

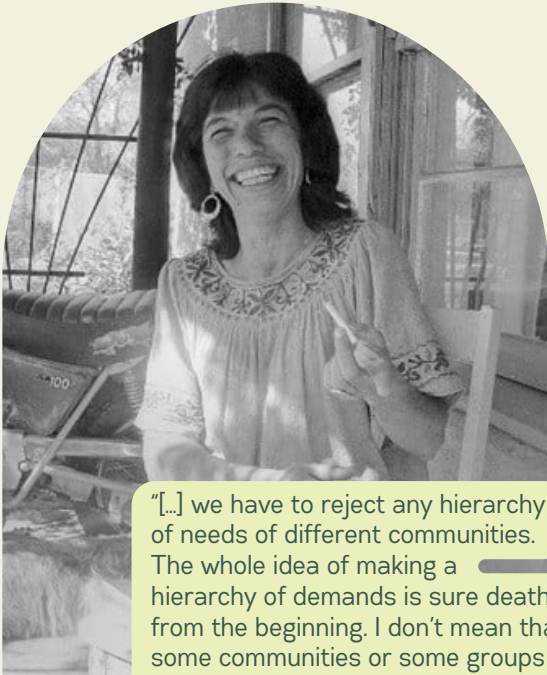
HONORING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH & THE POWER OF REPRESENTATION

Grassroots Dispute Resolution Newsletter | September 2026

As we dive deeper into Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15), here at GDR we continue to reflect on the essential role of representation in community empowerment and dispute resolution. We believe that effective conflict resolution goes beyond reaching a settlement—it creates a space where individuals feel empowered to act and speak from a place of empowerment.

For many individuals, particularly within marginalized and Hispanic communities, seeking conflict resolution can be intimidating. Especially when those in the positions of power have intention to harm. How do we bridge the gap and support each other? Let's dive deeper into the needs one has and the skills we possess that can help guide and protect those in need.

RECOGNIZING NEEDS IN OURSELVES AND OTHERS



"[...] we have to reject any hierarchy of needs of different communities. The whole idea of making a hierarchy of demands is sure death from the beginning. I don't mean that some communities or some groups on a campus or in any other community will not want to emphasize certain needs. That's inevitable and there's nothing wrong with it."

• Elizabeth Martinez, activist

Today, we are reflecting on a quote from Chicano activist and author, [Elizabeth Martinez](#) during a [conversation with Angela Davis](#) at University of California, San Diego in 1993. In this quote, Martinez is responding directly to a question around how people of color can come together in coalition building, but it reflects something to remember in individual relationships as well: one person's needs and desires are not above another's, they are simply different.

So, how can we make sure to recognize our own needs? Acknowledge the difference in the needs of others? What is the best way to express them? Where might we be willing to compromise?

When in conflict, there may be some heightened emotions and feelings but it is imperative to take a moment and reflect on what you are feeling or what is bringing up feelings of anxiety or stress. This step brings you close to recognizing your needs and naming this is the first step towards progression.

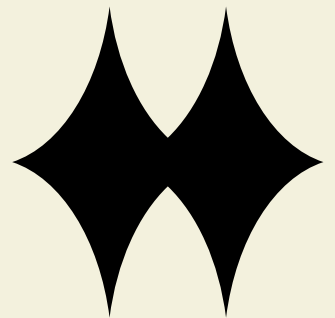
Some common needs that you may have difficulty naming include*:

- Physical Wellbeing
- Safety, Security, Trust
- Acceptance and Validation
- Connection, Belonging, Community
- Attention, Affection, Appreciation
- Freedom, Autonomy, Agency
- Space, Privacy, Solitude
- Peace, Presence, Serenity
- Love, Care, Kindness
- Purpose, Growth, Contribution
- Honesty, Authenticity, Self-Expression
- Play, Joyfulness, Adventure

*Source: <https://fixyourpicker.com/do-you-even-know-what-your-needs-are/>

So then, how do we best acknowledge the needs of others without dismissing them? We must engage in active and empathic listening. One way to do that is via the E.A.R.S. method: Empathy, Ask Open-Ended Questions, Reframe, Restate, Summarize. The E.A.R.S. method was coined by an organization called SEEDS.

You can read more about the E.A.R.S. method on our instagram post [here](#).



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FOUNDER'S NOTE:

"For decades, basic rights and care in Hispanic communities have been denied. I challenge you to speak up and stand in unity to drive meaningful change. True support requires listening directly to those in need rather than making assumptions.

Ask how you can help, and if you have the power to show up for others, do it!"



MEDIATION TIP OF THE MONTH: MINDSET & SELF-REGULATION

Navigating difficult conversations requires intention and emotional awareness. Keep these practices in mind:

1. **Practice Self-Regulation:** Recognize emotional triggers. Pause, take a breath, and reflect before responding. Silence can provide space to connect with yourself.
2. **Listen to Understand:** Focus on understanding the other party's perspective rather than planning your counterargument.
3. **Show Up with Intent:** Approaching conflict with an open heart and mind drastically shifts dynamics, creating space for mutual respect and genuine resolution.