

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. After all, people can't be expected to agree on everything all the time. The key is not to fear or try to avoid conflict but to learn how to resolve it constructively. When conflict is mismanaged it can cause great harm to a relationship but when handled in a respectful and positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between people. Whether you're experiencing conflict at home, work, or school, learning these skills can help you resolve differences constructively and build stronger, more rewarding relationships.

Healthy and unhealthy ways of managing and resolving conflict

Unhealthy responses to conflict	Healthy responses to conflict
An inability to recognise and respond to the things that matter to the other person.	The capacity to empathise with the other person's viewpoint.
Explosive, angry, hurtful and resentful reactions.	Calm, non-defensive and respectful responses.
The withdrawal of love, resulting in rejection, isolation, shaming and fear of abandonment.	A readiness to forgive and forget and to move past the conflict without holding resentments or anger.
An inability to compromise or see the other person's side.	The ability to seek compromise and avoid punishing.
By making the argument personal and saying things to hurt the other person.	Be the mature person and communicate your feelings and opinions with dignity.
Becoming aggressive and escalating the situation.	If the other person won't calm down be the responsible person and walk away.

The ability to successfully resolve conflict depends on your ability to:

Remain calm so that you don't escalate the situation.

Control your emotions and behaviour. When you're in control of your emotions you can communicate your needs without threatening, intimidating or punishing others.

Pay attention to the feelings being expressed as well as the spoken words of others.

Be aware of and respect differences. By avoiding disrespectful words and actions you can almost always resolve a problem faster.