

GETTING READY FOR YOUR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. DO A WORKSHEET ([LEARN HOW HERE](#))

Trying to resolve a conflict without self-awareness at best makes matters worse.

- Before you schedule a meeting with a conflict resolution facilitator, it's important you're comfortable with the self-awareness, self-disclosure process we use at NRCC.
- It is a critical prerequisite.

Learn about that practice [HERE](#) (LINK)

- After you've worked your way through the material on that page, there is a link at the bottom of the page to connect you to several folks ready to do the process with you.
- After you are comfortable with those skills, you're ready to start conflict resolution.

2. WHEN A CONFLICT IS BREWING... INFORM YOUR CONFLICT PARTNER

When you feel a conflict arise, don't talk. Yet. Do a worksheet and set an appointment with a facilitator. Carefully let your conflict partner know the topic so they don't have to arrive cold.

- Craft your sentences carefully. Don't assign blame, intent, or motive. Simply describe the episode. *Four sentences at most.*
- This happened. Then this happened. No interpretation. No assigned meaning.
- Example, *"There were dishes in the sink after we talked. I had an afflictive emotion. That's what I want to process together at our appointment."*
- This gives your partner time for his/her own internal exploration.

3. SET AN APPOINTMENT WITH A CONFLICT FACILITATOR

Until you have several successful conflict resolutions behind you, do the practice with a third party present. It increases the odds of a successful resolution exponentially.

- Our conflict resolution facilitators don't mediate conflicts. They simply help people learn a new way to communicate, and stick to it. We resolve our own conflicts.
- Because conflict comes with such powerful emotion it is difficult not to fall back into old patterns.
- So make the appointment.

4. GET YOUR HEAD STRAIGHT BEFORE YOU SHOW UP

Of course, your conflict partner is Satan incarnate! Everybody can see that!

Of course you want to unleash righteous fire or icy withdraw. Who wouldn't!?

- But odds are, you've tried all those old patterns before.
- Odds are they haven't worked.

This process is different. It is about intentional understanding and being understood.

- Which sounds simple. But it isn't.
- So you'll need to get your head straight before you show up.
- As many times as you've been over the same territory, show up to learn something you didn't know. As many times as you've been disregarded or dismissed, show up to understand something you haven't. Come to explore and reveal. Come curious. Come to learn your partner's story, and tell your own more deeply.
- Your facilitator will help you create a safe environment for this kind of exploration, but all the safety in the world won't help, if you don't show up with your head in the right space.

5. DEEP LISTENING IS THE KEY

Again, we use our self-awareness, self-disclosure practice to help us resolve conflicts.

- However, there are a few additional steps added in to help us navigate the strong emotion that comes with conflict.

The rules of listening are particularly strict. (Listen to the audio clips. There's a lot to this part.)

- The message sender shares his/her worksheet.
- Without commentary or rebuttal, and with positive, encouraging body language, the message receiver does the hard work of understanding.
- When telling your own story, work really hard not to tell your partner's story -- especially their motives and intent.
- Example: "*You ignored me*" assigns intent. "*I felt ignored*" tells your own story.

When the sender has finished telling his/her story, the receiver summarizes what he/she heard.

- Often, upon hearing their story retold, the sender will want to clarify or add something. This goes back and forth until the sender says, "*Yes. You understand me.*"
- Then the partners exchange roles.
- The original sender becomes the receiver and vice versa, and the process is repeated.

The whole thing sounds deceptively simple written down like that. But again, it's not.

- Again, the audio clips will fill in some essential background. Be sure to listen.

6. INFORMED NEGOTIATION

The work of understanding and being understood helps us unearth the "thing under the thing."

- It makes us aware of hidden sources driving our conflicts.

Thus informed, we are better able to resolve our conflicts.

- We often start conflicts, thinking they are about money, or sex, or harsh words. But this process unearths what's going on *beneath* those surface issues.
- We come to understand the thing that actually needs to be resolved.

Informed negotiation works to resolve the deep drivers of our conflicts.

- However, informed negotiation is more art than science.
- Consequently, until you get the knack, do the process with a facilitator. They've done the process several times. They can help come to a good negotiated outcome.
- Again, listen to the audio clips. They will tell you more.
- And again, set an appointment with a facilitator at the bottom of the conflict-resolution page on our website.