

In the article, *Emotion and Negotiation*, John Bradley Jackson argues that rather than avoiding emotion during a negotiation, people should embrace their emotions. It can be a mistake to try to hide one's emotions. While people embrace their emotions, they should also control their emotions to prevent potential mistakes. Emotional exuberance can derail a negotiator's concentration rather than putting them in a positive mood for the negotiation. In addition, negative emotions can work against an individual in a negotiation to the point that they are unable to focus on the task at hand. Jackson describes the impact of negative emotion as a "physical reaction" that increases blood pressure. In order to manage one's own anger, it helps to gauge the reaction of the other party. Additionally, the author talks of recognizing when the other party is upset and working to avoid antagonizing them too much. The negotiation may be helped by listening to the other party vent, according to the author. If the other party is very upset, it may be wise to postpone the negotiation and pick it up at a later time to allow cooler heads to prevail. In a negotiation, the author discusses the use of emotion as a negotiation tactic to take advantage of the other party. To neutralize an aggressive negotiator, the other party can verbally acknowledge the tactic as soon as possible. Doing so usually discourages the acting negotiator from continuing their tirade. According to Jackson, it is necessary to keep perspective on any anger that is expressed during negotiation. It should be recognized that anger is usually aimed at a product or service issue rather than the other negotiator. If the negotiators cannot get past their anger and frustration, it may be worth the cost to bring in a mediator to help them work through not only the emotions but also to refocus on the negotiation at hand. A neutral third party can also help the negotiators to discuss the issues and work through them rather than continuing to allow the issues to be a distraction.

I have been involved in negotiations that were highly emotional, and it took some effort to control those emotions. Those negotiations have included child custody, annual job evaluations, and relationship issues. Anger was probably the most common emotion felt by me or the other party. However the negotiations went, I refused to voice my anger through yelling or shouting. Instead, I controlled my anger and focused on resolving the issues that were being discussed. I found it difficult during the proceedings to hold back from unloading my thoughts and feelings. I realized that showing how upset I was would not accomplish getting what I wanted from the negotiations. Instead, I worked on creative ways to give the other party something they wanted in exchanged for something I wanted. Sometimes, suggestions for how to resolve specific issues would not be acceptable to the other party. This rejection caused additional frustration, but it also forced me to remain humble throughout the negotiations. I had to realize that I would not get everything I wanted. I agree with the author of the article that emotions should be controlled, but I also think that people should avoid expressing their emotions to an extent. Leaving your emotions on the table for the other party to see can allow them to take advantage of you. In the child custody negotiations in which I was involved, I tried to pay attention to the other person's verbal and nonverbal communication. When they frowned or crossed their arms, I recognized those expressions as disapproval or frustration. I tried to avoid antagonizing the other party on certain issues. On other issues, however, they disliked the nature of the issue, especially if it involved money. As a negotiator, I realized that I had no control over how the other party felt, but I could control myself. If there important issues to discuss, I decided to present them regardless of how the other party felt. I thought it would be better to bring those issues out during the negotiations rather than regretting not doing so later. I found in the negotiations that preparation was essential to managing emotions.

## References

Jackson, J. B. (2006). Emotion and Negotiation. *Ezine Articles*. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from <http://ezinearticles.com/?Emotion-and-Negotiation&id=442501>.