

## **Role-Play #9 The Fence**

### **General Information**

A community mediation service has been engaged to facilitate a mediation between two long-time neighbours in dispute about how to replace an old fence. The neighbours, Armando and Lyle, cannot agree on what type of new fence to put up, how to split costs, who or when the work will be done or even where the fence should go. The situation may escalate into a property boundary dispute. Currently neither neighbour has produced a surveyor's certificate and they each seem reluctant to incur the cost of hiring a surveyor. Their attempts to talk about the fence resulted in a shouting match and now all communication has broken down. Neither party feels hopeful about mediation.

### **Lyle's Additional Information**

What has gotten into your neighbour!?! You have both lived with the same fence for 20 years as you raised your families together, it is obviously time for a new one. You approached Armando with a sensible solution to split the cost of replacing the existing fence with something similar. Armando tore a strip off of you, claiming the fence is not where it should be but refusing to show any proof. He told you to come back when you had a surveyor's certificate, which you do not have and do not want to pay for.

You sense it is a money issue that Armando is embarrassed to share with you. He has downgraded his vehicle. He used to host generous barbeques. You can't seem to talk like you used to about life – maybe just the way people grow apart, maybe the shame of feeling broke, maybe still a bit of weirdness from when Armando's teenage son Hernando proposed to your daughter Olivia after just a couple of dates. (Realizing they were far too young to think about marriage, she kindly and sensibly refused him. It was awkward for a time but both kids seemed to recover quickly). You are willing to pay more than half of the fence, but don't want to insult Armando. If you must, you will get a surveyor's certificate. You need the mediator to navigate the delicate financial issues. Armando is a proud man and he cannot be shamed about money if this is to work.

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