

Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution -- Quadrants 1 & 3

- **“Conflict is an outgrowth of the diversity that characterizes our thoughts, our attitudes, our beliefs, our perceptions, and our social systems and structure. It is a part of our existence.”** Dudley Weeks, in *The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution*
- **Conflict resolution means settling or solving a disagreement between two or more people.** Effective conflict resolution addresses the root issues of the conflict.
- Constructive conflict resolution aims at solutions that will make the situation better in the future. A collaborative approach to conflict means that the interests of each of those involved need to be communicated, and valued. Center for Conflict Resolution, Salisbury State University, 1999.
- Conflict should not define the relationship. Dudley Weeks, *The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution*
- Good communication is the key to avoiding and resolving conflict.

What causes conflict?

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| <p>Data Conflicts</p> <p>Lack of information Misinformation Different views on what is relevant Different interpretation of data Different assessment procedures</p> | <p>Relationship Conflicts</p> <p>Strong emotions Misperceptions or stereotypes Poor communication Miscommunication Repetitive negative behavior</p> |
| <p>Interest Conflicts</p> <p>Perceived or actual competitive Substantive (content) interests Procedural interests Psychological interests</p> | <p>Value Conflicts</p> <p>Different criteria for evaluating ideas or behavior Exclusive intrinsically valuable goals Different ways of life, ideology, and religion</p> |
| <p>Structural Conflicts</p> | <p>Other?</p> |

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| Destructive patterns of behavior or interaction Unequal control, ownership, or distribution of resources Geographic, physical, or environmental factors that hinder cooperation. Time constraints | |
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How do you respond to conflict?

1. **Accommodating:** I give in
2. **Competing:** I am determined.
3. **Avoiding:** I do not address the problem at all.
4. **Compromising:** I will meet you half way.
5. **Collaborating:** I will work with you to meet both of our needs.

Five Principles of Collaborative Negotiation

1. We, not I versus you
2. Examine the conflict in the context of the relationship
3. The relationship should improve
4. Should result in mutual benefits
5. Relationship building and conflict resolution are connected.

Do you do the following to negotiate collaboratively?

1. Make eye contact?
2. Watch the person's body language and facial expressions?
3. Empathize and try to understand the person's feelings, thoughts, and actions?

4. Keep from interrupting and let the person finish, even though you already know what the person means?
5. Ask questions to clarify information?
6. **Smile** and nod your head to show interest?
7. Listen, even if you do not like the person who is talking or what the person is saying?
8. Listen for and remember important points?
9. Do you ignore outside interruptions?
10. Keep from judging what was said?

(Peer mediation conflict resolution in schools Program Guide, p. 55)