

Resolving Conflict



What Is Conflict?

Conflict is when people have a serious disagreement. It can last for a long time and be difficult to solve. Sometimes conflicts can involve physical violence.

At some point in our lives, we all come in to conflict with people. Learning how to resolve (end) conflict is an important life skill.



Think
about
it!

Have you ever been in conflict with someone?
What happened? Did you resolve it?

What Causes Conflict?

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Why do you think conflict happens?

Conflict can be caused by lots of things.
Some of them include:

- different beliefs, such as political or religious beliefs;
- stubbornness – refusing to see things from someone else's point of view;
- past arguments that haven't been sorted out.

How Can We Resolve Conflict?

Write down as many ways as you can think of to resolve conflict – that is, to make things better with someone you have fallen out with.



Feeling Angry

A big part of resolving a conflict is managing our emotions. Feelings like anger or frustration can make us do and say things we shouldn't. There are lots of ways we can help manage these emotions.

When you feel angry, a good way to deal with this is to slowly count to ten. As you are doing this, try to breathe in and out slowly.

1...2...3...4...5...
6...7...8...9...10



When you are feeling angry, it can be tricky to resolve a conflict. It can sometimes be a good idea to walk away from a conflict and then discuss it later when everyone is feeling a bit calmer.

Try counting to ten slowly. Try to control your breathing as you do it. How do you feel?

Words

There is an old saying, 'The tongue can bring death or life'. This means that words have power for good and bad. In conflict, words can make things better or worse.

When you are in conflict, be careful with the words you use. Don't call anyone names or use unkind words.

Try to explain how you are feeling and why you feel that way. Instead of saying "You have made me angry," try saying "I feel angry because..."

When we have fallen out with someone, it is easy to raise our voice. When resolving a conflict, try to keep your voice at a low level as if you were talking to someone sitting next to you in the classroom.

The word 'sorry' is a great way to resolve a conflict. However, using it properly is important. Instead of saying, "I am sorry you're upset," try saying "I am sorry I upset you."

Other Ways to Resolve Conflict

Listening to others is a good way to help resolve conflict. Try to listen carefully to what the other person is saying instead of only talking.



It can be tricky to solve a conflict and sometimes you might need some outside help. Find someone that everyone involved trusts. It could be a sensible class member or an adult from your school. Calmly, explain what has happened and listen to their advice.

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Have you tried any of these methods?
What happened?

Other Ways to Resolve Conflict

Compromise is when people agree to give up on a bit of something they might want in order to find a fair solution to a problem. If all the people in a conflict compromise a bit, you should be able to find a fair solution.

Empathy is when you try to understand how another person is feeling. Use your imagination to think about how the other person is feeling.



Think
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Have you tried any of these methods?
What happened?

Famous Words about Conflict

Think about some of these quotations about conflict. Talk with an adult about your understanding of them.

“Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.” – Ronald Reagan, former United States President.

“Whenever you’re in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.” – William James

“I try to take every conflict, every experience and learn from it.” – Oprah Winfrey

“There is no conflict in the world that cannot be solved.” – Jonathan Powell