Conflict management coaching is one of those tools known as conflict coaching) has grown exponentially as an ADR technique. Since the mid-1990s, conflict management coaching has emerged as a significant development in the field. Conflict management coaching is an approach that helps individuals and organizations improve their conflict resolution skills and outcomes. It is a collaborative process that focuses on helping clients develop the skills and strategies necessary to resolve conflicts effectively.

Coaching is an intensive process requiring clients’ commitment, effort, and motivation to increase self-awareness and make changes in their usual way of handling conflict. The process begins with an initial coaching session, where the coach and client establish the goals and objectives of the coaching engagement. The coaching relationship is built on open communication and trust, allowing clients to explore their conflict experiences and develop new perspectives.

Unlike sports coaching, professional coaching does not entail advising people what to do to improve their actions and reach their goals. As with mediation, self-determination is one of the cornerstones of the coaching field. Although there are a number of other similarities between some aspects of conflict management coaching and mediation, there are also a number of significant differences. One is that it is an individualized process. Rather than acting as a ‘neutral’, a coach is a champion of the individual and strives to help them achieve their goals. That is, the client’s objective is the focus, and coaches partner with them to co-create an effective working relationship that facilitates goal attainment.

Conflicts can be managed more effectively when mediation is used in conjunction with coaching. There are core competencies that certified coaches are required to meet (some of which mediators also learn in their training). Among other things, trained coaches help people to frame and use powerful questions that increase self-awareness and to use other tools that help people in their efforts to make progress and reach their goals. Training is required in conflict management coaching just as we expect mediators to be properly trained. When mediators are trained as coaches, it is not recommended that they coach an individual and then mediate between him or her and the other party. As may be expected, the practitioner’s ability to remain impartial would be compromised under such circumstances. Cinnie’s view is that ideally each party has a coach, and then a third individual would be the mediator. However, she acknowledges that this is expensive and she trains many mediators who learn how to incorporate coaching principles in their practices to prepare both parties and facilitate their engagement.

There are many mediators who learn how to incorporate coaching principles in their practices to prepare both parties and facilitate their engagement. The CINERGY® Model of conflict management coaching is a seven-stage process and the basic intentions of each are as follows:

- **Clarify the goal** - to determine what the client wants to accomplish in coaching
- **Inquire about the Situation** - to find out what the client wants to accomplish in coaching
- **Name the Elements** - to deconstruct the conflict and help the client analyze what happened for him or her and the other person
- **Explore the Situation** - to consider what optional plans of action may suit the situation and conflict dynamic
- **Reconstruct the Situation** - to make the plan a reality by envisioning, practicing, etc. - depending on the outcome desired
- **Ground the challenges** - to consider what barriers preclude goal achievement

The process may take 4 to 8 one-hour sessions (as is often the case) for clients to go through the whole model and be prepared to proceed with their plan. Conflict management coaching takes longer when clients are working on shifting unproductive conflict habits.

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Conflict management coaches assist clients in both personal and professional contexts - to effectively and independently manage and engage in specific disputes, to prevent unnecessary conflict and to strengthen their conflict competence. The types of goals an individual may bring to a coach are not necessarily about resolving issues, but rather others may bring to a coach are not necessarily about resolving issues, but rather about gaining increased self-awareness, improving the ability to identify and manage negative emotions and thoughts, and learning new skills and strategies to address conflicts.