

The 'S Questions Model': Formulating Shift Thinking Questions in Family Mediation



Date	Wednesday 14th May 2025
Time	9.30-4.15pm
Venue	Online via Zoom
For	Family Mediators
Presenters	Gerry O'Sullivan
Cost	RS Members £60/ Non-Members £120
CPD Points	6 Category A Points
Booking	Secure your place HERE

The success of mediation critically depends on the quality of the questions posed within the process. The *S Questions Model* has been developed by Gerry O'Sullivan and is introduced in her book - '*The Mediator's Toolkit: Formulating and Asking Questions for Successful Outcomes*'. Publisher: New Society Publishing, Canada.

In this interactive session mediators will critically reflect on their use of questions. They will consider the application of the *S Questions Model* to sharpen, focus and improve their questioning skills to support a shift in parents' thinking and approach to their conflict in a safe way.

Participants will explore how question formulation can introduce new information to parents, clarify existing information and *safely* challenge entrenched thinking.

The workshop will consider the use of questions in individual and joint sessions and will include presentations, demonstrations, skills practice and group discussion. Participants will be asked to watch a short film prior to the event to in preparation for the session.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the day participants will be able to:

- Recognise how the distortion, deletion and deficit of communicated information can impact mediations and why asking questions will help to alleviate this fact.
- Describe the physiological changes that occur when parties are in conflict.
- Demonstrate 'Thought Flow Tracking' so that they can facilitate a party to stay on their own thought flow, not on the mediator's thought flow.
- Examine the theory and purpose behind two of the S4: Shift Thinking question types from the '*S Questions Model*' and consider their application in their own mediation practice.

Presenter: **Gerry O'Sullivan** has worked as a trainer and facilitator for over 35 years. She delivered Certified Professional Mediation Training accredited by the Mediators' Institute of Ireland for many years. She has also delivered conflict and mediation training internationally. Gerry has authored '*The Mediator's Toolkit: Formulating and Asking Questions for Successful Outcomes*', and it is published by New Society Publishing, Canada, 2018. (Refer to Appendix 1) She has developed many training videos and a 16-hour training programme based on this book. Gerry is trained and certified in organizational & workplace mediation, community mediation, civil & commercial mediation and as a mediator for separating couples. Refer to www.osullivansolutions.ie for further information.

HOW TO BOOK

Relationships Scotland CPD events are for practitioners who are currently working for a Service that is a Member of Relationships Scotland. Booking early is encouraged as spaces may be limited. Spaces may be open to practitioners from external organisations where appropriate and available. We use an online booking process, the link to the online booking form for this event can be found [HERE](#) . The online booking form can be used by:

- Member Services to book on behalf of practitioners.
- Practitioners from Member Services who wish to self-fund.
- Practitioners from external organisations, when spaces are available.

If you have any questions about the booking process please contact:

Jo Lockenwitz: jo.lockenwitz@relationships-scotland.org.uk

BOOKING TERMS

Booking for CPD events will be confirmed by email within 10 days of submission. Please check your inbox and/or junk mail, if you have any issues receiving this email please contact us immediately. Only participants that have received a booking confirmation email will be able to access the event. Member Services or Self-funded practitioners will be sent an invoice for the course fee before the event, please do not make a payment until you have received this invoice as it will have a unique invoice number for the payment reference.

Cancellations within 14 days of the event and non-attendance will be charged in full. Member Services/practitioners must notify us of any cancellations by email. Where appropriate, Member Services may transfer a place to another attendee if the original person cannot attend, we must be informed of this ahead of the event taking place. If a CPD event is cancelled by Relationships Scotland (because of insufficient numbers or unforeseen circumstances) then all fees will be fully refunded. We are unable to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel and accommodation.

In exceptional circumstances, Member Services/practitioners may request a refund of the cost of the training event or a free place at a future event. Examples of exceptional circumstances include admission to hospital at short notice, or a family bereavement. We are unable to reimburse out of pocket expenses, such as travel and accommodation. Requests for refunds or credits for future events will be considered by the Office Bearers Group (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer of the National Office). All request for refunds/free places at future events should be made in writing or by email to the CPD Manager, sonia.bruce@relationships-scotland.org.uk

ACCESSING THE EVENT ONLINE

System Requirements: The CPD event will usually be delivered using the Zoom platform. Please attend the online session from a private space using a compatible computer or tablet connected to the internet. You will need to download Zoom to access the session: <https://zoom.us/> Please make sure you have the most recent version of Zoom. Please note, some organisations have additional security settings that may prevent you from accessing the CPD event on an organisational device. Please also ensure that you have the required bandwidth and internet speed. You can test whether you are able to join a Zoom meeting here: <https://zoom.us/test> Relationships Scotland are unable to provide refunds when there are issues with a participant's IT which prevents them from accessing the CPD event. Please contact the CPD Manager if you are unsure about how to use the technology sonia.bruce@relationships-scotland.org.uk

Accessing the Event: A link to the session will be sent out a few days before the event. Please ensure that the email address to which the link should be sent is clear in the Booking Form. It is also important that the Zoom account uses the same name that you used to register for the event. The Relationships Scotland CPD Host will use this information to admit participants into the event and to confirm attendance certificates. The username for your Zoom account can be amended by signing into Zoom and going to the profile section of your account.