

Resolving Conflict

When you want to work things out, just ... **T.H.I.N.K.**

Change the conflict from you versus me, to us versus the problem.
Focus hard on the problem and soft on the people.
Find a solution where you all win something.

Let's Talk

- Invite the other person or people involved to talk about the situation
- Agree on a convenient time and place where you can all discuss the situation
- Identify the issue or issues to discuss
- Agree on guidelines for how you are going to talk

What's Happening?

- Listen first to help the other person feel heard. Then talk.
 - Seek to understand, even if you do not agree.
 - Ask if you understand correctly and if they understand you.
- Take turns talking about the situation.
 - How is it affecting you, the other person/people involved, the larger group?
- Talk so you can be heard.
 - Don't focus on finding fault, focus on the future – how do you want things to be.
 - Take responsibility for your part.
- Emphasize things that you agree on – especially goals you both share.
 - Be patient

Search for Interests

- Look for the interests within stated positions.
 - Instead of fighting over solutions, try to agree on the criteria for what a “good” solution would accomplish.
 - Often what people really want boils down to identity, security, or recognition. Sometimes people just want to be heard and acknowledged.

What's Next?

- Brainstorm several possible solutions that meet the criteria you identified. Be creative.
- Work together to choose one or more solutions that allow you both win something – an all win solution.

Keep talking...

- Now that you've talked things through, keep the lines of communication open. Working through challenges together can help build strong relationships.
- Give each other feedback about how the solution is working. If it doesn't seem to be working well, you may need to go back to Step One and find a time to talk about what's working well and what needs to change.