



Concise preview of Heshia Abrams' new book **Holding the Calm: The Secret to Resolving Conflict and Defusing Tension**

How do you stop conflict?

How do you find a solution when a solution seems impossible?

How do you handle someone who is yelling at you?

How do you respond to someone who is crying?

What do you do when someone won't speak?

How do you settle cases better and more efficiently?

In half the world, conflict is resolved by someone breaking your legs, burning down your store or kidnapping your kid. In civilized societies there are legal systems that can be expensive, time consuming, and often faulty but isn't it better than this alternative? By *Holding the Calm*, you can be the civilizing force. Our society needs more civilized discussion and conflict resolution skills **right now**.

Holding the Calm, The Secret to Resolving Conflict and Defusing Tension, carefully and meticulously lays out easy to use and absorb strategies to diffuse tension, settle cases, resolve disputes, and re-channel arguments. All by a popular master mediator with tens of thousands of hours in the trenches of challenging human conflict revealing pragmatic, practical wisdom in easy to digest bites that work with real people. Professionals of all kinds must manage an increasingly frustrated workforce. They may be taught leadership skills but not workable and immediate conflict management skills.

"I like you". "I hate you." "I feel like I can trust you". "You scare me." "You're lying". All happen within seconds. Trying to out logicate or rationalize with someone who's amygdala has been triggered is like punching jello. It will get you nowhere fast, wastes precious energy, and deflects from things that would actually work to calm things down and find a solution.

The prefrontal cortex developed last in our brain's evolution. The amygdala, which is the fear center, developed first and decides in a nano second whether that thing is a rope, food or a snake and makes decisions accordingly without stopping for verification of information. Then the prefrontal cortex justifies the decision that has already been made by the amygdala.

You want to know how to tell if the amygdala is operating?

It yells "ME! ME! ME!" or "MY! MY! MY!" in all its actions.

That's the trigger to start Holding The Calm.

Holding The Calm works even in really bad situations.

I resolved a case where a postal truck hit a young boy who then became brain damaged. Postal regulations forbid drivers from passing out candy to kids. They don't want kids trained to run out into the road to see the postal driver to get a treat. Well, in a small rural county a kind driver, who had the same route every day, thought, "Why can't I give out a little candy, a little happiness to the kids on my route?" So, every day she brought a bag of penny candy and the kids ran to her truck when she came down the road for a sweet treat.

Of course, you know where this story is headed. One day she was out sick, and a replacement driver took the route who had no idea kids would run out in front of the truck. She struck a little boy who suffered brain damage and was now in a coma.

Bad situation.

The family hired a lawyer and sued the postal service. The father was a truck driver and mom was a waitress. Mom was nervous about her upcoming deposition the next day, so she took a few extra sleeping pills to help with the fear. The husband woke up in the morning to find a dead wife.

Really bad situation.

I had no idea what I would say to this guy or how to deal with this situation. I began by Holding The Calm. I walked into the room and looked at him. He was chewing tobacco, had a John Deere hat pulled low over his eyes, and was slumped in a chair. I just looked at him and said, "How in the world are you dealing with this?" He growled, "I read the Bible."

I made my voice low and growled back. "What part?" He snarled "Job". I got quiet and said, "Oh my gosh, you are Job." He slid down off the chair onto the floor and I

quietly sat down on the floor next to him. I didn't touch him. I didn't speak. After a long time, I got up and said to his shell-shocked lawyer, let's go help this man be done with this. By the end of the day, we got to a financial number to settle the case and didn't have to put this man through any more pain.

By Holding The Calm, we created the space where he could be seen, valued, and safe to make resolution possible even though he barely spoke.

Want an entirely opposite story where Holding The Calm worked completely differently?

It was late at night negotiating a business deal between two high powered executives, and we locked in at Tom demanding 35 million dollars and Juan refusing to pay more than 30 million. Two big egos, a lot at stake, how to bridge this gap? By Holding The Calm, I saw that the need to win was potent. I told them that we were going to flip for the extra 5 million. They looked at me incredulously. I took a coin out of my pocket and said either we do this or arm wrestle for it. I then threw the coin in the air. Juan reached out and grabbed it midair and said, "Ok, we'll split it. I'm a public company and I can't have it out there that I flipped a 5 million dollar coin." I teased them and said, "Come on, it'll be the story of a lifetime". After joking around a little, the tension was released, and we did, in fact, split the difference. Egos were saved. Manhood's intact. No winners. No Losers. The case settled.

The need to win is also the need to not lose. By Holding The Calm, I was able to see that reframing a 30 million dollar dispute into a 5 million dollar dispute where one would lose and one would win, completely reframed the definition of a "win" enabling the egos to feel satisfied. All and only possible by Holding the Calm.

Want another one example of Holding the Calm?

Assume you have an agreement but there is a small gap between what one will pay and the other will accept. Hold the Calm and suggest the difference be donated to charity. They will look at you shocked. Sometimes it works because a party is really committed to a charity, sometimes it takes an evil twist. In a particularly nasty business divorce case, I suggested that each former partner decide which charity the other partner had to give his one half of the gap amount to. The power struggle was immense, and they gleefully thought about ways to punish their former partner by making him donate money to something he hated. The self-interest to punish the other was satisfied and two international charities received nice donations.

The difference between the three scenarios? Holding the Calm, allows us to see what each party needs then select the correct tool for the job.

Conflict is destructive. But human beings have always had difficulty talking to each other and resolving disputes. Most people are intimidated by conflict and don't know how to successfully resolve problems when tensions are high and emotions are frayed. And sometimes people are just argumentative.

Hesha Abrams' new book will give you powerful ways to settle cases, improve situations and solve difficult problems with bosses, co-workers, family, friends, neighbors, clients, customers, and business associates. Hesha provides an active yet simple way to develop space for possibilities, drain the swamp of toxic emotions, and diffuse tension so that solutions can be found.

There are seven billion people on the planet, each with their own unique fingerprint. Yet we are taught to treat everyone the same. Doesn't that sound ridiculous? Treating everyone the same ignores the unique humanity in each of us. Personalized medicine is the new trend in healing our bodies. We need a personalized approach to heal human conflict as well. The trick is how to know what people want, what they will resonate with, and the right approach to take in defusing conflict, finding solutions and solving problems. And...it's not hard if you have a bag of tricks to pull from.

This highly popular book provides the skills, stories, lessons, and tools to help resolve all kinds of difficult conflicts, including lawsuits, business disputes, divorces, family fights, and neighborhood quarrels. Business people, mediators, lawyers, counselors, community leaders, and all kinds of people who deal with conflict will find this to be a humorous, practical, immediately useful guide. It's the oxygen of conflict resolution.

Read on my friends.....

Table of Contents

Preface: Why I'm Sharing these Secrets with You

Introduction to Holding the Calm -- Picking the Right Solution for the Right Situation

Section 1 Speak into the Ears that are Hearing You

- 1 You Talk to People for a Living?
- 2 Speak into the Ears that Hear You
- 3 Almost, Never, Always, Rarely, a Lot
- 4 How to Listen to What Is Not Said
- 5 The Magic of Silence
- 6 High Emotions Allow Vomiting and Diagnosing

Section 2 Situational Awareness -- Reading the Room

- 7 There Is No Problem, Only a Solution Waiting to Be Found - Find the Self-Interest
- 8 Be the Grown-Up In the Room
- 9 Winning? Or Not Losing? Leave Them with Their Sword
- 10 When Everything Is Hitting the Fan
- 11 Us Versus Them Mentality -- But I Am So Reasonable!
- 12 It's a Dollar and She Lives In a Hut -- The Dangers of Over Negotiating and Negotiating with Jerks

Section 3 People Are Weird and Wonderful

- 13 The Blame Game
- 14 Politeness and Civility Matters
- 15 We're All Animals in the Zoo
- 16 A Dozen Roses – Seeking Advice
- 17 Cultural and Disability Considerations

Section 4 Bringing It Home, Closing the Deal,
Solving the Problem, Settling the Case, Resolving the Dispute

- 18 Create Small Winnable Victories
19. Don't Take No for an Answer
20. Going Postal-Not

Conclusion -- Your Turn

Praise for:

Holding the Calm: The Secret to Resolving Conflict and Defusing Tension

"You are amazing at what you do and how you approach it – world class, really. This book is an extension of that. Like reading a book from Tiger Woods about putting, or Celine Dion about hitting sustained long notes, or Steven Spielberg on story telling – even if one can't perfectly reproduce the lessons of the master, the reader will become better at their craft by studying the master."

Alan Fisch, Esq.
Fisch Hoffman Sigler, LLP
Washington DC

"Holding the Calm helps the reader understand the complex dynamic of intractable conflicts. Hesha's extraordinary breadth of experience is shared in bite size truths that make practical application very easy. While the other books espouse different theories, Holding the Calm unpacks conflict and helps all of us, whether a mediator, negotiator, employer or even a parent— find practical and creative solutions to difficult situations. It is a must read and a book that you will want to refer to again and again."

Cindy Hallberlin, Esq.
General Counsel and Compliance Officer
Digital Health Institute for Transformation NYC

"Hesha is one of the rare people on the planet who was put here with a mission: to use her compassion, intellect, creativity and talent to help people in conflict find peace. Her work as a mediator and peacemaker has been inspiring to other mediators and her skill set is beautifully displayed in this very personal and very powerful new book. Hesha speaks from the heart, not just from her brilliant head. Read it and, more importantly, incorporate it into your practice. Her successes are legendary, and her passion is inspiring."

Kay Elliott, Esq.
Attorney-mediator-coach for ADR advocates
Texas A&M School of Law

"If everyone were to know what Holding the Calm reveals, the world would be a considerably different place. In crisp and accessible fashion, holding the Calm sheds light on how to overcome some of the most perplexing issues businesses and humans experience. I laughed, nodded, and underlined text the whole way through. "

Chris Gasper, Esq.
Milbank
New York, NY

"I've read your book and understand now more than ever why you're so good at what you do. It needs to reach a wide audience."

Judge A. Joe Fish

U.S. District Court NDTX

"This book absolutely rocks. We have so many colleagues that pen books that are so densely filled with medical or legal terminology or shorthand that they are inaccessible gibberish to the average reader. Then there are the volumes of mystical weirdness that encourage people to hug each other in a cosmic field filled with lavender and Skittles until their chakras fall out. Your book is direct and practical. Every reader will learn something new, or reimagine their current approach to conflict, regardless of their current skill level. Thank you for unleashing this knowledge into the universe! I'm already waiting for the sequel!"

David Aaron DeSoto, Esq.

Mann Law Firm PLLC

Houston, TX

"Sometimes it seems like anger, conflict, and aggression define the human condition. Hesh's book provides the perfect antidote. A must read for anyone who navigates life's difficult conversations – mediators, negotiators, salespeople, employees, employers, committee heads – the list is endless. You're guaranteed to improve your responses and your results!"

Sarah Caverhill, Vice President Sales

The Ken Blanchard Companies

Co-Author Your Leadership Legacy

Atlanta, GA

"This isn't a book on theory. Hesh's Abrams is a "boots on the ground" mediator focused on what works in the trenches of negotiation warfare. Through decades of experience of trial-by-fire, Hesh's has discovered the secrets to dissolve egos, assuage big personalities, and loosen up those dug in heels. Holding the Calm shares those lessons in easy to read, bite-sized chunks. I've highlighted my copy up and down, and will keep it near, for the next time I need to unstuck a sticky situation. I want a copy for everyone in my division."

Michael Eddy

Vice President, Analytics, Global Innovation Fund

San Francisco, CA

Transcending the courts, and offering huge value to business, Hesh's smartly delivers wisdom and power gleaned from a lifetime in mediation. All organizations hold "guards to the gates of change" that may be detrimental to growth and value. Though difficult to identify, people, and the processes they control, often reveal themselves only when they "draw swords" to defend positions or status quo regardless of evidence or rational thought. Holding the Calm provides a playbook of technique leaders can draw upon to help their "guards" capture new opportunities available to the business while preserving the valuable of the present.

Rod Hightower

Past Fortune 500 executive, Private Equity President, CEO

"As an intellectual property litigator for more than 30 years and manager of attorneys and clients for many of them, Hesha is correct that most conflict focused decision making typically comes from a place of fear. Once one understands that and the particular fears that are in play, you can use the tools outlined in this terrific book, provided in an easy to understand and relatable form, to move difficult people and problems to a successful conclusion. The insights provided in this book are important to understand for anyone dealing in conflict, not just mediators or attorneys."

Robert Brunelli, Esq.

Sheridan Ross PC

Denver, CO

"Hesha Abrams is a tour de force and so too is Holding the Calm. Drawn from 30+ years of high-stakes mediations, Hesha opens the door to exploring the human psyche. And that's where the real magic is: understanding people, their motivations, their fears, their need for validation. All aimed at the noble calling of finding peace. Let's hope for a sequel - this writer has more to offer."

Craig Florence, Esq

Foley & Lardner

Dallas, TX

"Don't be fooled by this easy, fun read by a master mediator and deal maker. Beneath the surface lies pattern recognition and insight from decades in the trenches of strident conflict informed by recent advances in social and brain science. This brilliant book sits at the corner of theory and practice ready to improve your game on Monday."

Don Philbin, Jr. JD, MBA, LLM

ADR Toolbox

"The book is fantastic. This is really going to help a lot of people. Pfizer may have developed a vaccine to protect against the physical effects of COVID, but a book such as this may help cure the societal impact of the pandemic by giving people a shot of courage to open an honest dialogue with their neighbors. At the very least, this should be required reading for mediators that are operating on the front lines of the "new normal" that has resulted in an increase of divorces, unemployment, bankruptcy, addiction, and litigation in a court system that has all but broken down during the pandemic."

D. Aaron Desoto, Esq.

Mediator/Arbitrator, Houston, TX

"Hesha pours her wisdom, intuition, and gravitas into this powerful book which pulls back the curtain to reveal some of her extraordinary secrets and skills. Simply put, Hesha is the best mediator in the business. Hesha has polished her abilities to the point where they are truly out-of-this-world great. This real page-turner of a book is jam-packed full of her experiences and anecdotal stories and contains important information for any lawyer who wants to better serve their clients through meaningful negotiation advocacy."

Dawn Estes, Esq.
Estes Thorne Carr,
Dallas, TX

"In this book, Heshia extracts from her wealth of mediation experiences key lessons and skills for mediators, mediation advocates, and negotiators. The book delivers that information in a "self-help," easy to digest style that captures the reader's attention and invites thoughtful consideration without getting bogged down in lots of verbiage."

Harrie Samaras, Esq.
ADR Office of Harrie Samaras
Pennsylvania

Just read Heshia's *Holding the Calm* during one sitting. I have sat in many conference rooms with Heshia over the years as a decision maker/negotiator/party in various mediations. I have also acted as mediator in many cases over the years. Heshia's ability to capture the how-to's and don't evers is magical in itself. Having witnessed many failed mediations over the years (MWH-Mediations without Heshia), I can honestly say that what was missing were key ingredients that make up Heshia's Secret Sauce: not giving up, not taking No for an answer, and the most important of all-listening. How refreshing that we have a book that lays out some of the most successful ways to bridge gaps and bring people together in the goal of striking a deal. Sitting here, I can't help but wonder what zoo animal I was during my first mediation with Heshia. I can't wait to order dozens of her book for all of my lawyer friends and fellow general counsel colleagues.

John Harvey, Esq.
General Counsel Innovation First International
Dallas, TX

Heshia explains her performance based strategies in *Holding the Calm* in an easy to understand and easy to apply way. Heshia's techniques provides a special awareness of people that helps lead to successful outcomes.

Judy Eddy, Educator
President American Association of University Women

"Heshia Abrams is, by far, the best mediator I have ever appeared before. And her new book is, by far, the best book on conflict resolution I have ever read."

Howard A. Kroll, Esq
Tucker Ellis LLP
Los Angeles, CA

"Congratulations on a fine work. I believe you have really created a work of art. I loved the many examples as well as the stories. I am one of those people who learn though others' experiences. Thank you for creating this for all of us."

Don Swift, Mediator
Wichita Falls/Dallas, TX

"I want to express my appreciation of, and admiration for, Holding the Calm, and the best way to do this is to vote with my pocketbook, and to that end I'd like to preorder 25 copies. In a profession defined by conflict, complexity, and change, few mediators have a North Star to guide them as the settlement process reaches its darkest point. Holding the Calm -- filled with stories, quotes, and perspectives no one can forget -- will be that North Star to many of us going forward."

John DeGroot, Esq.
Attorney Mediator
Dallas, TX

"I've attended a training where you presented, and I could hear you while reading. The book contains so much wisdom, advice, and encouragement that it is worth reading again, and again, and again. It's needed and important! The book is light (a good thing) and intelligent. Thanks for sharing at so many different levels."

Gene Roberts, Jr., Esq.
Director Student Legal & Mediation Services
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, TX 77341

"I read your book during my flight to Seattle and back. Your style is so unique and your advice so specific- just about no one else does that. And if anyone else does do it, they do not do it with the skill, tenacity, wisdom, and imagination that you bring to the table. It's really good! It presents important and very useful ideas, and mediators and advocates will certainly benefit from it. Outstanding!"

Arthur Chaykin, Mediator
KC, Kansas

"What a great book! - full of really useful and practical information. Your enthusiasm for your art and passion for helping people find their "peace" is obvious. My favorite part was: "So how BIG can we get? How Smart, How Wise, How Kind, How Skillful? I don't know, I'm not dead yet." LOVE IT!! "

Hilary Rapkin, Esq.
Chief Legal Officer Wex, Inc.
Portland, Maine

"I already knew firsthand that Heshia delivers as a world-class mediator. I didn't know whether she was any good at teaching. She's apparently great at that too. This book is filled with wisdom and offers tools that I wish every mediator had. It also provides important insights to litigators, who are in a constant negotiation during the life of their cases, not just when mediating."

Jeff Eichmann, Esq.
Dovel and Luner
Santa Monica, CA

"Hesha Abrams has given the community a tome of serious, practical advice with interjected humor. A tome is, by definition, a heavy, serious book. Her tome is light in length but heavy in suggestions to make the magic of conflict resolution work. I am still experimenting with her suggestion of the difference between "could" and "would". It is a good, quick read to encourage us in some of the darkest hours of the use of this process."

Cecilia Morgan, Esq.

JAMS Panelist and ADR Professional

"All the antidotes, historical notations, and personal stories kept me engaged from beginning to end. I DID feel like we were sitting across from each other chatting away. I was recently thinking about the post office with all the chaos currently surrounding them, and it reminded me about the past shootings and how we haven't had any. Thank you for explaining why!"

Lisa Rogy

Director of Clinics

Los Angeles, CA



Hesha Abrams, Esq., author of:

Holding the Calm, The Secret to Resolving Conflict and Defusing Tension

is a nationally acclaimed attorney mediator who is known for crafting highly creative settlements and resolutions in very difficult matters. She has the unique talent to work with big egos and strong personalities with the keen ability to create synergy amongst the most diverse personality types driving to agreement. She has created settlements worth billions of dollars and has saved companies billions more using her innovative approaches to deal making. She specializes in crafting innovative solutions for complex or difficult matters in Intellectual

Property, Commercial, Pharmaceuticals, Securities and “Deal Mediation”, which is driving a complex business deal to a successful signing.

Hesha has successfully mediated for thousands of parties and was an innovator in the mediation field serving on the legislative task force that drafted landmark ADR laws. She mediates, consults, and negotiates on behalf of private parties throughout the country and internationally with 30 years of in the trenches experience. She has worked in London, Hong Kong, Mexico, Germany, Thailand and India and with parties from all over the globe in complex commercial, business and patent licensing deals.

She taught mediation and negotiation at the 2001 International Symposium on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution in The Hague. She was on the national panel for Dow Corning Implant cases and was the Chair of the Texas Bar Intellectual Property ADR Committee. She has been appointed Delegate to the Fifth Circuit Judicial Conference, 1988, 1990, 2002, speaker 2005, elected as a fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation in 2006 and received the Brutsché Award for Excellence in Mediation from the Association of Attorney Mediators. She is AV rated by Martindale Hubbell.

For further information, see www.HeshaAbramsMediation.com.