

## **Conflict Resolution**

### **Positive and Negative Techniques**

#### **What is Conflict?**

- to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash:
- to fight or contend; do battle.
- a fight, battle, or struggle, esp. a prolonged struggle; strife.
- controversy; quarrel: conflicts between parties. 5. discord of action, feeling, or effect; antagonism or opposition, as of interests or principles: a conflict of ideas.
- a striking together; collision.

#### **What Doesn't Work?**

- Yelling, refusing to change or compromise, refusing to work out the conflict, name calling, hitting, walking out, belittling, etc.

#### **What Does Work?**

- Negotiation, Mediation, Looking at both sides, A Win-Win attitude.

#### **When is Conflict Positive?**

- When we are able to resolve internal and interpersonal conflicts,
- using win-win problem solving.
- Every relationship will have some conflicts at some time or other.
- when we use win-win problem solving, it strengthens the relationship.
- when we don't, it destroys it.

#### **Who Owns the Problem?**

- The person who is negatively affected by the Problem.

#### **What is the Owner's responsibility?**

- To find a way to resolve the problem, even if he is not the cause of it.

#### **Search for Win-Win Solution**

- **The Use of Power**
- **Three Responses**
  - **Fight**
  - **Flight / Avoidance**
  - **Obedience/ Shutting Down**
- **Identify Each Other's Needs and Goals**

## **Preparation**

- Include only those concerned.
- Give a description of the problem that respects all involved.
- Explain how conflict resolution can enable all to win, and explain the steps.
- Agree not to slip back to the win lose methods
- Find a good time and place with no distractions.
- Get something to write down ideas.

## **Identify the problem or issues**

- Use “I” Messages to explain your own concerns, needs and basic goals
- Use reflective listening to hear and acknowledge the other’s needs and basic goals
- Evaluate exactly what each of your actual needs are with the problem. List needs.
- Don’t accept sudden promises not to cause the problem

## **Brainstorm All Possible Solutions that meets both people’s needs**

- Cake Cutting Exercise: You are in charge of a Birthday party for four Children. You have one Cake and need to cut it in 4 equal parts. Brainstorm with your partner. How many different ways you could cut it?
- Car Sharing Solution: You and your sibling have one car. You need to go to a meeting tonight, and your sibling wants to visit a good friend. How many solutions can you come up with?
- Look at things from another’s perspective and try to see their point of view and look for a solution that meets both underlying needs.

## **Brainstorm to Generate all possible solutions.**

- Think of any and all possible ways to solve the problem so that everyone will have needs met.
- Evaluate later NOT NOW
- Do not criticize any suggestion. Feedback with reflective listening
- Write down all ideas suggested.

## **Evaluate the alternative solutions**

- Ask “Will it work? Does it meet all the needs of both people? Are there any problems likely?”
- Don’t accept solutions for the sake of speed
- Use reflective listening and I Messages

## **Decide on the best solution.**

- Find a solution that is mutually acceptable to both of you.
- If agreement seems difficult, Summarize areas of agreement. Restate needs, and look for new solutions.

- Make certain that both of you are committed to the solution

### **Implementing the Solutions**

- Get Agreement on who does what by when
- Write this down and check all agree to it
- Refuse to remind or police the solutions
- If you want to set criteria for success, work out these now

### **Follow-up evaluation**

- Carry out agreed method. Wait to see if the conflicts seems resolved.
- If the agreed upon solution doesn't work, remember it is the solution that failed, not the person, and seek for a new solution.
- Ask from time to time if the solution is working for both of you.

### **Results of Win-Win Solutions**

- More creative in Thinking up solutions
- Take more responsibility for helping everyone have needs met
- Feeling of mutual respect
- Love grows deeper with every conflict resolved

### **Additional Tips:**

1. Communicating thoughts and feelings in a positive way during a heated conflict is often difficult. The following map will help to guide you along the communication I-way. Practice will help you master the "I-way." Before getting on the communication I-way, it is important to learn which signs to look for and to understand a few rules of the road in conflict management.
2. **No "You" statements.** Use statements that begin with the word "I". Do not use statements that include the word "you," because these statements make people feel defensive.
3. Remember, it takes time to settle a conflict. Go slow at first, because conflict resolvers usually encounter some rough roads in the beginning. Keep using your I-way map to reach safer roads
4. Sometimes tempers are flaring so much that it may be necessary, to take a temporary detour from the communication, I-way. Once the tempers have calmed down, you may begin using I statements to solve the problem.
5. Most conflicts can be resolved through effective communication. However, if you begin to feel threatened or unsafe, you should exit the communication I-way and seek safety.
6. Construct an I-way statement by following these directions:
  - use the word "I"
  - state how you feel
  - state the specific behavior that you do not like
  - state your willingness to cooperatively resolve the problem

7. After using properly constructed I-way statements, individuals can begin to share ideas for how to solve the problem. Often, the best solution is reached when two people merge their ideas together.
8. After reaching a solution that the two individuals agree will work, they can resume normal activities.