

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Basics

1. **Be willing to talk.** Conflicts can only be resolved through meaningful dialogue. Remember to take into consideration communication styles and personality differences.
2. **Acknowledge different viewpoints.** People see the same problem through different lenses. There is not such a thing as "the truth." There are only various ways of looking at circumstances that happen to be in disagreement.
3. **Taking responsibility is key.** To come to a resolution, individuals must be willing to see the part they played in the conflict and make every effort to resolve it in a timely manner.
4. **Know what issue you are in disagreement about.** To reach an agreement, make sure you are solving the right and the same problem. Clarify what that is early on!
5. **Allow time to do its magic.** Depending on the seriousness of the issue, it might take some time, in addition to dialogue, for the wounds to heal. Allow the other person the space that he or she might need to go through his/her own healing process.
6. **Sometimes the best resolution to a conflict is to agree to disagree.** If so, make sure to define how it would look like, affect, and work in your particular case/relationship.
7. **Be prepared to have a meaningful dialogue.** When you are ready to talk about your conflict, take the time to prepare and consider the ideal outcome of your conversation. Ensure that both parties are in alignment with your what you are hoping to achieve.

The Process

- STEP 1. Define the issue.** Ensure clarity on your disagreement by naming your disagreement.
- STEP 2. Listen to each side.** Allow for plenty of time for each side to state their thoughts.
- STEP 3. Consider alternatives.** Evaluate potential solutions to address the issue.
- STEP 4. Agree on a solution.** Determine the best course of action and agree on next steps.

The Preparation

- Who should be involved in the discussion about this conflict? Why?
- When and where is the best time and place to discuss the issues related to this conflict?
- What is the conflict about? Are both parties in agreement about what issue needs resolving?
- Write a short CONFLICT STATEMENT from your point of view. Keep it factual and watch out for opinions disguised as facts.
- Taking into account the other party's style, what is the best way to share your viewpoints?
- What is your desired specific outcome for the discussion about this conflict? Does the other party share it?
- What follow up steps could you suggest to make sure the conflict is resolved to everyone's satisfaction?