 Summer/Fall 2018

**Mediator as Midwife**

Steve Ruttle is a colleague and friend who happens to be one of the finest mediators in the U.K. and Europe.  He will be featured in the three-day program on Trust that I’ve organized and am hosting for the International Academy of Mediators (IAM) at Case Western Reserve University in October.  If you want to know more about the conference go to the “Speeches and Presentations”section of this web site and click onto the link.

As you might imagine Steve’s a talented fellow and turns a clever phrase; so it was no surprise to me that he recently referred to mediators as midwives.  I played along and asked him why and his explanation made terrific sense, which added even more to the humor.

 We mediators push and pull and coach.  We sweat.  We cry and laugh with disputants and generally are with them through some of their most challenging and rewarding times.  We help them give birth to new ideas and assist them in bringing focus and concentration that has been blurred by the distraction and chaos as they “labor” with the freight of their conflict.  In most instances we help bring about increased peace and happiness and we help deliver long awaited relief.  We might even help transform that which has been frightening and painful into something uplifting.

And we try to do it with quiet humility.  We get thanked enough to make it worthwhile ….but once our task is complete we evaporate quickly into the background as our wards move on with their lives.  And we pivot to our next dispute.  And like the midwife, we never find our way into the family photo….and that’s the way it should be.

Like I told you.  Steve’s a clever fellow and I’m excited to have him here with me in October.