

CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Recognize and accept conflicts are natural.

Conflicts are inevitable and a normal part of life; having a conflict is not necessarily bad. Sometimes, it can mean that change is necessary, and it gives us opportunities to listen, improve, understand, and grow as individuals.



Use neutral language.

Avoid name calling, inflammatory language, or using exaggerated phrases to describe someone's behavior (e.g., "You always ignore me when I ask you a question" or "You never pay attention when I'm speaking"). This type of language can escalate conflict, and you may say things you will regret.



Separate the person from the problem.

It's easy to attack the person when in a conflict. Remember to use "I" statements about how what happened made you feel (e.g., "I felt hurt when you cancelled our dinner plans last minute because I felt excited to spend time with you." Remember to attack the problem, not the person. Thinking this way allows people to work together to come to a common goal, and avoids hurting one another in the process.



Evaluate your goals.

How do you want the conflict to be resolved? What do you hope will come out of a resolution? During conflict, we often focus on "winning" the argument. Changing our perspective helps resolve issues and creates forward thinking solutions. Viewing arguments as opportunities to grow, collaborate, or understand others' perspectives is an important way to re-frame conflict. This thinking leads us toward mutual understanding, resolution, and reduces the likelihood of the conflict arising again.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK OURSELVES

Why is this conflict happening?

What is this issue about, who are you angry at, what are you angry about?

Step back and think: Am I under-reacting, over-reacting, or is my response appropriate?

LISTEN AND USE "I" BASED STATEMENTS

- I felt [emotion]
- When you [description of behavior]
- Because [how did it impact you]
- I would like [future oriented and problem solving statement]

AN EXAMPLE

Hey Angela, I wanted to discuss the other day when we got into a bit of an argument. I felt invalidated and ignored when you spoke over me in the meeting because it made me feel invisible. I would like in the future, if you could be more mindful about speaking over me in meetings.