

Steps to take to resolve conflict

1. Before you begin, ask yourself, "What exactly is bothering me? What do I want the other person to do or not do? Am I over-reacting?"
2. Know what your goals are before you begin. What do you want to result from this discussion?
3. Remember that the idea is not to "win" but to come to a mutually satisfying and peaceful solution to the problem.
4. Set an appropriate time to have a discussion with the person with whom you have a conflict. Suddenly bringing up a problem and expecting the other person to be ready to discuss it is not a good idea.
5. State the problem clearly. At first, try to stick to the facts; then, once you've stated the facts, state your feelings. Use "I" messages to describe feelings of anger, hurt, or disappointment. Avoid "you" messages such as "you make me angry...."
6. Ask the other person to set out his or her feelings on the conflict and listen carefully. Be careful not to interrupt, and really try to hear his/ her concerns and feelings.
7. Try to see the problem through his/ her eyes. Sometimes we can understand the other's point of view, even if we do not agree with it.
8. Put forward some ideas to resolve the matter and invite the other person to do the same.
9. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal.
10. Be ready to compromise. Respecting the other person's opinion can be a good starting point to resolve the issue.

VIOLENCE IS NOT THE ANSWER!

A Final Word

Conflict is a normal, inevitable, and even healthy aspect of most relationships. There will always be times when we do not agree with someone else's opinion or when they do something that upsets us or makes us angry.

However, resorting to violence is not the answer. Imagine, one moment of loss of control can change your life forever and can cause irreparable harm, not only to the one we might hurt, but to his/her family and friends.

If you are have a problem and would like to talk to someone about it, please call:

**The Crisis Centre 24-Hour Hotline
328-0922**
or
**The Family Violence Unit
322-4999**



Peaceful Conflict Resolution



The Crisis Centre

P.O. Box EE-17910
Nassau Bahamas

24-Hour Hotline: 328-0922
Family Violence Unit: 322-4999
Fax: 328-7824

email: bahamascrisiscentre@yahoo.com
www.bahamascrisiscentre.org

How do you deal with conflict?

- ◆ Avoid conflict at all costs?
- ◆ Feel that any criticism or disagreement is an attack on you?
- ◆ Feel "out of control" when conflict arises?
- ◆ Withdraw and become silent when you're angry?
- ◆ Feel you must fight back?

At one time or another, most of us have done one or more of these things. That's because in most relationships, conflict inevitably arises, and for many of us it creates significant discomfort. But conflict, if handled appropriately, can actually strengthen relationships and improve our understanding of each other.

When handled badly, conflict can result in broken friendships, ended relationships, serious violent attacks and even death.

What Causes Conflict?

Conflict can arise whenever people - whether close friends, family members, co-workers, partners or strangers - disagree about their thoughts, feelings, desires, ideas, or values.

These differences can range from seemingly unimportant matters to life threatening situations. Regardless of the reason for the disagreement, though, conflict often arouses strong feelings.

Anger and Conflict

Disagreements can lead to people feeling angry or hurt. People generally feel less in control when they are hurt, and they may become angry as a way of feeling more "powerful."

Feeling angry isn't necessarily a problem if that anger is handled constructively. Anger is a normal human emotion, just as normal - and healthy - as joy, happiness, and sadness.

Conflict Styles

Because many people never learned to manage anger constructively, it's very common to handle it in inappropriate ways. Some people get angry easily and express it, but with little control. Others store up problems but do not express them directly. Sometimes the anger builds up inwardly and the person may act out angry feelings in passive ways or turn the anger against themselves, resulting in such activities such as drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders suicidal thoughts.

How to deal with conflict

Resolving conflicts in a peaceful manner is a way to manage conflict and associated feelings effectively. You just need to follow some basic guidelines to help keep your disagreements from becoming destructive.

This may be difficult when you think another's point of view or actions are wrong. But remember, he or she may think the same thing about your ideas. You have to learn to respect others' opinions.

To do this, it is necessary to follow some basic rules.

Rules for resolving conflict

Remain calm. Try not to overreact to difficult situations. By remaining calm it will be more likely that others will consider your views.

Express feelings in words, not actions. Telling someone directly and honestly how you feel can be a very powerful form of communication. If you start to feel so angry or upset that you feel you may lose control, take a "time out" and do something to help yourself feel calmer- walk away, do some deep breathing, become involved in an activity that relaxes you.

Be specific about what is bothering you. You should express clearly but calmly what is causing your anger.

Deal with only one issue at a time. Don't bring up other topics until each is fully discussed.

No "hitting below the belt." Attacking areas of personal sensitivity creates an atmosphere of distrust and anger

Avoid accusations. Accusations will cause others to defend themselves. Instead, talk about how someone's actions made you feel.

Don't generalize. Avoid words like "never" or "always." Such generalizations are usually inaccurate and will heighten tensions.

Avoid refusing to respond appropriately. When one person becomes silent and stops responding to the other, frustration and anger can result.

Listen to what the other person has to say.