

BRIEF NOTES

February 2018

Certification ♦ Education ♦ Networking ♦ Leadership



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2017-2018**

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ADVERTISE WITH US!

Brief Notes is distributed throughout the Kitsap Peninsula and is pleased to offer space for advertising. Current rates are:

Full Page	\$100.00
Half Page	\$ 50.00
Quarter Page	\$ 25.00
Business Card	\$ 10.00

If you are interested in advertising, please contact Mary Carter for further information.

NALS OF KITSAP COUNTY MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

Are you part of legal community support staff seeking a venue for furthering your legal education? Do you want to be part of a legal association that offers networking with other legal professionals, as well as job support? Does spending one evening a month with other individuals pursuing the same goals appeal to you?!

If so, then this is **THE PLACE** for you.

We invite you to join us for our
March Membership Meeting at the
Family Pancake House (East Bremerton)
Tuesday, March 13 @ 6:00 pm

If, afterward, you make the decision to become a member of NALS, our chapter will pay \$45 toward your 2018 dues*.

Interested? Contact Terre Skelly (NALs of Kitsap Chapter President) at terre@rsulaw.com for more information!

*Dues are assessed Annually and are processed by NALS...the Association of Legal Professions (nals.org)..Check out the website for additional information regarding benefits o membership!

Terre Skelly, Kitsap Chapter President

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INFORMATIONAL LINK TO WASHINGTON STATE SICK LEAVE

<https://washingtonsickleave.com/employees> is the link to the new Washington State Sick Leave law. This information was presented at the last CLE, but it was SO MUCH INFO; that I was worried that I might miscommunicate some of the information. This is printed here so that those who are interested in knowing more (went into effect on [January 2018](#)) are able to check it out.



**NALS of Kitsap County
Minutes of the Membership Meeting
Tuesday, January 9, 2018
Family Pancake House, East Bremerton**

Members in attendance included President Terre Skelly, Vice President Marina Baker, PLS, Secretary Nancy Thayer, and Mary Carter. Also in attendance was guest Jean Kaio.

The meeting was called to order at 6:13 p.m. Reading of the Code of Ethics was waived.

Terre Skelly chaired the meeting. Terre stated that the members have decided to maintain the chapter for the time being. Rather than inviting speakers, Terre and Marina will speak on subjects of interest to the members.

Marina Baker reported that we currently have 9 members but that since one member lives out of the area we technically have 8 members.

Nancy Thayer reported that she had sent the previous month's minutes to Terre for review but had not yet sent them to Mary for publication in *Brief Notes*. She reminded everyone of Caressa's new email address. She reported that she had spoken with Linda Tjaden who suggested that (i) should the chapter decide to disband, we could use the money to pay for

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conference registration for members who regularly attend meetings, and (ii) that the Bylaws had been revised to state that the budget could be passed “by a majority of the members in attendance at a meeting” as opposed to a majority of the membership.

Terre led a discussion about having a membership drive at which we would offer to pay \$45 toward dues to up to four people who decide to become members. Marina will begin working on a flyer. We will have a messenger service deliver the flyer to local law firms and we will encourage attorneys to share the flyer with their staff.

MOTION: Nancy moved that we use chapter funds to host a membership drive at which we will offer to pay \$45 toward membership dues to up to four people. Mary seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion passed.

Terre gave the Treasurer’s report, stating that there had been no changes since last month’s meeting. She distributed copies of the 2018 budget for everyone to review. It was noted that the budget would need to be amended to add the \$180 expense for membership dues should we get new members.

MOTION: Marina moved that we pass the budget, as amended. Nancy second the motion and, there being no further discussion, the motion passed.

Mary Carter announced that her computer had finally died and she was getting a new one which will delay publication of *Brief Notes*.

The next meeting will be February 13 at the Family Pancake House in East Bremerton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Submitted by Nancy Thayer
NALS of Kitsap Secretary

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Ban underlining in your legal documents

Lawyers have spent decades trying to achieve emphasis in legal documents by underlining. It's well past time to stop. Underlining is an unsightly relic from the typewriter era, when italics weren't usually available. With today's word processors, there's no reason to use it—at least not 99% of the time.

If you've read documents with underlined text, you know the problem. Underlining impairs legibility: it obscures some letters and punctuation (esp. the lowercase letters *g, j, p, q, y*, and the comma [,] and semicolon [;]). If we underline that last parenthetical, you'll see that the lines run together, making it harder on the eyes: (esp. the lowercase letters *g, j, p, q, y*, and the comma [,] and semicolon [;]).

It's also a typographic habit that all readers have been conditioned to associate with crude means of producing text, not with professional typography. Typically, you never see it in well-produced books and articles.

So what about the 1% of the time when underlining *might* be justifiable? In very narrow circumstances, when a page is so covered with italics—say, in setting forth case names or book titles—that words italicized for emphasis won't stand out, you might consider breaking the no-underlining rule. But that would be rare.

Apart from the issue of underlining for emphasis, two uses are common and acceptable. First, you'll find underlining commonly used with hyperlinks and e-mail addresses. But if you use it that way, an underscore in your e-mail or web address—one that stands in for a space—can look like an actual space. Try to avoid that if you can. (A contrasting font color—particularly blue—can indicate a hyperlink without the confusion.) Second, the "track changes" feature typically underlines text added to a document. Other uses of underlining in a tracked document could certainly cause some confusion—yet another reason for avoidance.

For those of you concerned about *Bluebook* style, the 20th edition continues to underline certain text—but, sensibly, doesn't require it: "So long as you are consistent . . ., you may

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substitute *italics* wherever underscoring is used" (*The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* 3 (20th ed. 2015)).

Finally, even if you're quoting a source that uses underlining, it's okay to substitute italics. (In fact, matching the quotation's formatting to your own makes for a better-looking document.) Follow the original's formatting only if there might be a question about what it means—for example, if both italics and underlining appear in the original. Or use italics but explain your changes in a parenthetical note after the citation, just as you would for added emphasis or omitted footnotes.

If you harbor the outdated habit of underlining, break it by substituting italics or, better yet, emphasize your points using syntax, not typesetting gimmicks.

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Employment Opportunities

If you know of any employment opportunities
Please let me know so that I can post
them to the NALS of Kitsap website

Tips and Tricks....

Do you have quick tips that you use all of the time?
PLEASE SHARE THOSE WITH US!
Send them to [Mary@davidgateslaw.com](mailto:Mary@ davidgateslaw.com)

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Handling conflict: The most important conflict handling skill

by Asaf Shani

When it comes to handling conflicts, I personally have a sense of belief that there exists a single skill that can be said to be the most important. Even so, the idea of having 'the most important skill' is still mind boggling. Naturally, the ability to handle conflicts-whether to resolve or manage them-is a combination of many skills, so we expect that there isn't one which can be said to 'the most important'. In a way, it's like asking what the most important ingredient of a cake is. If you've ever baked one you know that there isn't such an ingredient as a good cake requires flour, sugar, eggs, etc. and not just the right ingredient but also the right amount of each. Without the required list and in the right amount we'll get a tasteless cake.

Applying the same analogy of baking a good cake, conflict handling will have a slight difference in that there is an ingredient on top of which all others are built. As a matter of fact, this ingredient is quite essential in any process involving change. In that light, conflict resolution is a specific situation of change creation, as one needs to convert conflict patterns - whether before they've become apparent or after they have reached the surface - into a more constructive pattern.

This brings me to the most important conflict handling skill, reflection.

Reflection is one's ability to truly contemplate oneself.

Conflicts are the result of egoic patterns – patterns that come from the mind and which compel us to behave in what I refer to as conflict prone behavior. For instance, the egoic bias of relativism, the tendency to compare one's situation, possession or whatever is currently perceived under scarcity with another person's situation, is prone to make one regard the situation at hand as a 'Me vs. You' situation. As you can easily deduce, no collaborative endeavor is possible when such a perception reigns. With that in mind, if you find yourself frowning with the thought "of course it's a Me vs. You situation, after all it IS a conflict we're talking about here..." then you are a perfect proof of the idea I have put forward above. We are so engrossed to the egoic mind patterns to an extent that they literally govern the way we regard, and to a deeper extent, react to conflicts.

Within a pattern, no critical thinking is ever possible. This feature is the essence of any pattern. It serves as a minimal thinking unit and hence does not enable any thinking within it. In one hand, patterns serve as major time savers-we tend to act in a predetermined way without getting entangled in unnecessary thinking. A good example is your ability to drive without having to think of our next action, a phenomena that's quite beneficial. On the other hand, the supposed blessing is in itself a curse since without conscious awareness; the driver will be acting as an auto pilot. Thus, in order to create a change in one's course of action, a light must be switched on-the conscience should be awoken. Such a light can only be switched on only in the presence of reflection. Only when you truly envisage yourself will you be able to make notice of the pattern and be able to contain it.

As I highlighted earlier, handling disputes is a definite situation of creating a transition. If one is engrossed in the bias of relativism, he will continue fighting the other side as this is what he perceives as the only way to achieve his

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goals. When you contemplate your behavior in the long run, you might discover that clutching onto a Me vs. You mindset doesn't really work to one's advantage, but rather incapacitates it.

There exists one catastrophe though; the reflective ability diminishes around conflicts. This fact helps explain why conflicting parties often act in a way that is clearly not in their best interest and hence are usually unable to stop. During disputes, the power to self-reflection is replaced by a frantic clinging to one's school of thought, with the aim of self-justification. In the absence of self-awareness, discussing proper goal setting, or using communication skills, or any other conflict handling skills is of no benefit since all other conflict handling strategies are relevant only when reflection is present. It is therefore clear at this point that the most important skill in conflict handling and management is reflection.

How can you create reflection when you get entangled in a dispute? The response is simple, just become aware of the signs of the conflict patterns, after which you will realize that you are reacting from the pattern. It is therefore one's responsibility to pay great attention to the conflict pattern, which will induce the process of creation of self-reflection. You might have detected a circular problem with 'just become aware of the signs of conflicts patterns' as in order to ignite reflective ability, one needs to use some form of reflection that will enable him to pay attention to the signs of the conflict pattern. This is indeed so, yet a repetitive attention will create such an awareness that can start the process of reflection creation.

In case you may want to know more about self-awareness, I recommend Eckhart Toll's excellent book *The Power of Now*. And if you want to read more about conflict handling, kindly visit our Resource Center and Shop where you can find posts and clips, e-books and e-courses about conflict resolution, conflict management, sales and many other confrontational situations.

With academic background in Economics, Accountancy, Law and Philosophy Asaf Shani is a highly experienced facilitator - consultant - trainer on confrontational situations. A Confrontational situation is a situation in which two entities (groups or individuals), holding opposing viewpoints, meet. Every conflict, negotiation, sales encounter, a difficult conversation etc, falls into this category

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