

Conflict resolution, or reconciliation, is a way for two or more individuals or groups to come to a peaceful solution to a disagreement. When conflict is resolved effectively, it can strengthen relationships, increase trust, and facilitate resolution and personal growth.

Pride, anger, and avoidance of resolution can prolong and even escalate a conflict. Talking things out with the other person is often the first step to resolution. Both sides should talk, listen, and sincerely attempt to understand each other. Remember, people respond to conflicts based on their own perceptions of the situation, having been influenced by experience, values, cultural background, and beliefs.

Guidelines for Effective Conflict Resolution

- Make resolution and maintaining the relationship your priority. Do not focus on being right or "winning" the argument.
- Understand and articulate what boundaries you need in a given situation and understand and respect the boundaries of the other person.
- Be assertive. Assertiveness is open, honest, direct, and above all – appropriate. Respect yourself and your right to voice your opinion and feelings. Express yourself with clarity, honesty, and confidence without discounting the basic rights and perspective of the other person.
- Use "I" statements to avoid putting the other person on the defensive. For example: "I feel X when you do Y because of Z, and in the future, I would like it if A, B, or C."
- Avoid words that blame or are absolute (i.e. never, don't, always).
- Don't make excuses or beat around the bush.
- Manage your stress, emotions, and behavior so you can communicate your needs without threatening, intimidating, or punishing the other person.
- Respect and be aware of differences. Avoid disrespectful words and actions.
- Apologize. A genuine apology involves accepting responsibility and expressing sincere regret. Apologize as soon as you feel comfortable and make restitution if possible.
- Compromise. Define your terms, validate the other person's terms, and be willing to give up something in order to gain resolution and understanding. Be flexible but do not act against your core beliefs and never sacrifice your physical or emotional safety.
- Be willing to forgive and focus on the present. Grudges and resentment impair your ability to see the reality of a current situation. Instead of assigning blame from the past, focus on what you can do to solve the present problem and move forward.
- Listen for what is both said and felt. Being conscious of your own needs and emotions and those of other people facilitates effective listening and understanding.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

David O. McKay Center for Intercultural Understanding

If you cannot resolve a conflict by yourself, the David O. McKay Center offers resources for further reading, appointments for advice, workshops and seminars, classes, and mediation services. Visit mckaycenter.byuh.edu for more information.

The Anatomy of Peace The Arbinger Institute

churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/strengthening-the-family-instructors-guide/session-seven-resolving-conflict