

## The Many Faces of *Facilitation* : Roles Human Services Workers Play<sup>1</sup>

The word *facilitation* has been used in a variety of ways ... facilitation can be weak or strong; directive or non-directive. In all its guises, facilitation is a means or tool for getting somewhere - as directed by either the facilitator, or the facilitated!

Some of the language which has, at times, been used interchangeably with *facilitator* are - information provider, advocate, broker, mediator, negotiator, conciliator ... and, some would add *traitor*. The following suggests one way of distinguishing between these different forms of facilitation. Clearly, the explanatory text is based in *Social Justice* assumptions ... in particular, the notion that society includes the *oppressors* (powerful/dominant culture) and the *oppressed* (those who miss out in society).

<b>Informer</b>	<b>Advocate</b>	<b>Broker</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Negotiator</b>	<b>Conciliator</b>	<b>Traitor?<sup>2</sup></b>
Providing the data needed by the oppressed to enable them to act on their own behalf <sup>3</sup> .	Acting on behalf of (for), or alongside (with), the oppressed.	Creating pathways to enable the oppressed to <i>go shopping</i> for the best deal.	Listening to both sides, and treating the parties even-handedly ... as equal partners in dispute.	Treating both parties as equal, and actively seeking to encourage them to find a resolution of the situation.	Treating both parties as equal, and making final judgements about who should be the <i>winners</i> and <i>losers</i> in the situation.	

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<sup>2</sup> Courtesy: Siyavash Doostkhah. This could be added as the final option, with text to read *Advocating a dominant culture position, by encouraging the oppressed party to conform to social norms.*

<sup>3</sup> This may be extended to a more sophisticated approach which includes exploration of possible consequences of actions.