mediación insight

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**Abstract:** The Insight Mediation Model is here to stay. Cheryl Picard and Kenneth Melchin's initial proposal of 2008, implemented and enriched by Picard (2016) herself, and by authors Jamie Price and Megan Price, inter alia, not only integrates many of the assumptions of the three classic mediation models (Interest-Based Model, Transformative Mediation and Narrative Models), but also provides an enriching very profound view of how conflicts are caused and how to solve them through mediation. In this paper, we will present the three classic models and the links and contributions of the Insight Mediation Model for us to show the richness of some of its concepts and tools (Direct and Inverse Insights, Cares, Threat-to-Cares, Defensive Narrative and Threat Narratives, Linking and Delinking, inter alia) which are already part of the Mediation theory and practice, as befit what we consider deserves to be counted as the fourth pillar in Mediation.

**Resumen:** El modelo de mediación insight viene para quedarse. La propuesta inicial de Cheryl Picard y Kenneth Melchin de 2008, implementada y enriquecida por la propia Picard (2016) y por autores como Jamie Price o Megan Price, entre otros, no sólo integra muchas de las enseñanzas de los tres modelos clásicos en mediación (el modelo basado en interés, la mediación transformativa y los modelos narrativos), sino que aporta una visión muy enriquecedora y profunda de cómo se producen los conflictos y cómo superarlos a través de la mediación. Recorreremos, a través de esos tres modelos clásicos, las conexiones y aportaciones propias de este modelo de mediación insight, para mostrar la riqueza de ciertos conceptos y herramientas propios (insights directos e inversos, lo que importa, amenazas a lo que importa, narrativas defensivas y narrativas de amenaza, vinculación y desvinculación, entre otros) que forman ya parte de la teoría y práctica mediadora, como corresponde al que consideramos ya con buena razón de ser el cuarto modelo-pilar de la mediación.

**Keywords:** Insight Mediation, Interest-Based Mediation, Transformative Mediation, Narrative Mediation, Consciousness.

**Palabras Clave:** mediación insight, mediación basada en intereses, mediación transformativa, mediación narrativa, conciencia.

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Even if there are several intervention proposals for the mediation practice, three models are traditionally considered as those that are really grounded: the so-called Harvard or Interest-based Model (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011), the Transformative Model (Bush & Folger, 1996; Folger, Bush, & Della Noce, 2016) and the Narrative Model (Cobb, 1994, 1997, 2013; Soares, 1996; Winslade & Monk, 2000, 2008, 2013). These three models focus on different relatable, although not linked, aspects of conflict; yet no significant attempt has been achieved to date to integrate them.

The Insight Mediation Model, however, does not intend to carry out such integration; in fact, it responds to many questions that have not been considered by the other three models. However, it is obvious that Cheryl Picard, the model's author, knows and has worked with the three traditional models throughout her many years of experience as a mediator, and it is also clear that for her proposal with Kenneth Melchin (Melchin & Picard, 2008) or the one she offers later on her own (Picard, 2016), she has taken into account the contributions provided by the three models. Insight Mediation's proposal is not merely adding ingredients, but rather deepening, first by Picard and Melchin, and later by other authors such as Jamie Price, Andrea Bartoli, Marnie Jull and Megan Price, how people live conflict and what elements should be taken into account, such as cares, threat-to-cares, direct and inverse insights.

### Cares: Overcoming the Concept of Interest

The concept of interest is well grounded in our practice, especially since the creation of the Harvard Model mentioned above. This model proposes to leave positions aside to focus on the underlying interests. But, what does the concept of interest mean?

Interest-based negotiation considers that a rational decision is based on cost/benefit criteria, therefore one is most inclined to choose the best, most rational options possible. Along the same line, economist and social scientist Mancur Olson believes that a rational choice is the one that determines the individual action to whether join a specific proposal or not (Cardoso, 2001; Olson, 1992). This model responds, therefore, to the concept of the interest of participants based on the idea that people can easily access the knowledge of their own interests and that the latter are objective. This supposes defending the rationality of human decisions.

Caring for these interests can be done from a confrontational approach (by imposing one's interest on the interest of others), or, as underpinned by this model, by promoting collaboration: seeking common interests and solutions that

satisfy both parties (Deutsch, 1949a, 1949b). If the goal in the field of conflict resolution is to move from confrontation to collaboration, this can be done by leading people to seek rational solutions. To do this, in lieu of focusing on confrontational positions the classic authors of the Harvard Model (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011) propose, following Morton Deutsch, to resort to interests based on the idea that from them the parties will be able to open and collaboratively seek solutions that satisfy both of them: moving from «win-lose» to «win-win», as we all know, forgetting that in many conflicts we are ready to lose as long as our enemy does not win.

One of the authors that focused more on explaining what interests mean is Christopher Moore. When studying this author we can see an evolution in his concept of interests: if in the first version (1986) Moore defines interests as the «specific conditions (or advantages) that one of the parties must obtain to reach an acceptable settlement» (1995, p.77)<sup>1</sup>, in the last version he proposes that «interests are desires, concerns, or wishes that people in dispute want to have addressed and satisfied». We can also see an evolution in his view, as he proposes three types of interests in the first edition, and interests and needs in the last one (2014, p.128), even if he does not differentiate them clearly. These three types are: a) substantive needs and/or interests, that refer to tangible goods and objects that are usually the concrete matters the parties want to discuss; b) procedural needs and/or interests, related to how and in what way they want to solve their differences; and c) the so-called psychological/relationship needs and/or interests that «a negotiator experiences during negotiations and as a result of them» (Moore, 1995, p.78), where the author mainly underlines the need to keep a good social image in front of others and good self-esteem. This proposal seems to go beyond the idea of interest based exclusively on the rationalist view of costs/benefits, even if it is undeniable that the use of the adjective «substantive» shows the inclination to attend to the appropriate distribution of goods versus other elements that are at stake in the conflict.

Robert Fisher –possibly the most significant author of the Interest-based Model– and psychologist Daniel Shapiro start to emphasize other more psychological elements in this model. They refer to five core expectations or concerns (appreciation, affiliation, autonomy, status, and role) that occur in our social interactions and significantly in conflict situations (Fisher & Shapiro, 2005). These authors sustain that these core concerns, although often silenced, are present in every negotiation, and that they are as real and important as tangible interests; not attending to them jeopardize the

<sup>1</sup> The English translation of this text was done by the translator, as the original quotation indicated by the author was in Spanish who did not have the English version.

entire conflict resolution process. They also indicate they are related to each person's life background and because of that they cannot be addressed based on rationality. We could then say that they are the consequence of our own «burdens»: the «backpacks» we all carry and fill with our experiences, mistakes, etc., that shape our sometimes disproportionate defensive responses if we try to judge them based on the specific experience or conflict we are assessing.

Shapiro goes even beyond in his last and fundamental work «Negotiating the Nonnegotiable» (2017), as he includes the emotional interests in the economic and rational ones: «emotions alert you to unmet psychological needs»(Ibid., p.10); and, especially in this piece, he adds the identity ones: «who you are, what you hold as important, and how you conceive of meaning in your life. In other words, [an emotional charged conflict] threatens you»(Ibid., p.11).

Shapiro agrees with Melchin and Picard about the importance of the emotional element:

*«... feelings play a dramatic role in guiding our relations with others in conflicts. Until we engage explicitly in understanding these feelings and the cares and threats that lie behind them, we will not know what is driving our conflicts» (Melchin and Picard, 2008, p.23).*

The classic stance of Plato referring to the black and white horses that put rationality above emotionality has been overcome by neuroscience, among other disciplines (Ariely, 2012; Eagleman, 2013; Gazzaniga, 2011; Haidt, 2012; Lieberman, 2013; Mlodinow, 2013; Ramachandran, 2012; Tomasello, 2010; Waal, 2011), especially since the outstanding research conducted by Antonio Damasio (2007, 2012), whose main conclusions are that what we call cost-benefit rational decision draws and lives on the indispensable role of emotions, and that when these fail to guide us, as is the case in certain patients with neurological damages, people get blocked for decision-making. Interest is not only rational; is very often very emotional.

Even if we accept this idea, the concept of interest does not entirely reflect the guide towards where the parties' attention should be focused in mediation. The aforementioned authors show how other human motivations that are not very economic go far beyond our interests as a guide of our behavior: we are often able to prioritize others even if this harms us from our own rational interest point of view. This approach can also be found in conflict resolution. The evolution we can see from Harvard's initial proposals to those presented later by Moore and also Fisher and Shapiro, and more recently the latter, refer to something more than interests themselves.

It is the Transformative School of Mediation that gives emotional aspects a higher role in considering the way they

influence conflict. Lederach, for instance, will speak about the need to go more in depth on the true concerns and needs of people in order to solve conflict, going beyond the concept of interest; in this regard, he urges us to use in many occasions what he defines as the «epicenter» of the conflict if we really want to sort it out (Lederach, 2003), which lays at a relational level for this author. He also states that it is important to differentiate between the problem or issue to discuss, and the process that is the form in which the problem rises and develops until it becomes a conflict, related to what the parties did to try to resolve it (Lederach, 1998). Bush and Folger (1996) focus their Transformative Mediation Model on this interaction and on the emotional states of weakness and self-absorption as those that generate and feed the conflict. Hence, the emotional statuses that go beyond interests and their interaction are included as central elements of Transformative Mediation, something we can also find in Insight Mediation.

*«In most conflicts, what ground and sustain the dispute are not the explicit issues that focus our attention, but the underlying interests: the concerns, values, fears, and human needs that often go unnamed and unacknowledged» (Melchin & Picard, 2008, p.36).*

This is the reason we positively value that Insight Mediation uses the term «cares». The term goes beyond the concept of interest. It encompasses what is important for people, what concerns them, so it goes far beyond the concept of worrying. It is linked to values not in the moral sense of what is and is not right or wrong, which refers to social arrangements; but rather in the sense that value is what each person values, his life priorities, his personal guide and directions. It is similar to the concept of value as personal guide we can find in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson, 2014; Wilson & Luciano, 2002), including, notwithstanding, the concept of identity that was traditionally incorporated in Narrative Models and more recently by Shapiro, or the concept of social image or the preferred image of oneself (how I want to be seen by myself and by others), a key aspect for Eron and Lund (1996). Therefore, the term cares is a large, appropriate concept that focuses more on persons than on the traditional concept of interest. It allows us to better understand the stubbornness and hardness of the positions in a conflict.

*«Cares include interests, needs, and desires, as well as the scores of ways in which we identify ourselves, our families, our professions, and our culture, including our religious, political, and social beliefs. For parties in conflict, they are at the root of what really matters and what needs to be protected» (Picard, 2016, p.17).*

### Threat-to-Cares: How do Weakness and Self-Absorption Emerge

Since the beginning, the Transformative Model (Bush & Folger, 1996; Folger, Bush, & Della Noce, 2016) was a little more complex than the Harvard Model in trying to understand the high emotional content that accompanies conflicts. Beyond the clash of interests, Transformative authors see how conflict itself generates weakness and self-absorption among the parties in a way that reinforces a kind of interaction in which each party closes down to the other. They have also studied in depth how the transformation occurs from weakness and self-absorption to strength and openness toward the other. We might argue that there has not been an attempt to explain how people get to these emotional states. What is it that generates weakness and self-absorption? What is it that activates a person to stand in a defensive position?

These might have been some of the questions that triggered Cheryl Picard's wish to go beyond the traditional models. For the Insight Mediation Model refers to the experience of threat people feel to what they care about (be it goods, relationships, their own social image, the values at stake, and so forth). It is because we experience something we care about as at stake, and because we interpret another's actions (or omissions) as an attack that we feel threatened, and we react to protect ourselves in either a more active (confrontation) or passive way (entrenchment). Picard claims that an objective experience is not necessary and, in fact, it is not often the case; for this reason it is necessary to assess without judging in order to generate understanding of the threat a person is defending against.

This threat concept is relevant, and other authors such as Casado and Pratt allude to it when explaining conflict as follows: «a conflict is an interaction between two or more people in which each one of them perceives the other as a threat to meet their goals or to satisfy their need» (2014, p.16). What is key is the subjective element, because without it, it is impossible to understand the reason for some positions and angry reactions in mediation, what Bush and Folger call self-absorption. As Melchin points out:

*«When threatened, our natural curiosity about the cares of others shuts down. Our focus is on defending from the perceived attack» (Melchin, in Picard, 2016, p.155).*

It is important to underscore the importance of the concept of threat as something that goes beyond the fear of loss: it is not only that I am afraid to lose something; but also that I (subjectively) attribute a cause to what I am afraid to lose: the other envisages to take it away from me. Hence, the importance given by the Insight Model to the need to

clarify and address this experience of threat, as often times it is not based on reality but rather on the defensive pattern acquired throughout our relational history that leads us to overreact in situations that do not require such an intense reaction.

Therefore, this proposal goes beyond the traditional «here and now» view of the conflict. We cannot understand the current conflict if we don't look at the previous conditions that influence it and the fears about what might occur if I don't protect myself. Not everything is conflict of interests or an actual threat against what is important to us. If that were true, how could we explain the abundance of irrationality in conflict? Many are the conflicts in which people and groups overact if we focus exclusively on what they pursue. Only by resorting to very intense emotional reactions, such as living out the need to defend ourselves, can we understand why certain resentments occur. When a person or a group feels that their own value is at stake, or when they feel that the threat is important, their entire defensive repertoire will be activated, often times to the very end.

Picard indicates that the threat is subjective and that often it is nothing but the interpretation that a threat exists that activates the parties, beyond the real circumstances. Hence, attending to this experience of a threat and putting it on the table facilitates the deconstruction of many of these interpretations.

*«To change the conflict situation, the parties need to identify and understand their threat experiences, defend responses, and patterns of interaction differently» (Picard, 2016, p.15).*

We give the person the chance to reveal what his fears are and, as a consequence of that, we also give the other party the chance, on the one hand, to understand why the former reacted as he did, and also to clarify his own intentions.

The dynamic proposed by the Insight Mediation Model is mostly similar to the Transformative Model in terms of the notion that conflict is cyclical: negative interactions feedback on each other and escalate. But Insight Mediation goes beyond as it identifies that threat is the basis for the emotional states that Transformative Mediation considers: weakness is the result of experiencing a threat, caused by the interpretation and assessment –sometimes in unconscious or automated way, as part of the pattern learned to assess context as safe or threatening– of this situation. At the same time, it is the engine of a self-absorbed defensive response against the other party who, facing this new situation, feels also threatened and compelled to defend himself. We can find two defense interaction patterns that feedback other.

## Hope, Values and Narratives: Approaching the Narrative Models

These interaction patterns of a defensive type are backed by «meaning perspectives», that are narratives acting as «unconscious rules by which we live our lives and how we think the others should live their lives» (Ibid., p.20). For the Insight Mediation Model, being able to acquire new meanings is paramount, as is for the Narrative Models, prior to the negotiation itself (seeking solutions phase and settling). The classic Harvard School step to «separate the people from the problem» is, for these two models, an extensive key work that requires, on the one hand, reviewing and enlarging how conflict and the other are seen. In order to do this, it is necessary to review the constructions of meaning that have been created throughout the conflict. And, on the other hand, it is necessary to pay attention to a new discourse and have renewed hope, without avoiding or denying the most adverse aspects. This is what Winslade and Monk define as double listening:

*«on the one hand, people are sitting there talking about things they are upset and angry about, that they find really painful, and yet on the other hand, they are sitting there with some implicit hope that this will make a difference. [...] Mediators can give this story of hope for something better a chance if they first of all hear this absent but implicit hope and then begin to inquire into the story that it is a part of.»* (2008, p.10)

This narrative of hope that we need to listen to amid the messages of despair and encourage so that it can be reinforced is key for Picard, to the extent that she considers it as an early phase of the intervention. Picard states:

*«asking about hopes, rather than issues, at the beginning of the mediation session is an attempt to move the parties away from their current defend patterns of communication»* (2016, p.73); an idea she shares with the narrative authors:

*«Rather than always beginning a mediation process by defining the problem, it is possible to ask people to artic-*

*ulate this sense of hope [...] Asking for people's hopes involves eliciting something bigger than personal desires. It calls forth a person's best self and her most generous and inclusive voice»* (Winslade & Monk, 2013, cap.3, pos.567-573)

Most narrative proposals center on the social and cultural aspects of the narratives that we accept as valid and assimilate as our own personal narratives. In our opinion, and we do not want to undermine them, attention has not been paid to how this introspection of narratives occurs individually; moreover, it has not been considered how we actively create and foster some narratives more than others from an individual or constructivist point of view. The weight of narratives in a conflict is heavy, as sufficiently shown by the classic authors of this model, Winslade and Monk or even Sara Cobb; however, it is important to highlight the role that the relational history of each person plays, regardless of and prior to this concrete interaction of the two conflicting parties at that time in order to understand both how parties are triggered by the behaviors, comments and omissions of the other, and the cognitive mechanisms that lead us to create and reinforce a conflict narrative that views the other as a threat.

Accordingly, Picard indicates that narratives «shape the way we interpret others and the positions we take in relation to others»(Ibid., p.20).Her approach is that, based on our relational history, we draw conclusions about what we can expect from others and take on an interaction style that has made us feel sure in the past or that has provided certain benefits. When facing new threatening situations or possibilities, these patterns or life positions are reactivated and urge us to act according to a learned interaction mechanism, regardless of the conditions and characteristics of the conflict at hand<sup>2</sup>. Facing the anguish that causes the feeling that we do not control our environment, we seek stories that provide us with a control sensation, and to do so we often use general conclusions: for example, if I conclude in a narrative that you are evil, this prevents me from trusting you again in the future and saves me from any renewed sense of disappointment. Hence, there is an important link between the conclusions of my narrative about you in particular or about others in gener-

<sup>2</sup> We can see an interesting relation between this Insight Model approach to narrative and the concepts that put on the table a tendency to emotionally assess the other using a recurrent, learned, emotional and distorted pattern that usually entails habitual concrete responses facing situations that are considered «conflictive» or threatening. This is the case of Thomas and Killman's learned conflict resolution styles -competing, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating and compromising- (1974), the concept of existential positions of Transactional Analysis (Berne, 1972), or the safety and satisfaction learned mechanisms proposed by the great author Karen Horney (1960). In fact, Horney's three negative interaction styles are quite close-compliant, withdrawn and aggressive -in terms of what I expect from and fear of the other (the generic other that will affect how I interpret the specific other with whom I have a conflict); together with the four Transactional Analysis existential assumptions (Sáez Alonso, 2011): «I'm ok, you are ok» (collaboration), «I'm ok, you are not ok» (confrontation or dominance), «I'm not ok, you are ok» (cession, complacency), «I'm not ok, you are not ok» (evasion, detachment); and with assumptions by Thomas and Killman (1974), that are classic ideas in the literature, as well as the desirable styles of collaboration (the ideal one) and commitment (even more interesting), she picks these three not very efficient styles to satisfactorily solve conflicts: competition, accommodation and avoidance.

al, and the behaviors I use to face this conflict, and generally, all interpersonal conflicts.

We can see the concept of narrative in both life positions and the learned interaction mechanisms. In both cases we unconsciously acquire or construct an idea about what to expect from others and how to act to protect ourselves, to be sure and achieve what we wish. What emerges are narratives of victimization, negative identity attribution or, at least, negative intentionality that we reinforce again and again through confirmation bias.

*«Over time individuals come to notice only those interactions that reinforce threat-based narratives [...] Conflicting parties' actions are linked to the way they interpret each other's intent. [...] The insight mediator's role thus focuses on discovering whether one's interpretations accurately reflect the other's intent.»* (Picard, 2016, p.22-23).

Megan Price (2017), for her part, thoroughly reviews the cognitive aspects at stake in a conflict situation, where it is shown how rationality, traditionally understood as an objective look at reality, is put into question by very frequent cognitive errors when a person is emotionally triggered in the face of an experience of a threat; cognitive errors such as «tunnel vision», «selective perception», «confirmation bias», «egocentrism», «attribution bias», «self-fulfilling prophecy», inter alia.

Jamie Price (2013) focuses on studying the patterned flow of human consciousness, which allows us not only to understand the questions that we spontaneously ask at each step of conscious thinking, but how we use our minds to get, at a cognitive level, to both a confrontational, defensive, closed response, as well as a transformed sense of openness.

Thus, these two authors respond to the need to understand the mind process, from a cognitive-constructivist point of view, by which the opinions and views of the conflict get radicalized, and the ways to facilitate a flow of conscious thinking that moves parties from an experience of threat to greater openness.

Moreover, the narratives built on the other in a general way will affect how we interpret the intentions of the specific other with whom we are in conflict. The mediator's intervention will seek an openness of the conflict narrative so that it can be seen that the learned pattern does not have to correspond to what is really happening in a current conflict situation. However, this requires one to detect, within the defensive narratives («constructed in ways that blame and judge others» (Ibid., p.25), the underlying threat narratives that will allow us to understand what is important and is at stake for a person. This will generally facilitate, on the one hand, being aware of the role of the past in the current con-

flict, what Picard calls «linking» (Ibid., p.140)-; and, on the other hand, ceasing to seek the answers to current situations in past patterns, what she calls, «delinking»(Ibid., p.141)-, and start searching for an answer to these new circumstances in unusual places. We thus touch upon the concepts of inverse and direct insights that are fundamental to the Insight model.

### Insight, Learning and Creativity

Casado and Prat (2007, p.18) state that «The human being is a smart switch automatically reacting to received impulses [...] Learning means automating new reactions that leverage the results we aimed at, and we evolve thanks to this power». In this connection, the Insight Mediation Model is put forward as a learning model, and the role of the mediator is more active than that of the transformative model: «Mediators play a role in this learning [...], facilitating disputant's own learning» (Melchin& Picard, 2008, p.9). «The goal of an insight mediator, then, is to engage the parties in a learning process that changes defend patterns of interaction» (Picard, 2016, p.15).

We tend to establish behavior patterns or learned habits that we automate, but our thinking patterns are also automated to the point to act in an unconscious way. Such patterns lead us eventually to assess concrete situations in a predetermined fashion, without questioning each new situation we face. As long as the pattern leads us to a satisfying conclusion, everything is ok; the problem arises, in turn, when the pattern leads time and again to an impasse. In this connection, remember the fable «Who Moved My Cheese?» (Johnson, 1999). One of the authors that studied this matter more in depth is British expert De Bono (1985, 2016), who states that human beings tend to be rigid, little inclined to novel thinking, and that to be able to find new solutions in conflict we need to use what he defines as «lateral thinking». In this regard, it is important to state that his approach is close to the proposals of the Insight Model.

Insight Mediation applies Lonergan's insight concept to a conscious, reflexive act of understanding one's actions and those of others. Even if the creators of the model refer to the work of Mezirow and Habermas on «the role of distortions, prejudices, and stereotypes in our meaning perspectives»(Melchin& Picard, 2008, p.19), we can see important similarities with Piaget's classic accommodation and assimilation assumptions: experiences are initially accommodated according to prior knowledge that determines their understanding. More in depth learning requires sometimes questioning what we take for granted in order to assimilate a new issue. Thus, the two kinds of insights the model refers to occur: direct insight that means finding an answer to the questions we ask ourselves; and inverse insight that is the moment where we become aware the pathway we took to reach a conclusion is mistaken, which is, therefore, a prereq-

usite to start seeking the solution in a place different than the usual one.

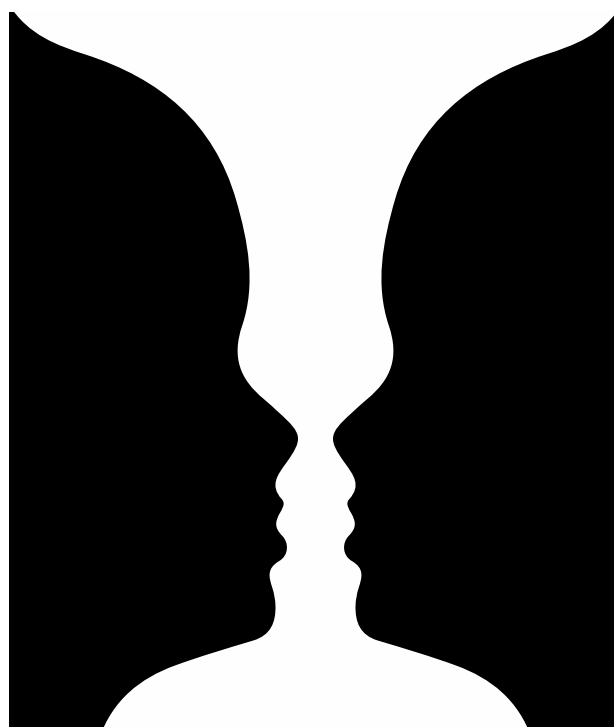
Our certainties, our values, our beliefs, our narratives are insights we have accepted as valid and have, therefore, determined our subsequent experiences; in many cases our insights are preconceptions; they become like new lenses to view the world outside, thereby shaping our experience: if my lenses are black, I see a blacker «reality».

If my usual tendency is to look at a picture, «our conflict's narrative», from a specific viewpoint, we need to see what it is that a person is not seeing in this picture, what the person is missing. This reminds us of the perception trap images, such as the famous Rubin Vase (see Figure 1): the person who initially sees the vase does not see the two faces; however, if we ask a person to look at the faces he/she will see them, and from that moment on he or she will see them more easily than before. Melchin and Picard say: «Once insights occur, they enter into our habitual pattern of experience to supply the materials for the next round of questions» (2008, p.58). Now that the person knows the faces are there; he or she can't stop seeing them. Something like that is what mediators try to do with those in mediation: asking a question that will allow them to see what they couldn't see before, so that, once this is seen, the picture will be changed forever.

We take these frameworks for granted and we focus on them, without looking further. Like a «gestalt», I can see the figure but I cannot see the background. According to Melchin and Picard, in order to open our view this we need first to be aware of the questions that are not yielding results to meet our needs, we need to realize that we are not looking in the right direction. This is the moment of inverse insights. Rather than helping us understand cause, inverse insights help us realize that we need to find the cause somewhere else: «This requires learning habits and skills, and un-learning dysfunctional habits, attitudes, ideologies, and assumptions» (Ibid., p. 47).

Hence, before direct insights we must retrace our steps with inverse insights. This is very much related to the traditional deconstruction of narratives in the Narrative Models, as explained in the following example: a question that often facilitates inverse insight in criminal conflicts is when we address the view the defendant has of the plaintiff. After the plaintiff presents a terrible image and the supposedly bad intentions of the defendant when the offence was reported («he did it to get money from me» is a sentence I have heard quite often as a mediator in criminal cases, and it is rarely true), we can ask the offender why he or she thinks the plaintiff wants and accepted to go through a mediation process to solve the matter amicably. This question puts him/her in a different place, it makes him/her see the other in a completely different way, and it breaks the consistency of his/her prior

Figure 1. Rubin's Vase



discourse. If we do this in such a way that he or she does not feel challenged (because if he/she feels questioned, the important thing is to «invent» something so that he/she will try to give the narrative consistency again), he/she will perhaps realize that the explanation about the other's intentions is not necessarily correct, and that another pathway should be explored (inverse insight). He/she has not been able to clarify the cause of the other's behavior yet, but he/she has come to the realization that the bad intention he or she assumed was not valid. It is now when we can start asking another kind of questions aimed at establishing a new insight, a direct insight, that will lead the person to a possible explanation that, once accepted, will make them see the other not from the initial bad intention viewpoint, but something more comprehensive and open.

### Emotion and Values in Insight Mediation

Emotions play a small role in the narrative models and are often considered as a consequence of narratives. This is not the case for many authors (Randolph, 2016; Strasser & Randolph, 2004) who highlight and advocate not only the main role they play in conflict but also the role they play to point to the parties' values:

*«Emotions are a most reliable and informative means of disclosing our values. [...] The emotions are the «royal road» to their worldview -where the worldview consists*

*of their value, beliefs and assumptions about themselves, about others and about the world in general.»* (Randolph, 2016, p. 49)

This assumption is shared by insight mediation that presupposes that «feelings point to values» (Picard, 2016, p.44), on the same line as social psychologist Jonathan Haidt explains in his masterpiece «The Righteous Mind» (2012). Thus, when defining what he considers as the first principle of moral psychology –intuitions come first, strategic reasoning second– says Haidt:

*«Moral intuitions arise automatically and almost instantaneously, long before moral reasoning has a chance to get started, and those first intuitions tend to drive our later reasoning.»* (p.xx)

Picard, on her part, proposes a three level hierarchical system for values that help us to understand where a real clash occurs in the conflict:

- The first level, the most individualistic one, refers to personal wishes (goals, needs and interests), and a clash might occur as one's personal wishes collide with another's.
- The second level, which can act as a counterweight to the first one, focuses on the normative parameters of the relational interactions, i.e., our internal obligation towards others. At this second level we might define how we want our relations to be. The role of these relations is equivalent to what authors of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes, Strosahl and Wilson, 2014) grant to values: being a personal life guide. If, for example, we opt not to impose our interests, it is because our social values help us to prioritize coexistence over our more personal wishes.
- The third level of values proposed by Picard includes the statements with which we judge others, based on what we consider right or wrong. The third level coincides with the moral framework concept presented by narrative authors (Sluzki, 2006; Cobb, 1994, 2013), as the one people use as a platform to legitimize their own position and delegitimize the other. This is why Picard warns about the need to pay attention to this third level of values, as it is the one that generates more defensive responses when someone feels somehow «threatened».

Being open to work with values in mediation is still at the onset, but the fact of having experienced relevant voices such as Picard, or Shapiro, Strasser and Randolph mentioned before, to create an important space to discuss this topic points toward new interesting ways to work with conflicts.

## Conclusions

The aim of this article is not to review all the contributions of the Insight model, many of which can be accessed in this issue of Revista de Mediación, thanks to the most important authors of the model, but to go through its contributions with regards to those of the three classic models. As explained in this article, we believe that the Insight Model has made important contributions, both in how it addresses conflict and in the more practical contributions for mediation, and to advocate and support that this model should be considered as the fourth fundamental model for mediation, as presented by Salvador Garrido in an article also published in this issue. This model takes into consideration all the proposals of the classic models and it allows us to understand them from a point of view that, in our opinion, goes beyond their assumptions.

We do not want to state that this model is the definitive one or the only one. Human knowledge is based on staggered knowledge: yesterday's models facilitate today's models and these will be, in turn, the steps future models will be based on and outdo. Possibly, the Insight Mediation Model would not exist without the other three classic benchmarks, but we cannot undermine the many contributions this fourth model proposes if we want, in fact, to move forward to understand conflicts and seek ways to settle them.

For this reason, if figures such as Fisher, Ury, Patton, Moore, Shapiro, Lederach, Bush, Folger, Della Noce, Cobb, Winslade, Monk and Soares, inter alia, are fundamental references to understand mediation and conflict resolution today, we must add Cheryl Picard, Kenneth Melchin, Jamie Price and Megan Price, inter alia, to the list as they have clearly shown how much the Insight Mediation model has to offer to understanding conflicts and finding active and positive solutions to them.

Still, we face a rather young model that opens new doors and reinforces already grounded ideas through a new and more inclusive look; it must, however, respond to fact checks to test the model. Also, it invites us to continue studying these «new doors». For example, concepts such as «threat-to-cares», «feelings point to values» or the hierarchical value system seem to be promising proposals that require in depth study about the different triggers that are reacted to as threats. In this connection, we propose to bear in mind, inter alia, Fisher & Shapiro's five core concerns –appreciation, affiliation, autonomy, status, and role– (2005), and especially Haidt's six moral foundations –care, fairness, loyalty, authority, sanctity and liberty– (2012 chapters 7 and 8), as a way to go beyond the exclusive attention to rational and «substantive» interests, and to better understand what pillars of one party are triggered as a result of the actions, comments or omissions of the other party, what generates in the latter a feeling of threat to what he or she cares about.



The more we know and understand of what triggers people in conflict, the more we will be able to respond effectively as practitioners.

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