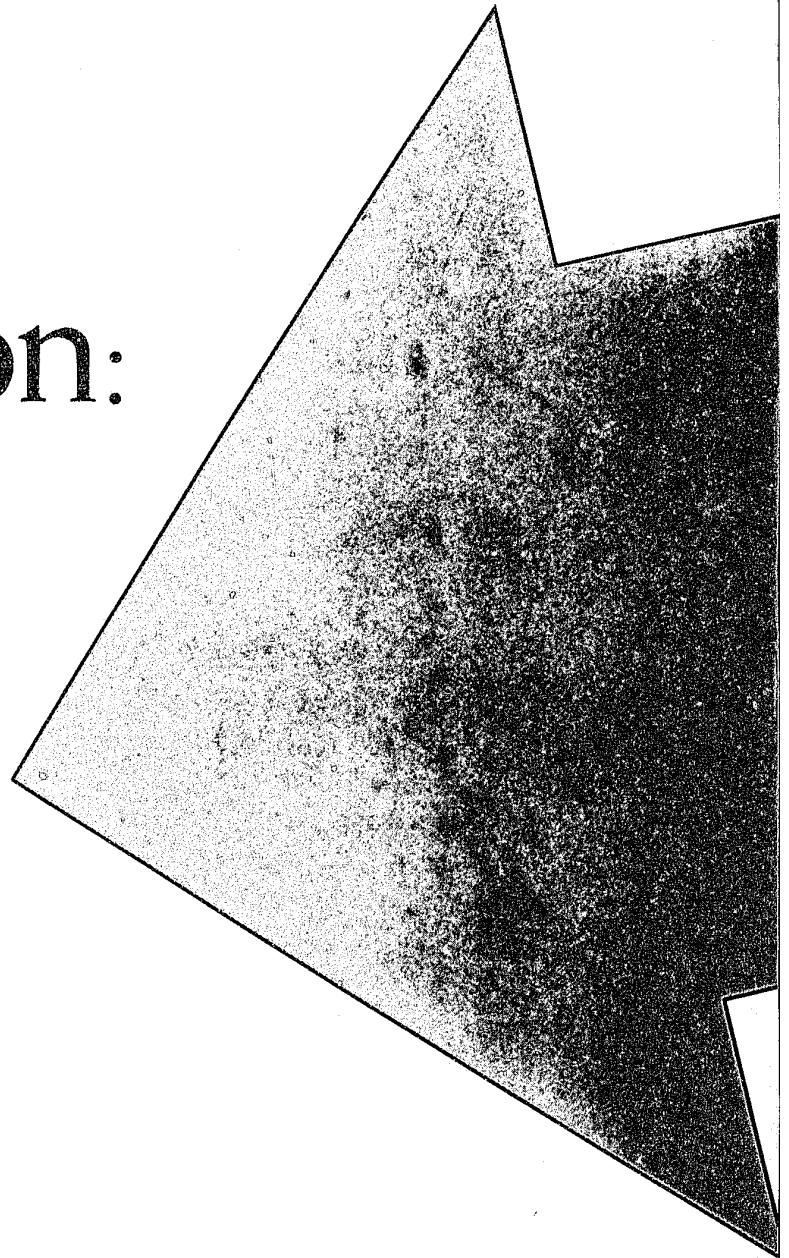


112447

Conflict Resolution:

A SECONDARY
SCHOOL CURRICULUM



CONFLICT RESOLUTION RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS AND YOUTH
THE COMMUNITY BOARD PROGRAM, INC.

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material in microfiche only has been granted by

Community Board Program

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

Conflict Resolution: *a Secondary School Curriculum*

The Community Board Program, Inc.
149 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 552-1250

© 1987 The Community Board Program, Inc.

NCJRS

FEB 9 Rec'd

ACQUISITIONS

The design and layout of this book are by
Epistemological Engineering of Oakland, California.
All formatting was performed on Apple® Macintosh™
computers, using Microsoft® Word version 3.0 and an
Apple LaserWriter™ Plus printer.

FOREWORD

Since this volume was originally published in 1987, the concepts and activities presented have been field tested by hundreds of educators. This field testing has demonstrated the curriculum's tremendous range of applications:

- Students in public and private school classrooms gained insight into their ways of handling conflict, enhanced their self-esteem, and strengthened their decision-making abilities;
- Wards in correctional facilities learned constructive problem-solving;
- Youth in employment-preparation programs experimented with constructive ways to deal with conflict in the workplace;
- Students with severe behavioral disorders were able to initiate positive interactions with their peers;

In their evaluations of the curriculum, many teachers noted that prejudice—including racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia—are frequently at the bottom of youth conflicts. Ideally this curriculum would address these important subjects in greater detail and depth. As we considered this undertaking, however, it quickly became apparent that a sensitive treatment of these topics would require another volume of at least the same size.

For the time being, we have decided to limit this curriculum to activities focusing on some of the dynamics underlying prejudice—the differences in values, assumptions, and perceptions between people. For teachers who want to introduce the topic of prejudice, we recommend these activities as a beginning point. We sincerely hope that at a future point we can publish a companion volume that explores in depth the role of prejudice in interpersonal conflict.

PREFACE

This secondary school text on conflict resolution presents a radical idea: *Conflict is positive and can serve to enhance important relationships.* This idea is reflected in the work of one of the nation's first community and school conflict resolution organizations, the Community Board Program of San Francisco.

In a world where conflict is quickly equated with violence, it is important to distinguish between the two in order to underscore the opportunities presented by conflict. When violence emerges, these opportunities are lost. Because TV, movies, and popular works so often extol the virtues of violence, it is crucial that we embrace the positive aspects of conflict and articulate these as essential life skills. This is particularly important for those of us who are involved in teaching young people about the world.

In many respects, a conflict is what the disputants perceive it to be. Conflicts emerge out of the commonplace events of everyday life and demonstrate what the disputants consider to be important and relevant to them. Thus, *the elements for the peaceful settlement of a conflict are to be found in the conflict itself.* How one goes about pulling these elements out of the conflict is, in fact, the real purpose of this curriculum.

Through our work over the past ten years, we at the Community Board Program have found that the starting point in finding a resolution to conflict is the active participation of the disputants. In order to resolve a dispute, it is crucial that the disputants communicate directly to one another why the dispute is important, what it means to them, what emotions it has generated, what fears and angers have arisen, and what attitudes and impressions they have of the other disputant. It is in this direct communication that several things happen:

- Each disputant learns something about the dispute from the other's perspective.
- Each disputant sees how the other disputant could have misunderstood his or her actions, motives, and intents.
- Each disputant learns what is at stake for the other and what the conflict means to him or her.

And, perhaps most important, each disputant comes to appreciate the significance of the *relationship* that generated the dispute in the first place. For one of the undeniable realities of most conflicts is that they take place within the context of an interpersonal relationship. This is true in the school setting, and also in the society at large where the vast majority of homicides, felonious assaults, and civil litigations are not between strangers, but between people who know one another — often quite well. It is this interpersonal factor that creates the intensity of the dispute and generates deep feelings of anger, wrongdoing, and mistrust.

In this text, teachers and students will learn how to become empowered to express and resolve their own conflicts. This text does not focus on the process of using courts, lawyers, or arbitrators to make decisions when disagreements arise (although this may be appropriate in some situations). Rather, it is about how to mine the "gold" in a conflict through direct communication between the disputants themselves.

The skills presented in this text will enable students to reduce the tensions and hostilities associated with conflict. At the same time, they will learn how to acknowledge one another, and how to come to an understanding based on the real needs of both people involved in the dispute. In short, this text is about developing new life skills that students can use to deal effectively with everyday conflict and improve the quality of their own lives. This skill building is especially important for young people because they often feel powerless. The ability to express issues and resolve

differences voluntarily is empowering and can have a positive impact on self-esteem.

From a larger social perspective, the direct expression and resolution of conflict creates unique opportunities to learn more about ourselves and the increasing cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity within American schools and society. Through the conflict resolution model presented in this curriculum, students are encouraged to use these differences as an opening to learn more about one another, and to appreciate the multi-dimensionality of personal interactions and relationships.

However, the ability to express and resolve one's conflicts is not simply a matter of personal power or increased understanding and appreciation of differences. It can also be seen as a *responsibility* inherent in citizenship in a democratic society. Because the state can intervene in a conflict only after there has been a violation of law, the work of prevention and early intervention in conflicts — before they escalate to violence — is incumbent upon individuals. When students peacefully express concerns and seek cooperative resolutions, they promote the values and viability of democracy.

The mission of the Community Board Program's school efforts is to make the resolution of conflict the "Fourth R" of our educational system. You, as a teacher, are at the critical edge of this effort. Your work in modeling new forms of conflict resolution advances the cause of peace in our complex, heterogeneous, democratic society. To you — and to your students who practice the skills of peace — this curriculum on Conflict Resolution is appreciatively dedicated.

Community Board Program

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Gail Sadalla, Manti Henriquez, and Meg Holmberg of the Community Board Program, special appreciation is particularly warranted. Without their creative thoughts, writing, editing, and overall development and management of the materials for this publication project, it would still remain a concept outlined in a funding proposal. For establishing the project and generating the necessary funds appreciation is extended to Raymond Shonholtz.

To Jim Ford Halligan, who worked on initial drafts of the background material and activities included in this curriculum, we also extend special thanks.

For their written contributions, comments, and critiques, appreciation is extended to Terry Amsler, Helena Davis, Lisa Hunter, Gail Kaplan, and Donna Lloyd-Rolkin. Moreover, without Tim Erickson, Inge Khoury, Judith Lynch, Dick Price and Janet Tom, the word processing, manuscript preparation, editing, typesetting, obtaining publishers' copyright permissions, and the dozen of unsung deeds that make all good endeavors of this magnitude a tangible reality would not have been accomplished. To each and all our heartfelt thanks.

Innovations require risk takers and supporters. To the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Community Board Program wishes to acknowledge its gratitude for support and encouragement. Special appreciation is extended to Donna Terman and Deborah Wood of the Foundation for their consistent attention to our needs and continued support for the publication project.

This publication has been a major enterprise for the Community Board Program and represents a collective commitment to the transmission of conflict resolution theory and practice to the secondary students of this and future generations.

CONTENTS

Introductory Material	Overview of the Curriculum	salmon tab
	Special Concerns in Teaching About Conflict Resolution	Intro-3
	Guidelines for Conducting Role Plays	Intro-7
Chapter 1	Understanding Conflict Activities	yellow tab 1-13
Chapter 2	Conflict Styles Activities	tan tab 2-7
Chapter 3	Communication: An Overview Activities	blue tab 3-9
Chapter 4	Skills for Effective Communication Activities	pink tab 4-9
Chapter 5	Resolving Conflicts Activities	green tab 5-13
Appendix A	Values Implicit in Teaching Conflict Resolution to Students	grey tab
Appendix B	Services for Educators	Appendices-5
Appendix C	Questions for Guiding Discussion of Role Play Exercises	Appendices-7
Appendix D	Bibliography	Appendices-11
Appendix E	Activity Index	Appendices-13

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

This curriculum is designed to help secondary students better understand and resolve the conflicts they encounter in their own lives — at school, at home, and in the community.

The curriculum is divided into five chapters:

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Understanding Conflict | Helps students define conflict and its connotations; identifies common societal messages about conflict; reviews the major kinds of conflicts we encounter. |
| 2 | Conflict Styles | Considers three basic styles of resolving conflicts and the effectiveness of each. |
| 3 | Communication: An Overview | Describes the communication process and the factors that influence it. |
| 4 | Skills for Effective Communication | Provides skill building in basic positive communication behaviors. |
| 5 | Resolving Conflicts | Provides practice in an informal collaborative conflict resolution process; describes the spectrum of third-party processes. |

Within each chapter, you will find teacher background information to help you understand the key concepts you will be presenting to students, followed by a series of activities. Some of these activities are marked with the symbol ¶. These are "Key Activities" and their use is highly recommended to assure that students master the

basic concepts. Other activities are marked with the symbol ⊕. These are "Supplementary Activities," and you may use them if you want to give students additional practice in a particular skill, or to strengthen their understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

The activities can be used as part of a specialized course or unit on "Conflict Resolution," or they can be integrated into the curriculum for Social Studies, English, or Family Life Education.

Before you begin teaching this curriculum, we suggest that you read through the "Special Concerns in Teaching about Conflict Resolution" that follows this overview. If you are not experienced in using role-plays in your teaching, you may also wish to read through the "Guidelines for Conducting Role Plays" section.

Except in a handful of instances, the student activities included in this field test version of the curriculum are not designated by grade level. The appropriateness of the activities may differ by school, or even within the same school for the same grade level. We encourage you to use those exercises and handouts which seem most appropriate, and to let us know of your experiences. Your feedback is important during this period of field testing.

Finally, the impacts of culture and ethnicity on communication and conflict resolution are substantial. We make no claim that this curriculum does justice, in any complete way, to this subject area. We look forward to more study and writing in this area, and, again, we invite your feedback and ideas.

SPECIAL CONCERNS IN TEACHING ABOUT CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Preparation

Most of the learning in this course will take place through the use of structured activities, such as record-keeping, role-plays and group discussion. It is important to be well-prepared and well-organized for these activities so that they progress quickly and efficiently. This will allow more time for discussion of what students have learned from each activity.

The Teacher as Facilitator

In experiential learning, the processing and discussion of structured experiences is the key to helping students draw conclusions from what they have done. It is at this point that your role as facilitator — rather than as traditional classroom teacher — is crucial.

Students should arrive at their own conclusions instead of receiving pat answers; they will own what they have learned more readily if it comes from within them. Your support and encouragement in the form of active listening and open-ended questions (how, what, why, when), as opposed to those which can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," will help students explore their own ideas and feelings. This places a heavy burden on you, the teacher, since you are the role model for the skills that students will learn.

Ground Rules

You and your students should agree on at least three ground rules to inspire trust, openness and cooperation:

- respect one another's ideas and feelings;
- what is said in class (personal conflicts and names mentioned) is not repeated outside of class;
- students will receive support from their classmates and teacher as they take risks and try out new skills and ideas, i.e., no one will be put down or made fun of as they participate.

Things to keep in mind

If you will keep in mind the following, you and your students will have an extremely successful and rewarding experience:

1. There are no right or wrong answers, just differences in points of view. Do not judge students' responses, even if they seem off track. Simply thank the student for the contribution and call on someone else. If the class seems to be off the track, they may need help in the form of questions. (Suggested questions for facilitating discussion are included in an appendix.)
2. Students are taking a big risk in sharing their feelings. Encourage them, support them and positively value what they offer. At the same time, respect students' rights to decide not to share. If a student doesn't want to reveal something, *don't push*. Just say, "O.K." or "I respect your decision not to share that" and go on to someone else.
3. Show your respect for students by guaranteeing confidentiality and elicit an agreement from all students that whatever is said in the class (personal conflicts and names mentioned) stays in the class. This includes you, too. Be sure to let the students know you are included in the agreement.
4. Take some risks yourself. Join in the activities whenever it is possible and, at the very least, share some of your feelings with the students. The more open and honest you are, the more open and honest your students will be.

Students need boundaries and direction; they need to know where they are, where they've been and where they're going. Be sure to take a moment at the beginning of each session to focus them. In this way, each activity will be seen as part of a whole instead of as an isolated unit which has no relationship to the other units in the course.

Summary

In summary,

1. Establish ground rules for the class.
2. On the first day of the course, review the course organization with the students.
3. At the beginning of each section, review the outcomes with the students.
4. At the beginning of each activity, review with students the purpose and how the activity fits into the unit as a whole.
5. Never expect students to do anything you would be unwilling to do yourself.

Notes

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING ROLE PLAYS

Role playing is used frequently throughout the activities as a tool to help students practice the conflict resolution skills. Students will break into small groups to practice, and you will move among the groups to facilitate. Thus, you should be thoroughly familiar with how to facilitate each step of a role play.

A role play activity has four distinct parts:

- Preparation (done by the trainer before the session)
- Introduction
- The role play
- Discussion following the role play

Preparation

1. Determine the purpose of the role play and appropriateness to objectives.
2. If the role play has written, established roles, study and confirm the suitability for the group.
3. If the role play is not a prepared one, take the following steps:
 - ☞ develop a situation (realistic, not contrived)
 - ☞ define the problem or issues in the situation that the role plays have to deal with
 - ☞ determine the number of role players needed and whether or not you want to use observers

- ✎ develop the specific roles for each role person.
(These may be briefly written — as short as a sentence or two, or as long as a few paragraphs).
What should the person be like? What characteristics and background should he/she have? How does this person feel about the other person(s) in the situation? the problem?
- 4. Determine how you want to stage the role play, e.g., one role play enactment observed by the total group? Simultaneous enactments with everyone participating in the same role play at the same time? Take time into consideration.
- 5. Develop a set of questions or a discussion guide for the post-role-play processing.

Introduction

1. Describe the purpose of the role play to students.
2. Describe the situation briefly and clearly, even if prepared, written roles are used.
3. Unless everyone is participating, select role players. Take care in assigning roles (e.g. do not choose students who might over-identify with the problem, etc.). Choose fictitious names for the role play characters and give each participant a name tag. This helps assure that the other students do not confuse the players with their roles
4. Brief the actors. Allow enough time for students to understand/read roles. Tell actors how much time they will have to complete the role play and processing.
5. Assign tasks, or structure what the audience or observers should look for.
6. Set the scene by defining the physical situation and mood. Help relieve tension and anxiety of actors by smiling, making physical contact, checking for readiness.

Remember, most of the common problems in managing role plays can be avoided with a carefully prepared and delivered introduction.

Monitoring the role play

1. Start the action
2. Stay out of role players' lines of vision. Quietly observe.
3. Coach or intervene *only if absolutely necessary*. Students need to use as much time as possible to practice. Intervention should occur only if students are completely bogged down or off the track and cannot correct the situation themselves. Interventions should be short, clear and concise.
4. If the role play does not come to a natural end in the specified time, cut it gently. Just a few minutes' interaction will provide enough data for a long discussion.
5. Thank the role players, using their *real* names. This removes students from their roles and provides a bridge to the discussion to follow.

Discussion following the role play

1. De-role participants by having them remove their name tags. Generally, allow role players to comment first. If the role play was an adverse situation, allow the person who is in the "hot seat" (the one who has responsibility for problem solving) to go first; then the antagonist.
2. Open discussion to the audience and/or observers. Try to trace the way the situation and interaction developed; why the role players behaved as they did; how the interaction might have gone differently (to achieve a better outcome).
3. Encourage audience/observers to describe their own feelings as certain events occurred, rather than only analyzing or dissecting the behavior of the role players.

4. Summarize the major issues. Tie these issues to the purpose of the role play. Stay focused on what the role play contributed to the understanding of the problem that was being dramatized and/or the attempt to solve the problem.

1 UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

Chapter One Background

Conflict is featured daily in the news. It takes many forms — from international disputes, political battles, and border incidents, to personal quarrels that have escalated into assault or even homicide.

Conflict is also a daily part of student life. Although educators often associate student conflict with extreme hostility or violence, most student conflicts are far more mundane. They typically involve day-to-day disagreements over rumors, boyfriends/girlfriends, and the like.

Classroom teachers spend a large percentage of their time and energy trying to manage classroom conflicts — along with the many other conflicts that may arise with administrators, other teachers, and parents. Together, these conflicts contribute to a body of tension that can become an enormous obstacle to the classroom goals of learning, teaching, cooperating and having fun. Since similar dynamics exist in almost every school, it is not surprising that so many teachers and students believe that conflict is negative and unproductive.

The Potential Value of Conflict

Conflict resolution work — whether in neighborhoods, businesses, or schools — is based on the idea that conflict has a positive value. If handled constructively, conflict can have many benefits. It can help us to:

- learn new and better ways to respond to problems;
- build better and more lasting relationships;
- learn more about ourselves and others.

Once we have experienced the benefits of constructive conflict resolution, we will be more likely to reach positive resolutions to future conflicts.

Constructive conflict resolution can benefit entire groups as well as individuals. As relationships between members of a group are strengthened through positive approaches to conflict, the identity of the whole group becomes stronger, and a sense of community grows.

Conflict Resolution in the Classroom

The benefits of constructive conflict resolution are easily observed in a school setting. A class that has learned as a group to express its conflicts positively will display greater cohesiveness, cooperation and willingness to work together. Students will learn to take greater responsibility for themselves, for their behavior, and for the environment in which they are working and learning. At the same time, they will acquire valuable skills that can be applied both in and out of the classroom. They will learn to:

- communicate with one another more effectively;
- express themselves more clearly;
- listen more openly.

They will also have the opportunity to improve their ability to solve problems and to think creatively. Peripherally, the activities in which they participate will provide reinforcement for their reading and writing skills.

A Definition of Conflict

The word conflict is derived from the Latin *conflictus* meaning "to strike together." Webster's Third International Dictionary defines conflict as "a clash, competition, or mutual interference of opposing or incompatible forces or qualities, (such as ideas, interests or wills)." A simpler definition that might be used with younger students is that conflict is "a disagreement between two or more people."

Most youth agree that they experience a great deal of conflict, and that the word itself carries many associations for them. Therefore, while a dictionary definition is a helpful place to start, students will need the opportunity to consider what they already know and believe about conflict, the role it plays in their lives, what it means to them, and how it affects them. From this exploration, students can construct their own definitions of conflict. A

Attitudes Toward Conflict

useful place to begin in introducing students to conflict resolution is to discuss what words, feelings, and associations come to mind when they think of "conflict."

When asked to brainstorm words and images associated with conflict, most groups — adults as well as students — generate lists that include a majority of negative words, feelings, and associations such as "anger," "hostility," "violence," or "hate." This might indicate that most of us approach conflict with a negative attitude or belief which says that conflict is bad and that it causes pain, stress, fear, and sour relationships.

The negative connotations that all of us have about conflict are the result of the messages we have received and assimilated from parents, teachers, peers, the media, literature, and our own experiences. These messages help to build a set of attitudes and beliefs about conflict that affect how we interact with others and how we respond in conflict situations.

These beliefs and attitudes are largely negative:

"Don't get mad, get even."

"An eye for an eye."

"Conflict is hard, often painful."

"If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."

"Conflict is a waste of time and energy."

"Nice girls don't fight."

If we are going to effectively teach students about conflict, it is important that we, too, examine our own beliefs about conflict, and the way we react to conflict situations. For example, when conflict occurs in the classroom, how do we respond? Do we attempt to stop it by separating the students? Do we ignore it? Do we punish the students involved? Do we encourage the students to talk about it?

Most teachers have probably responded in each of these ways at different times, depending on the situation.

However, there are probably one or two responses that each teacher makes most often.

Just as important as how we behave in conflict is our inner reaction. What feelings are evoked by the occurrence of conflict in the classroom? Do we view it as an opportunity for learning, or as a problem to be overcome? In examining these issues, it is helpful to view our individual behavior in conflict situations as a cycle that occurs continuously.

The Conflict Cycle

Our individual experience of conflict seems to move through a series of phases that together make up a self-perpetuating cycle. This cycle can be positive or negative. By examining the cycle of conflict for ourselves and with our students, we can provide a vocabulary and a map for thinking about the ways in which conflict operates in our lives.

Phase 1: Attitudes and Beliefs

The cycle begins for all of us with our beliefs and attitudes about conflict. As we have seen, these beliefs and attitudes stem from many sources —

- childhood messages we received about conflict
- the behaviors modeled by parents, teachers and friends
- the attitudes presented by the media (T.V., movies, etc.)
- our own experiences with conflict

Our beliefs and attitudes affect how we will respond when conflict occurs.

For example, Jean comes from a family in which conflict was never expressed openly. Although there were many occasions when the tension resulting from a conflict could be felt in the house, everyone pretended that there was nothing wrong, and feelings of anger or frustration were never expressed. These tensions caused stress for all members of the family. Jean came to believe that conflict is negative, that it causes tension, discomfort and strain, and that dealing openly with conflict should be avoided.

**Phase Two:
The Conflict**

In the next phase of the cycle, a conflict occurs. In the example, Jean and her friend Margaret are with a group of friends. Jean and Margaret have known each other for some time and occasionally have lunch together. Margaret often dominates their conversations, but Jean has never voiced any objection to this. On this occasion, Jean begins talking about her plans for the upcoming weekend. As soon as she begins to describe her plans, Margaret interrupts and begins talking about her weekend plans. Jean feels disregarded and embarrassed in front of the group and thinks that they are uninterested in what she has to say. Jean is experiencing a conflict.

**Phase Three:
The Response**

The response is the point where we take action. We might begin to shout, or we might attempt to talk about the situation, or we might simply leave. Given our personal set of beliefs and attitudes, we will often react in the same general way no matter what the particular conflict. Thus, these reactions can tell us much about ourselves and our patterns in conflict situations. (In Chapter 2, we will discuss in depth the variety of ways in which people respond to conflict.)

In the case of Jean and Margaret, Jean's response is based on her belief that open expression of anger or frustration is negative and that conflict should be avoided at all costs. She responds by becoming silent and sulking. Margaret notices Jean's silence and asks what is wrong. Jean says, "Nothing" and excuses herself from the group saying that she must be going. Jean has responded by stifling her feelings and denying the conflict.

**Phase Four:
The Consequence**

The response leads, in turn, to a consequence. The consequences of Jean's not dealing directly with Margaret are continued hurt feelings, frustration, a strained relationship, and perhaps a feeling on Jean's part that she is uninteresting or is disliked by others (lack of self-esteem). These consequences serve to reinforce Jean's belief that conflict is negative and that it causes discomfort and pain. This, in turn, brings her back to the beginning of the cycle. For most of us, the outcome of the conflict cycle reinforces our belief system and leads to perpetuation of the same pattern.

Changing the Pattern

If we are to learn from conflict and change our patterns, we need three things:

- awareness
- willingness
- skills.

Awareness

In order to break the pattern that holds us in conflict and keeps us from resolving the conflict productively, we first need to gain an *awareness* of the beliefs and responses that perpetuate our negative behavior. Reflection is a vital step in gaining this awareness. We can ask ourselves:

- How do we usually respond to a conflict situation? Do we feel accused and compelled to defend ourselves? Do we deny that there is really a conflict? Do we assume that there is no way it will turn out well?
- What might have helped this conflict to unfold differently?

The answers to these questions can lead to new insights about our feelings, reactions and beliefs. Aided by this new understanding, we can begin to identify alternative responses to the conflict. With the realization that we don't have to respond in ways that will prolong or worsen the problem, we can then return to the other person and try another response. If that is not possible, we can move forward with new knowledge about ourselves and our choices, knowing that, even though conflict is inevitable, it need not be destructive.

Willingness

Self-awareness alone is not sufficient to change our usual pattern of behavior in conflict. Such change also requires a personal commitment — a *willingness* to change at many different levels.

- We must be willing to experiment with and work on new approaches to conflict.
- We must be willing to examine and perhaps change parts of our belief structure, and to notice what

parts of that structure do not serve us well in conflict situations.

- We must be willing to see conflict — and ourselves within it — in what will probably be an entirely new light.

In teaching students new ways to handle conflicts, we are asking them to change behavior that they probably have been using for a long time. Even with a stated willingness, this is not something that is likely to happen quickly or easily. Handling a conflict differently once doesn't mean the pattern is changed forever. Rather, the change is a continuing process in which most students will need guidance, encouragement and appreciation for the attempts they make. They will need help from you and from their peers in seeing the positive and negative effects of their responses.

Skills

Once a decision is made that change is desirable, we must learn the *skills* required to enact a change. There are two primary skills necessary for conflict resolution:

- The ability to convey an effective message — one which clearly states feelings and needs in a non-threatening way;
- The ability to listen effectively.

These skills will be explored further in Chapter 4.

The ability to use listening and speaking skills in responding to a conflict situation will largely determine whether the conflict escalates, or de-escalates.

Escalation and De-escalation of Conflict

The effect of most responses to a conflict is either escalation or de-escalation. In reflecting about how we might best respond to a conflict situation, it is helpful to understand the conditions that contribute to each of these.

A conflict will be more likely to escalate when:

- Other people become involved in the dispute and take sides;
- One or both people feel threatened by the other;
- There is no interest or investment in maintaining the relationship, or there is a history of unproductive, negative conflict between the parties;
- There is an increase in the acting out (indirect expression) of anger, fear or frustration;
- Important needs involved are not acknowledged and met;
- There is a lack of the skills necessary for peacemaking or a lack of awareness of the skills the parties do, in fact, possess.

A conflict will decrease or de-escalate when:

- Those involved focus on the problem rather than on each other;
- Emotions of anger, fear and frustration are expressed directly rather than demonstrated indirectly;
- Threats are reduced or eliminated;
- The people involved have cooperated well prior to the dispute;
- Needs are openly discussed;
- The people involved are able to use their peacemaking skills, or they receive some help in applying them.

The Causes of Conflict

The causes of conflict are infinite. But they can be categorized into three levels:*

- 1) Conflicts over resources
- 2) Conflicts over psychological needs
- 3) Conflicts involving values

Many disputes involve a combination of two of these levels, or even all three. In addition, as one moves from level one to level three, conflicts become more difficult to resolve. A conflict over resources will usually be more easily resolved than a conflict over psychological needs, and either will be more easily resolved than a conflict over values. Conflicts over values are the most difficult to resolve because they involve the things we hold most dear — the beliefs that shape our identity and give meaning to our lives.

Conflicts over Resources

Conflicts over resources are normally the easiest to identify and resolve. They occur when two people want the same thing and there is not enough to go around. The resource is usually the first point of contention to be identified in a conflict situation, and the heat of the dispute will most often be focused there. "He took my seat. I only got up to get paper." Although the chair may occasionally represent the entire problem, that is seldom the case.

* Adapted from *Creative Conflict Resolution* by William J. Kreidler, Scott, Foresman and Co., Cambridge, MA, 1984

**Conflicts over
Psychological Needs**

Conflicts over psychological needs. Youth have many needs, such as power, friendship, belonging, and accomplishment. Clashes over these needs are commonly played out over material things. The student above who appears upset over losing his/her seat, may be needing to sit next to someone whose acceptance is important to him/her. Since these motivations are less obvious, disputes of this type are harder to resolve. If the student is unable to express his/her need, the conflict is unlikely to be resolved. Even if a mechanical solution about the chair is reached, the conflict will often reappear, expressed over something else.

**Conflicts Involving
Values**

Conflicts involving values. Values are the basis of our belief system, and because of this, these disagreements are the most difficult to resolve. Challenges to our values are challenges to our very selves. We respond to them with the most deep-seated defensiveness and tenacity. In the midst of conflicts that involve value differences, it is most difficult to abandon old patterns and choose to make new responses.

Resolving conflicts that involve underlying value differences doesn't necessarily mean a realignment of the values on either or both sides. Often a mutual acknowledgement that each person is seeing the world and the immediate situation very differently will help make the path to a resolution much clearer. Again, if a conflict based on value differences is resolved only at the resources or needs level, it may surface in some other setting.

Types of Conflicts

Another step in understanding conflict is for students to be aware of the types of conflicts they may encounter. The causes of conflict discussed previously can be found in each of the types of conflict that follow.

Intrapersonal conflicts

Intrapersonal conflicts occur within the person. Examples are conflicts about goals, use of time, moral questions or decisions, or procrastination. Someone who wants to improve his/her muscle tone but would rather watch television has an intrapersonal conflict.

Interpersonal conflicts

Interpersonal conflicts, the most common, are between two or more individuals. For example, Gloria wants to use the car to go to her babysitting job. Gloria's mother plans to use the car to go grocery shopping. Gloria thinks that if her mother uses the car, Gloria will not have a ride to her job. Gloria and her mother are experiencing an interpersonal conflict (in this case, a conflict over a resource).

Intragroup conflicts

Intragroup conflicts are between individuals within a particular group, such as school faculty. A school faculty that is divided over whether students should be allowed off campus at lunch time is experiencing an intragroup conflict.

Intergroup conflicts

Intergroup conflicts occur between groups of varying size and scope including clubs, organizations, communities and nations. Often the difficulty with such disputes, at a secondary school level as well as at the international level, is identifying and addressing the myriad needs, values, and concerns expressed by the groups. A conflict between two gangs each representing different neighborhoods would be an example of an intergroup conflict.

Summary

In summary, conflict occurs when there are differences within the individual or between individuals or groups over resources, psychological needs, or values. Although many of us carry negative connotations about conflict because of family or societal messages, conflict in and of itself is neither negative or positive. Conflict can be destructive when it is not resolved or when it escalates into violence, or conflict can be positive and constructive, allowing us to air and examine our differences and move forward by resolving them.

Conclusion



In undertaking this work with students, we are embarking on a task that is potentially very rewarding. It is possible for students to develop a new awareness and a willingness to examine and change conflict behaviors.






It is important to recognize at the outset, however, that if we and our students succeed, it will not be automatic and certainly not always easy. Most conflicts cannot be neatly resolved; some may not be resolvable at all. But simply addressing the needs of the people involved and learning something about ourselves and others may be more than worth the effort. Even minimal results in these endeavors can have a strong effect on our lives and work, and on the lives and work of our students.

1 UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

Chapter One Activities

By the end of this chapter students will understand their own attitudes and beliefs about conflict and will see how these attitudes and beliefs affect how they behave in conflict situations.

Each "key" activity (designated with a  symbol) has been grouped with its corresponding "supplementary" activities (designated with a  symbol). The key activities are highly recommended to assure that students master the basic concepts. Supplementary activities are optional and may be used to provide further skills practice, or to strengthen students' understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

	What Do You Mean?	To define conflict.	1-15
		To examine the positive and negative associations related to conflict.	
	I Heard It Through the Grapevine	To examine the childhood messages we received about conflict.	1-18
	Conflict Collages	To reinforce understanding of the childhood messages received about conflict.	1-19
	Observing Conflict	To observe a conflict and to identify elements involved in the conflict.	1-20
	The Conflict Cycle	To understand that conflict is cyclical.	1-22
		To identify major components of the cycle.	
		To understand what perpetuates the cycle.	

key	Breaking the Cycle	(Prerequisite — The Conflict Cycle) To understand what can be done to break a negative conflict cycle.	1-28
key	Escalation and De-escalation	To understand what factors lead to the escalation and de-escalation of a conflict.	1-31
⊕	Perpetuating/Changing the Pattern	To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle by assessing personal conflict attitudes, behaviors, and consequences using the Conflict Cycle.	1-32
⊕	Conflict Observation	To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle. To give students practice observing conflict and relating their observations to the Conflict Cycle.	1-34
key	What's Happening Here?	To understand and explore the basic causes of conflict. To practice observing the dynamics of a conflict.	1-37
key	Kinds of Conflict	To distinguish between the basic kinds of conflict: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup.	1-38
⊕	Spot the Conflict #1	To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict.	1-41
⊕	Spot the Conflict #2	To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict in the sonnet "On His Blindness" by John Milton.	1-44
⊕	Conflict in Our Lives	To identify the kinds and causes of local, national and international conflicts that appear in the news.	1-46



What Do You Mean?

- OBJECTIVE:** To define conflict.
- To examine the positive and negative associations related to conflict.
- DURATION:** 55 minutes
- MATERIALS:** "What Do You Mean?" Worksheet
Chalkboard
- PROCEDURE:**
1. To begin, have each student write a definition of conflict in his/her own words without a dictionary or discussion. Have them set it aside.
 2. Ask students to think about a conflict they have had recently. After giving them a minute to think, ask students to brainstorm a list of words and feelings that come to mind when they hear the word conflict. Write these words on the chalkboard. List all the suggestions on the chalkboard. Don't edit the list as it is being made. The bigger the list the better.
 3. Distribute copies of the worksheet "What Do You Mean?" Ask students to look at the list of words on the worksheet and compare it with the list on the board. If there are any words on the board which do not appear on the printed list, students should add them to the bottom of the page.
 4. Review instructions for the worksheet with students.
 5. While students complete the exercise, put words from the worksheet on the chalkboard.
 6. Taking each word in turn, ask students to raise their hands if they rated it as a 2 or 3. Record total number of votes by the word.
 7. Erase the 12 words with the fewest votes.

8. As a class, discuss the remaining words.

Discussion: Give students a minute to examine the remaining words on the chalkboard. Ask the following questions:

- What do these words have in common?
 - Which words carry a positive meaning?
 - Which words carry a negative meaning?
 - Do any words carry a neutral meaning? If not, ask students to suggest some. Examples: compromise, disagreement, dispute, etc.
 - What can be concluded from this discussion? Most of us view conflict as negative, but conflict can have a positive value.
9. Have the class create a working definition of conflict based on their discussion and the words on the chalkboard. Is this definition satisfactory to the group? How does it compare with the ones they wrote in step 1?
10. Have students look up the word conflict in the dictionary. How does this definition compare with the one they have written in step 9?

What Do You Mean? (worksheet)

We may have many different ideas when we hear the word "conflict." If we are going to study conflict, it will be important to know what we are talking about. Below are some words which may help you find out what conflict is.

Directions:

Using the following scale, place a number by each word in the list.

1 = unimportant, not used much

2 = fairly important

3 = very important.

_____ difference

_____ innocent

_____ hurt

_____ win/lose

_____ decision

_____ normal

_____ guilty

_____ unfair

_____ anger

_____ struggle

_____ right

_____ disagree

_____ clash

_____ violence

_____ fight

_____ people

_____ learning

_____ wrong

_____ war

_____ ideas

_____ agreement

_____ against

_____ apart

_____ change

If you can think of some other important words, put them here.



I Heard It Through the Grapevine

- OBJECTIVE:** To examine the childhood messages we received about conflict.
- DURATION:** 30-45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Discuss this background material with the class:
 - a. Conflict is something that is with us throughout our lives. As we grow up we receive messages about conflict that help us develop our attitudes and feelings about it.
 - b. Emphasize that we receive messages about concepts and ideas in writing, in speech, and non-verbally.
 2. Break the class into small groups and ask the students to come up with examples of the messages they have received about conflict while growing up. Messages might be statements like the following:

"Nice girls don't fight"

"Don't get mad, get even"

"Turn the other cheek"

"Fighting never solved anything"
 3. Reconvene the small groups and list the messages on the chalkboard.
 4. Ask students where these messages come from (parents, media, teachers, friends, etc.).
 5. Discuss the messages as a class. Are they mostly positive or negative? What are they saying about conflict? How have these messages affected you?



Conflict Collages

OBJECTIVE: To reinforce understanding of the childhood messages we received about conflict.

DURATION: 55 minutes

MATERIALS: Magazines, newspapers, construction paper, scissors, glue.

PROCEDURE:

1. Using a blank piece of construction paper for backing, students make a collage which represents the childhood messages they received about conflict, e.g., Rambo advertisements, etc.
2. Frame a class discussion around the students' brief explanations of what their collage represents to them.

VARIATIONS: Have students create a drawing that represents the childhood messages they received about conflict. These may be abstract or representational.

Have students select and bring into class music that represents their feelings about conflict. Play and discuss their selections. Include in the discussion why the piece was chosen, what feelings it represents, and similarities and differences of the pieces selected by different students.



Observing Conflict

- OBJECTIVE:** To observe a conflict and to identify elements involved in the conflict.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment & 30-minute class discussion
- MATERIALS:** Worksheet "Observing a Conflict"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Explain the homework handout and the assignment.
 2. Discuss in class as many of the observed conflicts as time allows.
 3. **OPTION:** Offer students the opportunity to role play the conflict they observed and then discuss it using the questions on the homework sheet.

Observing a Conflict (worksheet)

1. Observe a conflict. It can be one that involves you or other people. It can be at school, at home, in your neighborhood, or on television.
2. Watch and listen carefully. Do not try to decide who is right and who is wrong.
3. Answer these questions about the conflict:
 - A. What was the conflict about (what are the facts)?
 - B. How did the people feel?
 - C. How did the conflict end?
 - D. Did change happen? If yes, what happened and how?
 - E. If there was no change, why not?
 - F. Was there a different way to resolve the conflict?
4. You may be asked to role play the conflict with another student in class tomorrow.



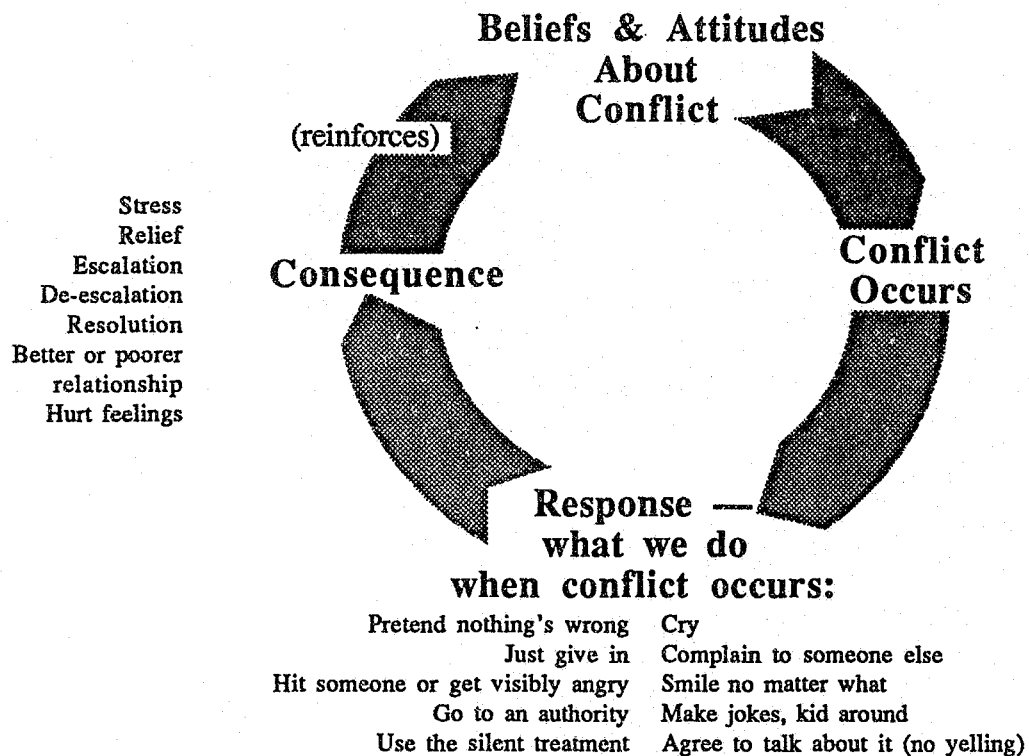
The Conflict Cycle

- OBJECTIVE:**
- To understand that conflict is cyclical.
 - To identify major components of the cycle.
 - To understand what perpetuates the cycle.
- DURATION:** 55 minutes
- MATERIALS:**
- Butcher paper with cycle on it
 - "The Conflict Cycle" handout
 - "The Conflict Cycle" reading (where applicable)
 - "My Conflict" worksheet (two pages)
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute "The Conflict Cycle" handout or "The Conflict Cycle" reading. Present and explain the handout using the teacher background material. Emphasize that since conflict is unavoidable, we all experience it in our lives and that the cycle begins with a held belief. Conflict is not necessarily positive or negative. It is how we respond to it that makes a conflict positive or negative. Our response will produce a consequence and the consequence reinforces our beliefs (positive or negative) about conflict.

If our beliefs about conflict are negative, then we are likely to behave in ways that will produce negative consequences (such as feelings of pain, guilt, fear, a strained relationship, a bloody nose, etc.)
 2. Be sure to discuss and explore any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar or confusing to the students. In the study of conflict resolution, many common words are used in specific ways that may be new to them.
 3. Ask students to fill out the "My Conflict" worksheet, using one of their own conflicts as a guide.
 4. Ask them to bring the worksheet to the next class session. (Breaking the Cycle) for discussion.

The Conflict Cycle

(handout)



What we believe about conflict comes from the messages we received from our parents, teachers, the media and our own experiences. These beliefs affect how we act when a conflict occurs.

Our response is what we do when a conflict occurs. Our response is usually based on what we believe about conflict. What do you do in a conflict? Can you add to the list of responses above?

What we do in a conflict (our response) will lead to a consequence. Consequences may be negative or positive. If we yell or pretend that nothing is wrong, the consequence may be hurt feelings or the problem may get worse. These are negative consequences. If we agree to talk about the problem without yelling or using put-downs, this may lead to the positive consequence of good feelings about ourselves and the other person and to a solution of the problem. These are positive consequences.

The consequences of our response to a conflict will make our beliefs about conflict even stronger. This means that our cycle of conflict will probably stay the same.

The Conflict Cycle

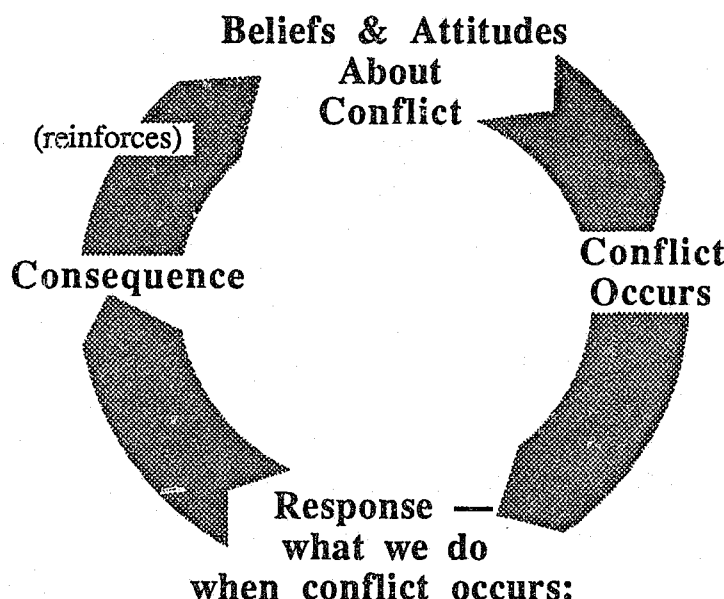
(reading)

Our individual experience of conflict seems to move through a series of phases that together make up a self-perpetuating cycle. This cycle can be positive or negative. By examining the cycle of conflict for ourselves, we can provide a vocabulary and a map for thinking about the ways in which conflict operates in our lives.

Phase One: Attitudes and Beliefs

The cycle begins for all of us with our beliefs and attitudes about conflict. As we have seen, these beliefs and attitudes stem from many sources —

- childhood messages we received about conflict
- the behaviors modeled by parents, teachers and friends
- the attitudes presented by the media (T.V., movies, etc.)
- our own experiences with conflict.



These beliefs and attitudes will affect how we will respond when conflict occurs.

For example, Jean comes from a family where conflict was never expressed openly. Although there were many occasions when the tension resulting from a conflict could be felt in the house, everyone pretended that there was nothing wrong, and feelings of anger or frustration were never expressed. These tensions caused stress for all members of the family. Jean came to believe that conflict was negative, that it causes tension, discomfort and strain, and that openly dealing with conflict should be avoided.

**Phase Two:
The Conflict**

In the next phase of the cycle, a conflict occurs. In the example, Jean and her friend Margaret are with a group of friends. Jean and Margaret have known each other for some time and occasionally have lunch together. Margaret often dominates their conversations, but Jean has never voiced any objection to this. On this occasion, Jean begins talking about her plans for the upcoming weekend. As soon as she begins to describe her plans, Margaret interrupts and begins talking about her weekend plans. Jean feels discounted and embarrassed in front of the group and thinks that they are uninterested in what she has to say. Jean is experiencing a conflict.

**Phase Three:
The Response**

The *response* is the point where we take action. We might begin to shout, we might attempt to talk about the situation or we might simply leave. Given our personal set of beliefs and attitudes, we will often react in the same general way no matter what the particular conflict. Thus, these reactions can tell us much about ourselves and our patterns in conflict situations.

In the case of Jean and Margaret, Jean's response is based on her belief that open expression of anger or frustration is negative and that conflict should be avoided at all costs. She responds by becoming silent and sulking. Margaret notices Jean's silence and asks what is wrong. Jean says "Nothing" and excuses herself from the group saying that she must be going. Jean has responded by stifling her feelings and denying the conflict.

**Phase Four:
The Consequence**

The response, in turn, leads to a *consequence*. The consequences of Jean not dealing directly with Margaret are continued hurt feelings, frustration, a strained relationship, and perhaps a feeling on Jean's part that she is uninteresting or is disliked by others (lack of self-esteem). These consequences serve to reinforce Jean's belief that conflict is negative and that it causes discomfort and pain. This, in turn, brings her back to the beginning of the cycle. For most of us, the result of the cycle reinforces our belief system and leads to perpetuation of the same pattern.

My Conflict

(worksheet, page 1)

Using one of your own conflicts as a guide, answer the following:

Messages I received about conflict were: _____

Briefly, my conflict was: _____

The other people involved were: _____

How did I respond? _____

How did the conflict end? _____

My Conflict

(worksheet, page 2)

Why did this happen the way it did? _____

How did I contribute to this? _____

What could I have done differently? _____

Is this a common pattern for me in conflict? _____

What part or parts of my belief system contributed to this conflict unfolding as it did?



Breaking the Cycle

**PREREQUISITE
LESSON:**

The Conflict Cycle

OBJECTIVE:

To understand what can be done to break a negative conflict cycle.

DURATION:

55 minutes

MATERIALS:

"The Conflict Cycle" handout

"My Conflict" worksheet (filled out during "The Conflict Cycle," the preceding activity)

PROCEDURE:

1. Briefly review the conflict cycle with students.
2. Divide class into small groups and ask students to discuss their worksheets with each other.
3. In the large group, ask for volunteers to share their answers to My Conflict Worksheet. Focus on the questions that ask them to reflect on their actions and beliefs:
 - How did I contribute to this?
 - What could I have done differently?
 - Is this a common pattern for me in conflict?
 - What part or parts of my belief system contributed to this conflict unfolding as it did?

4. Explain that we can use conflict to our advantage by recognizing the cycle. Are there certain responses that seem to be leading to the same or similar consequences? Conflict can become constructive if we can learn different ways to respond and break a negative cycle. Breaking a negative cycle involves:

AWARENESS

Gaining awareness of our beliefs, the messages we've received, and how we tend to respond to conflict.

WILLINGNESS

Being willing to

- examine our behavior
- change
- work cooperatively.

SKILLS

Developing the skills necessary to respond to conflict differently.

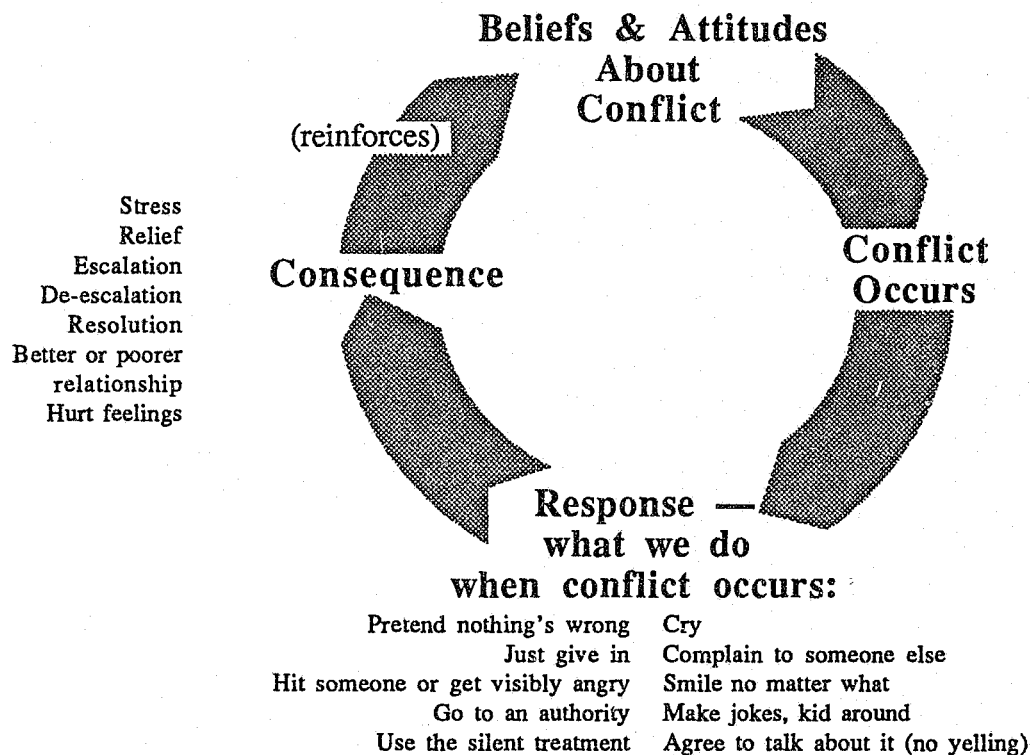
5. Have students suggest common conflict scenarios for role playing. If they feel comfortable, they can use their own conflicts from the Worksheet. Divide the class into small groups. Each group should decide what conflict situation to enact.

They will role play the conflict twice. The first time, they will use responses that will perpetuate the conflict, such as shouting, accusing or walking away. The second time, ask them to use responses that will lead to a positive consequence.

6. Announce that students should use the remaining class time to practice and prepare their skits and that they will role play the conflict situations at the following session.

The Conflict Cycle

(handout)



What we believe about conflict comes from the messages we received from our parents, teachers, the media and our own experiences. These beliefs affect how we act when a conflict occurs.

Our response is what we do when a conflict occurs. Our response is usually based on what we believe about conflict. What do you do in a conflict? Can you add to the list of responses above?

What we do in a conflict (our response) will lead to a consequence. Consequences may be negative or positive. If we yell or pretend that nothing is wrong, the consequence may be hurt feelings or the problem may get worse. These are negative consequences. If we agree to talk about the problem without yelling or using put-downs, this may lead to the positive consequence of good feelings about ourselves and the other person and to a solution of the problem. These are positive consequences.

The consequences of our response to a conflict will make our beliefs about conflict even stronger. This means that our cycle of conflict will probably stay the same.



Escalation and De-escalation

- OBJECTIVE:** To understand what factors lead to the escalation and de-escalation of a conflict.
- DURATION:** 55 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Optionally, the Conflict Situations developed during "Breaking the Cycle"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Give students the definition of "escalate" (to increase in extent, volume, number, amount, scope, intensity), particularly in relation to the "escalation of conflict." Ask them to list — on paper individually or on the chalkboard as a group — the things they believe would escalate conflict. Check the Teacher Background Information for a list of conditions that escalate conflict.
 2. Define "de-escalate" (to decrease in extent, volume or scope) as it relates to conflict. List the things which would de-escalate conflict.
 3. Have each small group role play conflict situations. You may use situations developed during the previous class or have students create conflict situations using their own experiences or observations.
 4. Process each role play as a group:
 - What kind of responses escalated the conflict?
 - What were the consequences?
 - What kinds of responses helped to change the consequences from negative to positive?
 5. Ask the students who participated in the role play how they felt in each situation.



Perpetuating/Changing the Pattern

- OBJECTIVE:** To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle by assessing personal conflict attitudes, behaviors and consequences using the Conflict Cycle.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment: essay
- MATERIALS:** Handout: "The Conflict Cycle"
- PROCEDURE:** Students are to write a one- or two-page essay, describing a conflict that is very typical for them. They are to discuss the conflict from their point of view using the Conflict Cycle as a guideline, starting with values and beliefs and taking the conflict through each phase of the cycle.

The essay should conclude with a discussion of what patterns and responses they used that were typical for them and what the effects were on the other person. (If the result of the conflict was negative, they should suggest how it might have happened differently to produce more positive results.)

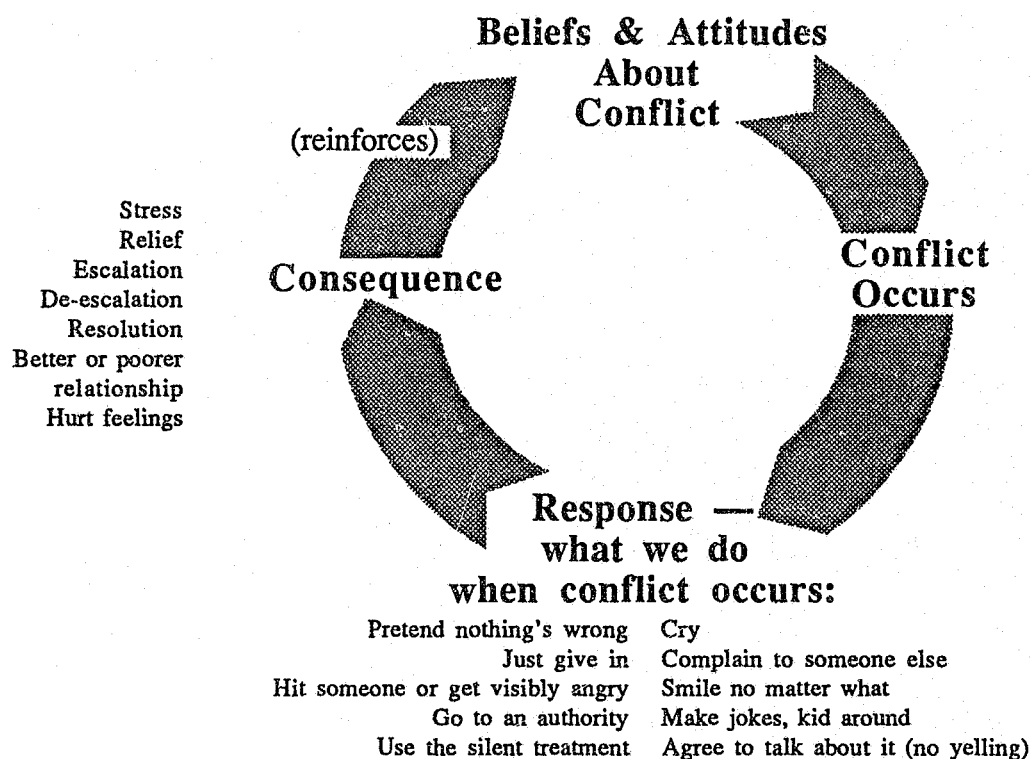
OPTION: Essays can be read and discussed in class, or used as role plays. It is often revealing for students to watch their conflict being played by other students, or to play the other person involved in their conflict.

Questions for assessing my conflict behavior:

- a. What values or beliefs that I have about conflict led to my response in this conflict?
- b. How did I behave/respond in this conflict?
- c. What was the consequence of my response/behavior?
- d. What could I have done differently to create a more positive outcome?
- e. What attitudes do I have about conflict that make the positive resolution of conflict more difficult?

The Conflict Cycle

(handout)



What we believe about conflict comes from the messages we received from our parents, teachers, the media and our own experiences. These beliefs affect how we act when a conflict occurs.

Our response is what we do when a conflict occurs. Our response is usually based on what we believe about conflict. What do you do in a conflict? Can you add to the list of responses above?

What we do in a conflict (our response) will lead to a consequence. Consequences may be negative or positive. If we yell or pretend that nothing is wrong, the consequence may be hurt feelings or the problem may get worse. These are negative consequences. If we agree to talk about the problem without yelling or using put-downs, this may lead to the positive consequence of good feelings about ourselves and the other person and to a solution of the problem. These are positive consequences.

The consequences of our response to a conflict will make our beliefs about conflict even stronger. This means that our cycle of conflict will probably stay the same.



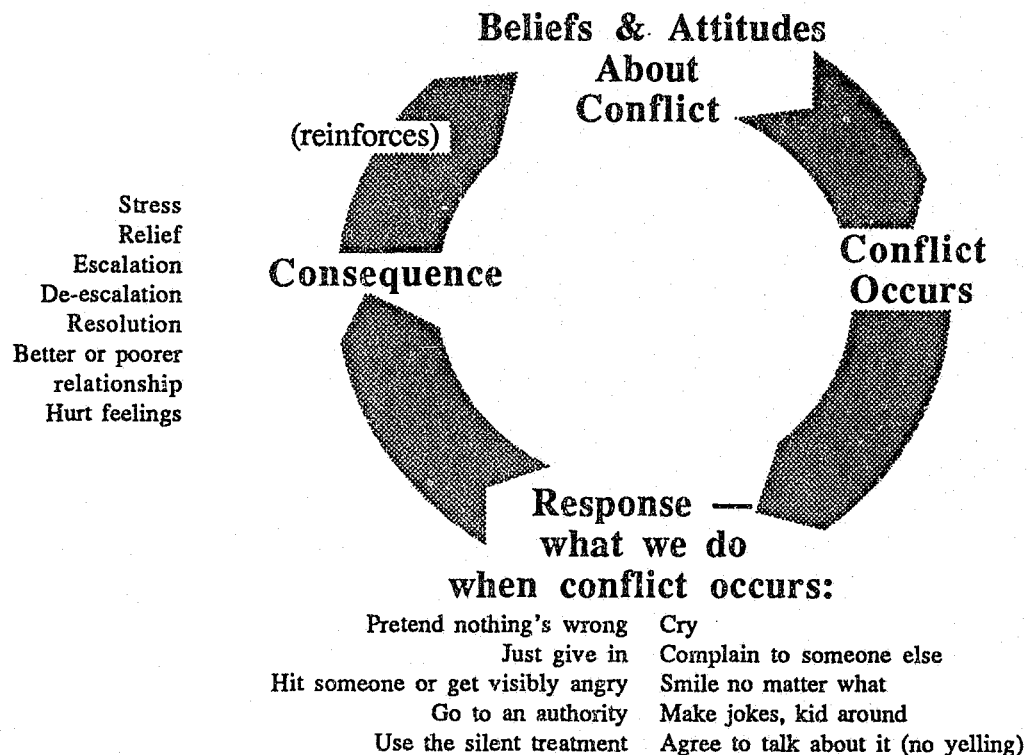
Conflict Observation

- OBJECTIVE:** To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle.
To give students practice observing conflict and relating their observations to the Conflict Cycle.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment and 30-minute class discussion
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: "The Conflict Cycle"
"Conflict Observation Worksheet"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Review the Conflict Cycle with the class.
 2. Distribute the "Conflict Observation Worksheet." At home, they are to observe a conflict as it is happening. This could be between family members or friends, or within a program on television. They will fill out the worksheet pertaining to the conflict they are observing.
 3. In class, frame a discussion around the students' descriptions of the conflicts they observed, and whether or not the conflict followed the Conflict Cycle.

NOTE: Students should not be expected to know someone's complete set of beliefs about conflict, particularly if they are observing a television conflict. However, they may be able to discern some basic beliefs and attitudes that are influencing the interaction they are observing.

The Conflict Cycle

(handout)



What we believe about conflict comes from the messages we received from our parents, teachers, the media and our own experiences. These beliefs affect how we act when a conflict occurs.

Our response is what we do when a conflict occurs. Our response is usually based on what we believe about conflict. What do you do in a conflict? Can you add to the list of responses above?

What we do in a conflict (our response) will lead to a consequence. Consequences may be negative or positive. If we yell or pretend that nothing is wrong, the consequence may be hurt feelings or the problem may get worse. These are negative consequences. If we agree to talk about the problem without yelling or using put-downs, this may lead to the positive consequence of good feelings about ourselves and the other person and to a solution of the problem. These are positive consequences.

The consequences of our response to a conflict will make our beliefs about conflict even stronger. This means that our cycle of conflict will probably stay the same.

Conflict Observation (worksheet)

What was the conflict about?		
	Person A : _____	Person B: _____
Beliefs/ Attitudes of this person		
How did this person respond?		
What was the consequence for this person?		
What could this person have done differently to ensure a more positive result?		



What's Happening Here*

- OBJECTIVE:** To understand and explore the basic causes of conflict.
To practice observing the dynamics of a conflict.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment and about 45 minutes in class plus 20-25 minutes background
- MATERIALS:** Slips of paper with causes of conflict written on them as described below
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Using the teacher background materials covering the causes of conflict, discuss the three major causes of conflict with the class. Take some time defining what is meant by resources, psychological needs and values. Give examples and draw examples from the class. Use at least one example to illustrate how a conflict that appears to be over resources can also be over needs and/or values.
 2. For the homework assignment, divide the class into pairs. Have each pair choose one slip of paper from a hat. The papers will be labeled: "resources," "psychological needs," "values," "resources/psychological needs," and "resources /values," or "psychological needs/values."
- Each pair of students will create a conflict scenario of the type or combination on their slip of paper. They may write a script to work from if they wish. The skits should take about 3-5 minutes to enact.
3. In class, pairs of students take turns enacting their conflict scenarios. The group will determine the cause behind the conflict, and discuss their general observations of the interaction.

* Based on a concept from *Creative Conflict Resolution*, 1984, by William J. Kreidler, Scott, Foresman and Co., Cambridge, MA 01423



Kinds of Conflict

- OBJECTIVE:** To distinguish between the basic kinds of conflict: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes to an hour
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Use the teacher background information in Chapter One, and with the class:
 - Define "intrapersonal" as *occurring within or inside a person's mind or self*. "Intra" is Latin for "within."
 - Compare this with "interpersonal," which is *occurring or involving relations between two or more people*. "Inter" is Latin for "between" or "among."
 - Ask students, then, to define "intragroup" and "intergroup" using the definitions of the prefixes "intra" and "inter."
 2. Read the following example of an intrapersonal conflict:

John is a junior and has discovered that his locker partner and good friend, Steven, has been getting the answers to algebra tests in advance of the tests and using them to study. Steve has offered to share the answers with John. John must pass algebra if he wants to get into the college he has chosen. John knows cheating is wrong, but he is afraid he will not pass the test without using the answers Steven is willing to supply.

Then ask students for other examples of intrapersonal conflicts. Be prepared with other brief examples of your own in case students have difficulty generating them.

3. Read this example of an interpersonal conflict:

Lawrence and Al were practicing at the same end of the basketball court with 12 other students. Lawrence was dribbling the ball while Al was trying to shoot for a basket. Lawrence was watching his ball and didn't know he was too close to Al until he bumped into Al and Al fell. Al got angry, pulled Lawrence to the floor and began punching him. Lawrence couldn't understand Al's anger and punched back.

Point out that most of the conflicts we see on television, at home, or at school are interpersonal conflicts; they are observable events; or actions that we can see. Point out that intrapersonal conflicts, in contrast, usually are not observable to others. Ask students for examples of interpersonal conflicts they have been involved in or have observed.

4. Now move on to an example of an intragroup conflict:

One of the staff writers on the school newspaper wrote a love poem using explicit language. Several students thought the poem should not appear in the newspaper because of the language. Other members of the newspaper staff argued that the poem should be printed because it was a good poem.

Again, ask the students for examples of intragroup conflicts that they may have observed or in which they have been involved.

5. Finally, give this example of an intergroup conflict:

A group of Hispanic students in the school use a particular area of the school yard each lunchtime to eat their lunches and socialize. Recently, a group of Chinese students have been using the same area for a noontime softball game. The Hispanic students feel they are being pushed around and are becoming angry about the situation. The Chinese students feel they have a right to use the area of the yard that best suits the game they want to play. Feelings between the two groups are very tense.

Ask students to describe and discuss examples of intergroup conflicts they have seen in school, in their neighborhood or in the news.



Spot the Conflict #1

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of "Identifying Conflicts" worksheet (2 pages) for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Review the different kinds of conflicts with the students (intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup).
 2. Give each student a copy of the worksheet and ask them to complete it.
 3. When they have finished, discuss responses to the questions on the worksheet with the whole class, or with students in small groups of 4-5.

Identifying Conflicts (worksheet)

- a. James and Richard are brothers. They share a bedroom. James is playing the radio loudly, listening to the last game of the world series. Richard is trying to read a very difficult book for school because he has a test tomorrow. Richard can't think about what he is reading or understand it while James is playing the radio so loudly. Richard yells at James to turn off the radio. James yells back at Richard and an argument starts.
- b. Trang is 16 years old. Last year, he moved to San Francisco from Viet Nam. He is very lonely and would like to have friends. He is smaller than the other boys in the class. He does not speak English well. He is afraid to try to make friends. He thinks the other students may tease him or beat him up. He does not know how he can try to make friends and still feel safe, so he stays quietly by himself, alone and afraid.
- c. The student council must decide on a way to earn some money for a yearbook. Half the council thinks a faculty/student basketball game would be a good way to earn the money. The other half of the council thinks that it would be better to have a car wash. The two sides cannot agree on the best way to raise the money.
- d. The sanitation workers in Drinkwater, U.S.A. go on strike for better working conditions. The strike has been going on for five weeks in the summer and there is nobody to take away the garbage. It is very hot and the garbage smells worse each day. The residents of Drinkwater become very angry because no one is collecting their garbage. The residents go to the City Council meeting to force an end to the strike. The sanitation workers attend the City Council meeting to defend their right to strike for better working conditions. An argument between the residents and the sanitation workers takes place at the meeting.
- e. During basketball practice, the coach tells the players to divide into six teams to practice lay-ups. There are six teams, but there are only two balls. The school cannot buy more balls this year because it does not have the money.

Identifying Conflicts (worksheet, p.2)

For each of the conflicts on the first page of this worksheet, answer the following questions:

1. Who or what is the conflict between?
2. What kind of conflict is this? (intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup)
3. What is this conflict about?
4. What are the causes of this conflict? (resources, psychological needs, values). What is the resource, psychological need or value in question?



Spot the Conflict #2

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict in the sonnet "On His Blindness" by John Milton.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of "On His Blindness" and the questions associated with it for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Review the different kinds of conflicts with the students (intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup).
 2. Give each student a copy of the sonnet and ask them to complete it.
 3. When they have finished, discuss responses to the questions on the worksheet with the whole class, or with students in small groups of 4-5.

Spot the Conflict #2

(worksheet)

ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve there with my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton (1608-1674)

1. Who or what is the conflict between?

2. What kind of conflict is this?

Intrapersonal
Interpersonal
Intragroup
Intergroup

3. What is this conflict about?

4. What are the causes of this conflict? What is the resource, psychological need or value in question?



Conflict in our Lives

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify the kind and causes of local, national and international conflicts that appear in the news.
- DURATION:** Homework and 45 minutes in class
- MATERIALS:** Newspaper or magazine articles brought in by the students
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Give homework assignment. Each student is to find, read and bring in to class two news or magazine articles about a conflict. They must find one article from two of these three categories: local/state, national, or international.
 2. In class, each student presents a brief summary of their articles. They must include the kind of conflict they think it is (intrapersonal, interpersonal, etc.) and whether they think the causes are resources, psychological needs, values, or combinations of those. Encourage class discussion of how the conflict was handled and how it might have been handled differently.

NOTE: Since some kinds of conflicts don't show up in the media very often, especially intrapersonal ones, teachers may want to designate one or two students to find a story about an intrapersonal conflict.

2

CONFLICT STYLES

Chapter Two Background

While conflicts may be successfully approached in many ways, each of us has a characteristic style of responding to conflict. As we saw in Chapter 1, this style develops over time and is a product of many factors —

- The societal attitudes about conflict that we assimilated;
- The way we saw our parents, teachers, media heroes, and other significant role models dealing with conflict;
- Our own direct experiences with conflict.

Although conflict styles are as varied as the individuals they belong to, they can be grouped into three general categories:

- Avoidance
- Confrontation
- Problem-Solving

In this chapter, we will examine these three general styles and some of their common variations.* This will help us begin to develop an awareness of our individual styles in conflict situations. By examining when those styles are effective and ineffective, we can begin to try new approaches.

* Junior high school teachers may want to confine their discussion and activities to the three general categories. High school teachers may find it useful to differentiate the variations on each style.

Avoidance

As we saw in Chapter 1, dealing with conflict in a way that leads to a positive outcome is not automatic or easy. It requires a combination of personal tools — self-awareness, willingness, and communication skills. Since very few of us are given these tools as part of our growing up, it is not surprising that we so often find ourselves at a loss for knowing what to do when we become involved in a conflict.

At the same time, we have probably assimilated the general societal attitude that conflict is bad and disruptive. We may assume that a “good” person — one who is understanding, cooperative, and well-liked — does not have conflict with others. We may believe also that if a conflict arises in a relationship, it must not be a “good” relationship.

Given this set of circumstances, it makes sense that many of us elect to *avoid* conflict. The most obvious way is to simply avoid the other person altogether. But avoidance can also take other, more subtle forms.

Denial

Denial is a very common way that people avoid conflict. When we deny conflict, we may actually be very angry or hurt, but rather than express this we choose to swallow these reactions and feelings.

For example, Jim is on the football team, and his friend Ed is the captain of the team. One day at school, Jim sees Ed walking down the hall and calls out teasingly, “Hey, Ed, where did you get that ugly sweater?” Ed walks past Jim in silence. When Jim asks if something is wrong, Ed casually says, “Nothing.” Later, in class, he comments to his other friend Richard that Jim is “a first class jerk.”

While we may appear to be unaffected by conflict, denial often leaves us feeling even more angry, frustrated, hurt, and resentful. These feelings, in turn, can lead to backbiting and gossip that may eventually add further fuel to the conflict that we were trying to avoid in the first place.

Sometimes our denial may become so extreme that we are reluctant to admit even to ourselves that a conflict exists. If we think badly of people who become involved in conflicts, we may deny that a conflict exists to avoid thinking badly of ourselves. If we believe that it is wrong to feel anger or resentment toward another person, denying the conflict in our own minds allows us to avoid having to acknowledge these feelings.

Accommodation

Another common means of avoiding conflict is *accommodation*. Accommodators are those who feel that agreeing is easier than disagreeing. When they sense a conflict in the making, accommodators quickly take action to smooth over the situation. They may do this by making apologies, or by finding reasons to justify a difference in taste or opinion. Sometimes the accommodator may even adjust his/her own opinions, desires, or behavior to bring them into alignment with those of another person.

If Ed (in the example above) were someone who tended to accommodate in conflict situations, he might respond to Jim's comment in any of several different ways:

Types of Accommodation

- "I never did have very good taste in clothes" (apology); or
- "It's hard to find great sweaters at the Salvation Army Thrift Shop" (finding reasons); or
- "I can see how you might think it's funny looking" (adjusting his own opinion).
- Or Ed might never wear the sweater again, even though he really likes it (adjusting his behavior).

For an accommodator, any of these responses is easier than risking a friendship by letting the other person know how he/she really feels about what the other person has said or done.

The effectiveness of accommodation in resolving the conflict depends on the importance of the issue involved. Agreeing in voice may remove or bypass a one-time incident of small importance. However, if Jim's teasing comments continue, Ed's feelings will build over time and the result may be a far more serious and disruptive conflict.

Confrontation

While some people tend to avoid conflict, others are more likely to *confront* a conflict head-on. A person who confronts tends to view conflict as a "win-lose" proposition. Believing that one person is right and the other is wrong, confronters are determined to win by proving that they are in the right. They may adamantly state their own positions while tenaciously disagreeing with the other person's point of view. Or they might become more aggressive — hurling insults, and even making threats.

If Ed's tendency was to confront aggressively, he might respond to Jim's comments with:

- "How would a slob like you know what's ugly and what's not?," or
- "Talk about my clothes one more time and you'll be sorry."

Use of Power

When the conflict involves one person who is in a position of authority over another, the person in authority may choose to confront by using his or her power. For example, because Ed is captain of the football team, he might resort to a threat:

"Apologize right now for what you said or you won't be playing in Friday's Big Game."

Threats based on authority or power are common in relationships between older and younger siblings, parents and children, teachers and students. (Most of us have experienced the comment "because I said so" at least a few times in our lives.)

Confrontation — like avoidance — is seldom effective in resolving a conflict. Avoidance, as we have seen, may temporarily defer the conflict. But unexpressed feelings will often fester and grow into an even more serious problem. On the other hand, when the response to a conflict is confrontation, a small incident is likely to escalate quickly into a serious, long-term struggle. The result of both styles is that no progress has been made towards establishing communication and finding a workable resolution.

Problem Solving

An entirely different style of responding to conflict can be seen in the *problem solving* approach. In contrast to the person who avoids conflict, the problem solver is likely to view conflict as a natural part of all human relationships — not as a sign that something “bad” has happened. Unlike the confronter, the problem solver tends to be less concerned with establishing who is “right” or “wrong,” and more concerned about finding a solution that will be satisfactory to both people.

Compromise

One very common means of problem solving is *compromise*. The person who chooses to compromise usually assumes that in order to resolve a conflict, each person must give something up. Instead of one person winning and the other losing, each person wins partially and loses partially.

Compromise can be effective and efficient if each person retains what is most important to him/herself, while giving up something only on issues that are less important. However, if either person lets go of something he/she holds dear simply for the sake of the compromise, the resulting unhappiness and resentment can make the problem worse. In this situation, compromise is actually a form of accommodation.

Collaboration

Collaboration is another approach to problem solving that avoids the pitfalls of compromise. Rather than assume at the outset that something will have to be given up, the collaborator attempts to explore with the other person how both of their needs might be met. The assumption is that it is often possible to find a "win/win" solution — one in which neither person loses.

If Ed wanted to respond to Jim's insult in a collaborative way, he might first take Ed aside and ask if they could talk for a few minutes. Then he might approach the subject in this way:

"You know, when you yelled down the hall that you thought my sweater was ugly, I was really embarrassed. I don't generally mind being kidded about stuff, but I guess I'm sensitive about my clothes. Do you think you could talk to me privately if you have a comment about what I'm wearing?"

In order to be successful, collaboration requires an understanding of what led to the conflict, and what is at stake for each person. This information not only provides the basis for a solution to the immediate problem, but can also help avoid similar problems in the future.

Collaboration works best when both people involved in the conflict pool their skills and expertise to work together toward a mutual solution. But this is seldom the case at the outset. More often one person may want to confront or avoid. However, if the collaborator is persistent and demonstrates a genuine interest in the other person's needs and point of view, he/she may succeed in engaging the problem-solving capacities of the other person.



What's next




In Chapters 3 and 4, we'll look at an approach to communication that is effective in eliciting collaborative behavior from other people. Then, in Chapter 5, we'll examine a structured, step-by-step process for collaborative conflict resolution.

2 CONFLICT STYLES

Chapter Two Activities

By the end of this chapter, students will be able to recognize a variety of commonly used conflict resolution styles, be able to identify their own predominant conflict resolution style, and will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of their conflict resolution style.

Each "key" activity (designated with a  symbol) has been grouped with its corresponding "supplementary" activities (designated with a  symbol). The key activities are highly recommended to assure that students master the basic concepts. Supplementary activities are optional and may be used to provide further skills practice, or to strengthen students' understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

	A Different Approach	To demonstrate that there are alternatives to win/lose approaches to conflict.	2-9
	My Conflict Resolution Style	To have each student become aware of his/her own predominant conflict resolution style.	2-11
	Conflict Diary	To review kinds and causes of conflict and to begin to develop an awareness of conflict resolution styles.	2-14

⚓	Styles and Strategies in Conflict I	(JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITY) To identify ways people behave in conflict.	2-16
		OR	
⚓	Styles and Strategies in Conflict II	(HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITY) To explore more specific styles, strategies and behaviors common in conflict situations.	2-17
⊕	Conflict Continuum	To reinforce understanding of conflict responses by viewing different responses on a continuum from passive to aggressive.	2-18
⚓	Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving	To introduce and explore three approaches to handling conflict.	2-19
⊕	When Can We Meet?	To review the various conflict resolution styles through the use of skits. To develop a collaborative conflict resolution style scenario.	2-22
⊕	Resolution Style Role Plays	To further examine specific conflict styles through observing conflict patterns and to explore how different styles affect each other.	2-25
⊕	Conflict Style Reading Assignment	To further examine and discuss the problem solving approach to conflict situations.	2-27
⊕	Observing Conflict Resolution Styles	To practice observing conflict resolution styles. To stimulate discussion about the various conflict styles around us and how they may affect us.	2-31



A Different Approach*

- OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate that there are alternatives to win/lose approaches to conflict.
- DURATION:** 15 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Student Reading: "A Different Approach"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Have students choose partners and, sitting across from one another, clasp opposite hands with their elbows resting on the table. DO NOT use the term arm wrestling, or any other term that connotes competition. State that the goal is to touch the back of their partner's hand to the table as many times as they can in 45 seconds. Both students should count for themselves.
 2. After 45 seconds, stop and ask how many times people touched their partner's hand to the table: more than 10, 5-10, 0-5.
 3. Distribute the handout "A Different Approach." Read aloud with students or have them read silently.
 4. Without discussion, have them repeat the activity with the same partners.
 5. Ask if any of the pairs changed their approach to the activity and, if so, how their results were affected. Ask them to compare their feelings the first time with the second time.
 6. Demonstrate for the students how they could work cooperatively (by providing no resistance) so that each person could touch his or her partner's hand to the table the maximum number of times.

* Based on a concept from *Creative Conflict Resolution* 1984 by William J. Kreidler, Scott, Foresman and Co., Cambridge, MA 01423

A Different Approach (reading)

Often, when there is a conflict, the people who disagree will each try to win. When this happens, both people focus on winning and it becomes difficult to find a way to make the changes necessary to resolve the conflict. When people approach conflict as a win/lose proposition, they are likely to be left with feelings of anger and the problem may get worse instead of better. As long as the goal of dealing with conflict is winning, both people will remain stuck in the conflict.

If the word "conflict" is stripped of all of its values, what remains is a process which signals a need for change. That process is neither positive nor negative, neither good nor bad; it simply is. Conflict can be expressed clearly and directly in terms of the problem it creates. It is also possible for conflict to be resolved in such a way that all concerned parties are winners. Furthermore, if conflict is expressed peacefully and if all parties work to solve the problem to their mutual advantage, then there is another very positive outcome: learning. When people try earnestly to resolve a conflict, they will learn new things about themselves and about each other, whether or not a resolution is reached immediately.

The notion of conflict as a positive force or process is not a common viewpoint in our society. Many people approach conflict as a win-or-lose, sink-or-swim proposition and they fight to win, sometimes as if their lives depended on it. Often we see people respond in the opposite way, as well. Rather than acknowledging the existence of a problem, many people will avoid the situation and suppress their anger. These people have been taught since childhood that it is inappropriate to be angry and that engaging in conflict is unacceptable.

When people express their feelings in constructive ways and work together to get what they want, conflicts can be addressed when they first occur and are very small. This approach reduces anxiety and prevents escalation of the dispute by addressing problems when they can be resolved quickly and easily.

Working together to resolve disputes can lead to better, stronger relationships and better feelings about ourselves and others.



My Conflict Resolution Style

- OBJECTIVE:** To have each student become aware of his/her own predominant conflict resolution style.
- DURATION:** 50 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handout: "My Conflict Resolution Style" worksheet for each student
Chart paper and marking pens
- PROCEDURE:** *Guided Memory and Discussion of Students' Experience of Conflict in the Past Week:*
1. Ask students to relax, get comfortable, and prepare to think back about the past week. All they need to do at first is think about the questions you ask them, and think about the answers silently to themselves. They may close their eyes for this part if they want to. (When asking the questions, leave enough time in between for them to think of the answers.)

Questions:
 - a. How often in the past week have you been in a conflict situation?In thinking about two of these situations:
 - b. What was the subject of each of the conflicts?
 - c. Who did you have the conflicts with?
 - d. Did you tell the other person what you thought and how you felt?
 2. For these questions, ask students to raise their hands so everyone can get an idea of how conflicts end.
 - a. In most of the conflicts that you had, how did the situation leave you feeling? Better? Worse? The same as before the conflict occurred?

- b. In most of the conflicts that you had, was the result that both people felt like they won, felt like they lost, the other person won and you lost, you won and the other person lost?
3. For these questions, ask for answers to be volunteered verbally by students. (Take only a couple of answers to each question.) Be sure to listen and respond. Be supportive of any statements of how difficult conflict is for them, and let them know it's difficult for everyone.
 - a. In thinking back about your conflicts in the past week, did you find out that you usually handle conflicts in a certain way? How do you usually handle conflict? (Ignore it? Fight? Try to talk it out? etc.)
 - b. How does this work for you? Does it resolve the conflict?
 - c. Do you use different styles with different people, i.e. your parents, your friends, your younger sister or brother?
 - d. Does your style of handling conflict usually result in a win/win, a win/lose, or a lose/lose situation?
4. Distribute "My Conflict Resolution Style Worksheet" and have students fill it out.
5. Have students discuss their answers to the worksheet in small groups (4-6). Each group should assign a recorder. Distribute chart paper and markers. The recorder writes group answers on a large sheet. Everyone helps summarize answers to be recorded.
6. Each group presents answers to the large group using the newsprint sheets.
7. Summarize. It is important to be aware of how we feel and respond when we're in conflict so that we can turn things around if our response is not working for us. This will enable us to manage our behavior more effectively and work with the other person in a way that encourages a positive resolution to a conflict.

My Conflict Resolution Style (worksheet)

In a discussion, I get angry when...

I respond by...

When I want to make the situation better, I...



Conflict Diary

- OBJECTIVE:** To review kinds and causes of conflict and to begin to develop an awareness of conflict resolution styles.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment and 30 minutes class discussion
- MATERIALS:** Handout: "Conflict Diary"*
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute the Conflict Diary handout and go over each question.
 2. Ask students to make notations in their diaries every day, and to take into consideration questions 1-7. Agree on a day to begin and end this activity.
 3. The night before the agreed-upon classroom discussion, students should review all of their own diary notes and be prepared to discuss questions 8-11 in class.
 4. In small groups or large group, frame a discussion regarding their insights and observations.

* Adapted from Simon, Howe and Kirschenbaum, *Values Clarification*. Hart, 1966, pp. 388-391.

Conflict Diary

(handout)

For one week, you will keep a Conflict Diary. Your teacher will also keep one. Each time you have a conflict or disagreement with someone this week, write it in your Conflict Diary. Each time you see a disagreement or conflict between other people, write it in your Conflict Diary, too.

You do not have to write a lot about each conflict. Just the following things will be enough:

1. Who was involved in the conflict (a friend, a parent, a teacher, a sister or brother, etc.)?
2. What was the conflict about?
3. What kind of conflict was it? (intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, or intergroup)
4. What was the cause(s)? (resources, psychological needs, values)
5. How did you respond?
6. What were the consequences?
7. Did the conflict escalate or de-escalate?

BE SURE TO WRITE IN YOUR DIARY EVERY DAY THIS WEEK. If you wait until the last day, you will forget many important things.

On the last night you must write in the diary, answer the questions below and be prepared to share your answers in class:

8. In what percentage of the conflicts did you voice your disagreement (tell how you felt)? Guess the percentage, but try to guess correctly. Did you voice your disagreement only a little (1% to 25%), a moderate amount (26% to 55%), or a great deal (56% to 100%)?
9. In how many conflicts did you feel angry?
10. How do you usually handle conflicts?
11. In watching other people's conflicts or disagreements, did you see any examples of ways to handle conflict that you would like to use? What were they? Why would you like to use them? Did you see any conflicts that you would have resolved differently? Why?



Styles & Strategies in Conflict I (Junior High Activity)

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify ways people behave in conflict.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Chalkboard, chalk
- PROCEDURE:**
1. As the students brainstorm, list on the chalkboard all the different one-word metaphors (animals, machines, etc.) they can think of that show ways people typically behave in conflict. Example: someone who responds very aggressively might be described as a steamroller or a rhinoceros. Have the students briefly explain each metaphor.
 2. Ask the students to discuss the list and group the metaphors into a few general categories. The group should be encouraged to come up with their own categories. Some possibilities: attackers, avoiders, problem solvers.
 3. Ask the students to decide which one-word description comes closest to their own style and pattern in conflict, and to also notice what group they fall in. Have them discuss how they think this conflict style helps or hinders the resolution of their own conflicts.



Styles and Strategies in Conflict II (High School Activity)

- OBJECTIVE:** To explore more specific styles, strategies and behaviors common in conflict situations.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Three pieces of butcher paper
- PROCEDURE**
1. As the students brainstorm, list on the chalkboard all the different one-word metaphors (animals, machines, etc.) they can think of that show ways people typically behave in conflict. Example: someone who responds very aggressively might be described as a steamroller or a rhinoceros. Have the students briefly explain each metaphor.
 2. Present background material that describes the three general conflict styles and the variations of each (denial, accommodation, power, compromise, collaboration). Discuss the effects and appropriateness of each style and have the students give examples. Be sure all specific vocabulary (accommodation, etc.) is understood by the class. Students should feel free to add their own ideas to this material.
 3. Title one sheet of butcher paper for each general category: avoidance, confrontation, problem solving. List the appropriate subgroups under each one, leaving room for examples. As a class or in small groups, place each metaphor in the correct subgroup. Allow time for the whole class to discuss the groupings. Again, they may decide if additional groupings are needed.



Conflict Continuum

OBJECTIVE: To reinforce understanding of conflict responses by viewing different responses on a continuum from passive to aggressive.

DURATION: 15 minutes

MATERIALS: Name tags for the one word metaphors of conflict styles from previous activity; or have the class generate a new list of words that describe different conflict behaviors.

Two scales on the floor:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
passive							aggressive		

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Divide the class into two groups and distribute half of the metaphor cards to each group. In each group, students choose cards to hold, and, as a group arrange themselves on the continuum from passive to aggressive. Groups should make their decisions through discussions. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for this process.
 2. Have each group present and discuss their continuum to the other group.



Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving

- OBJECTIVE:** To introduce and explore three approaches to handling conflict.
- DURATION:** 50 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handout: "Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Brainstorm: As a group, list all the ways students can think of to respond to a conflict. Examples: cry, say nothing, shout, etc. Do not edit or discuss the suggestions as they are being generated. Save the list.
 2. Using the background information, discuss with the class the three basic approaches to conflict. Note that all the ways there are to deal with conflict can be divided into three basic groups of avoidance, confrontation, and problem solving. Have the group generate examples of each general approach. Teachers may want to do a short skit with a student to model each style for the class.
 3. Hand out the "Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory" and have the students fill it out individually.
 4. Divide the class into groups of 4. Assign each group one of the 5 scenarios. Have each group discuss their responses to the scenario they have been assigned.
 5. Each group will create a skit based on the scenario they have been given. Students should replay that skit 3 times, each time using an ending that corresponds to one of the three basic conflict resolution styles, e.g. avoidance, confrontation, problem solving.

6. Have the groups choose the skit with *either* the avoidance or confrontation ending *and* the problem solving ending to present to the class.
7. Have the class discuss the skits comparing the different conflict resolution styles used.

Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory

(handout)

1. You and your closest friend are in a store and you witness him/her shoplifting. Outside the store you mention it and your friend tells you to mind your own business. What would you do?
2. You are in a group of students with whom you would like to be friends. This is the first time you have been invited to be a part of the group. Two members of the group begin to tease a girl standing nearby because she has some unusual scars on her face. Others in the group join in, and a few remain silent. The girl can hear what is being said about her, and she looks like she is going to start crying. Suddenly, one of the other kids in the group turns to you and says, "Boy, she's really ugly, about the ugliest girl I've seen. Isn't that right?" Everyone looks at you, waiting to hear what you will say. What would you do?
3. In a playground basketball game, a player on the other team seems very aggressive, fouling you often and arguing if you call a foul. Eventually, when you call a foul, he insults you loudly and steps up very close to you. What would you do?
4. In class, your new math teacher goes over new material very quickly. You are having trouble keeping up. When you ask a question, he/she seems impatient with you in front of the class. What would you do?
5. You sing in a jazz choir at your high school with ten members and a faculty director. The group is all white, and the director likes to tell race-oriented jokes. Most of the group doesn't seem to mind, and some participate with jokes of their own. You are offended by their jokes. What would you do?



When Can We Meet?

OBJECTIVE: To review the various conflict resolution styles through the use of skits.

To develop a collaborative conflict resolution style scenario.

DURATION: 55 minutes

MATERIALS: "When Can We Meet?" worksheet

PROCEDURE:

1. Review the following conflict resolution styles: Denial, Accommodation, Confrontation, Power, Compromise, and Collaboration.
2. Distribute the worksheet and have the students read the various scenarios and identify the styles of resolution used for each scenario. Discuss the positive and negative aspects of each style.

Answers:

Scenario #1 Compromise

#2 Confrontation

#3 Accommodation

#4 Denial

#5 Power

3. There is no scenario for Collaboration. After discussing the first five scenarios, ask each student to develop and write a scenario that portrays collaboration.
4. In groups of 2 or 3, have students share with each other the Collaboration scenario they wrote and ask them to develop a single one.
5. Discuss each group's Collaboration scenario and/or ask some groups to do a skit for the other students.

When Can We Meet? (worksheet, 2pp)

BASIC SCENARIO:

Gail and Meg are working together on a science project. They have arranged to meet tomorrow after school, at 3 o'clock to work on the project. Gail needs to reschedule the time of their meeting. There are five scenarios here.

Scenario #1: Gail: Meg, I need to re-arrange our 3 o'clock meeting for tomorrow. Couldn't we make it 4 instead? Would that be OK?

Meg: Well, actually, no. I need to leave right at 4. I suppose I could be a little late for my next appointment, although I hate to miss it. Could we start at least by 3:30?

Gail: Well, that means I won't get to finish what I was going to do....but, if that's the only way we can do it, I suppose that's fair. So yes, I'll see you at 3:30 then.

Scenario#2: Gail: Meg, I need to rearrange our 3 o'clock meeting for tomorrow. I want to make it at 4 instead. Would that be OK?

Meg: Well, actually no. It wouldn't be OK. I have to leave right at 4. We made that meeting a week ago. I can't understand why you can't keep it. I want to keep it at 3. (sounds irritated)

Gail: (defensive) Well, I know we made it a week ago, but I can't always predict everything. I don't see why it should be such a big problem to make it just an hour later. Seems to me you're being pretty rigid and inflexible about it.

Meg: (self-righteously) Well, at least I keep my commitments. It seems like you never do. You're always changing things around to suit your schedule.

Gail: I do not always change things around. When was the last time I changed a meeting with you?

Meg: Well, last week...

Gail: (interrupts) That was you who changed the time...you said that...

Meg: I did not!

Gail: Yes, you did (loudly)

Meg: I did not (shouts)

Gail: Well, if you're going to yell, I don't want to talk about it at all.
Forget the meeting! (walks out)

Meg: That's fine with me! (walks out the other direction)

Scenario#3: Gail: Meg, I need to re-arrange our 3 o'clock meeting for tomorrow.
I want to make it at 4 instead. Would that be OK?

Meg: Oh, gee. I had really hoped to leave at 4 because I have a lot
of things to do. You really have to change it?

Gail: Yes, it's really important.

Meg: Oh, well, I guess so then. I'll just stay up later doing my other
work.

Scenario#4: Gail: Meg, I need to re-arrange our 3 o'clock meeting for tomorrow.
I want to make it at 4 instead. Would that be OK?

Meg: Oh...well...sure — I guess that would be all right.

Gail: Oh great, thanks! See you at 4 then. (walks away)

Georgia: Hi Meg, how're you doing?

Meg: Oh, OK I guess. I'm so annoyed with Gail, though. She
changed our meeting time for tomorrow. She thinks she can
just move anything around to suit herself. I'm really tired of
it.

Scenario#5: Gail: Meg, I need to re-arrange our 3 o'clock meeting for tomorrow.
I want to make it at 4 instead. (starts walking away)

Meg: But, wait Gail, that time is not really good for me.

Gail: Well, then, I'll just tell Mrs. Jones to give me another partner
because you are hard to work with.



Resolution Style Role Plays

OBJECTIVE:

To further examine specific conflict styles through observing conflict patterns and to explore how different styles affect each other.

DURATION:

45 to 60 minutes

MATERIALS:

Cards (2 for each style, in a hat or box) with the names of the six specific strategies in conflict: denial, accommodation, confrontation, use of power, compromise, collaboration. Include additional styles that the class has agreed upon.

PROCEDURE:

- 1.* Divide the class into as many groups as there are styles; if there are six styles, there will be six groups and twelve cards in the hat. Have each group draw (and keep to themselves) two cards from the hat. Each is then to create a 3-5 minute role play of a conflict. One of the styles drawn should be represented by each of the people in conflict in the role play. Examples: accommodation-confrontation or confrontation-use of power. Allow the groups enough time for discussion and practice of their role plays.
2. Groups present their role plays and the class guesses which styles are being shown and discusses the interaction.

* The same activity can be done with younger students using the three basic categories of *Avoidance*, *Confrontation* and *Problem-solving*.

3. Ask students:

- a. Which styles seem to escalate a conflict?
- b. Which seem to de-escalate a conflict?
- c. What style do you most often use?
- d. Are there times when one style works better than another?

NOTE: It might be interesting to encourage students to play styles that are different from their own predominant style.



Conflict Style Reading Assignment

- OBJECTIVE:** To further examine and discuss the problem solving approach to conflict situations.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment and 30 minute class discussion
- MATERIALS:** Handout: from *Alternatives to Violence*
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Students read handout at home.
 2. Class discussion of the story framed around these questions:
 - A. What approaches to conflict were "A" and "B" taking in the beginning of the story? How was the crowd on the subway car reacting?
 - B. What approach was the writer "LS" taking to the conflict he was observing? Was he experiencing a conflict also?
 - C. What was the effect of the writer's approach on "B"? On the group on the bus?
 - D. Discuss the idea and role of apology in this scenario.
 - E. Through his interaction with "LS," was "B's" view of "A" changing at all? If so, how? If not, what might help to change it?
 - F. Have the class discuss their reactions to this story. How appropriate and realistic does this approach to conflict seem to them for real life situations of their own? When do they think it is appropriate or inappropriate? Can they think of a situation in their recent past in which this approach might have worked?
 - G. Discuss the statement, "All people have good inside them, and it's a challenge to try and draw it out."

Alternatives to Violence* (handout)

Last December at about 11:30 pm, I boarded the subway at 14th Street on my way back from a meeting in Washington. About a dozen passengers got on the empty car with me, an old one with seats running its full length so that all the passengers could see each other.

I found myself sitting opposite two black men: "A" was on the plump side and "B" thin, wiry and intense.

I noticed "A" looking upset as he got up in anger and moved away from "B," who was smoking.

B: (disdainfully, glancing over at A) What's the matter, don't you like my smoke?

A: No, you blew it right in my face.

(By now most people in the car were aware of the conflict).

B: Well, if you don't like it, you know what you can do!

A: I'm not saying anything. I just want to move away.

B: (with hostility) You better keep your mouth shut!

A: (sheepishly, and with obvious fear) I'm saying nothing.

B: (looking around triumphantly, as if daring anyone to challenge him) You better not!

Dead silence enveloped the car. Some people inched away from the scene of the conflict. There was a clear consensus that it was something to stay out of. Three or four minutes passed.

* Reprinted from Oct., 1980 *Fellowship* magazine, a publication of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960, as reprinted in *Alternatives to Violence*, 1984, by Peace GROWS, Inc., 475 West Market Street, Akron, OH 44303.

LS: (standing and walking over to "B," speaking quietly and considerately) My friend, I'm really very sensitive to smoke. It's hard on my lungs. You wouldn't mind putting out your cigarette for the sake of my health, would you? (with a smile)

B: You're over on that side and I'm over here. My smoke doesn't go over there.

LS: (returning to seat) It's not as bad over here, but some does come over, and it does bother me. I'm quite sensitive, you know. (Everyone in the car was listening carefully now, but trying not to look at "B").

B: I know it doesn't go over there.

LS: (earnestly) You know, smokers can't really notice it so much; they're used to it. It's different with those of us who are sensitive. I know you don't like to make it difficult for people.

B: (less hostile) You ask me in a nice way. You're not a "schmuck" (with a nod toward "A" to indicate that he is one).

As he went on smoking, I smiled at him, but tried to show by my expression that I wasn't joining in the denunciation of "A." At this point, another black man nodded approvingly in my direction, taking care to do so when "B" wasn't looking.

B: I have to apologize. (At his words, fear in the car seemed to melt away).

LS: I appreciate that. I know how you feel. But you know, it really doesn't help.

"B" repeated his apology three times, each time after a short period of reflection in which he carefully scrutinized my face. I showed appreciation, but continued to indicate—by means of imploring looks—that apologies were not enough, that the smoke really bothered me.

After another minute or so, "B" took a last puff, put his cigarette on the floor, and crushed it with his shoe. He looked at me with a faint smile.

B: You talk like a gentleman. (By now the other passengers looked incredulous, as if they had just witnessed a miracle).

LS: Well, I try, but I'm not always able to. But I really appreciate your putting out your cigarette. You're a gentleman, too.

B: I apologize. You were right. I'm not a schmuck, but when someone else acts like a schmuck, you have to act that way, too.

LS: Not really. Sometimes you can change the situation by acting nice.

B: (with a knowing look) You're right there, too. (He smiled, obviously wanting to be my friend. I smiled back).

He's my brother (nodding toward "A" and clearly indicating that he meant soul brother).

LS: Yes, we're all brothers.

"B" nodded in enthusiastic agreement as the train, which had stopped for passengers, started off. As the noise grew, we looked across at each other to communicate that it was useless to try to shout over the din.

"B" continued to smile and look pleased. At Union Square, the train filled up with passengers who stood between us, blocking our view. When I got up to leave, at Third Avenue, I walked over to "B." "Have a good evening, friend," I said. He looked up, pleased.

On the stairs leading up to the street, a young woman hurried up from behind to tell me that she could hardly believe what she had just seen happen. Because of what I had done, the passengers had lost their fear and were filled with good feeling, she said. How was I able to be so friendly to someone who seemed so threatening? I walked with her to the corner, telling her that I worked with Quakers in nonviolence training and conflict resolution.

"It doesn't always work," I said, "but it usually does. All people have good inside them, and it's a challenge to try and draw it out." She agreed and indicated deep satisfaction with my explanation. She warmly returned my greeting as we went our separate ways.



Observing Conflict Resolution Styles

OBJECTIVE:

To practice observing conflict resolution styles.

To stimulate discussion about the various conflict styles around us, and how they may affect us.

DURATION:

Homework assignment of 30 minutes to 1 hour of TV watching and 30 minutes of class discussion

MATERIALS:

Handouts: "Typical Behaviors Associated With Conflict Resolution Styles"

"Observation Chart"

PROCEDURE:

1. Review three styles of conflict resolution: Avoidance, Confrontation, and Problem Solving.
2. Brainstorm typical behaviors and statements that exemplify the three styles. Examples:
 - To say "Nothing is wrong" or "I don't have a problem" when something is wrong are statements that exemplify Avoidance.
 - To yell at or hit someone are examples of behaviors that exemplify Confrontation.
 - To demonstrate care about the well-being of a relationship, or to want to talk about the problem in a cooperative way, are behaviors used when the style is Problem Solving.

3. After brainstorming behaviors and statements, distribute handout "Typical Behaviors Associated with Conflict Resolution Styles" and point out any behavior not mentioned.
4. Distribute "Observation Chart." Explain that students are to watch one or two TV programs and fill out the chart based on the styles they see being used.
5. In the next class, frame a discussion of conflict resolution styles around their observations.

Typical Behaviors Associated (handout) with Conflict Resolution Styles*

Avoidance	Problem Solving	Confrontation
Tendency to:	Tendency to:	Tendency to:
☞ Allow self to be interrupted, subordinated and stereotyped.	☞ State feelings, needs, and wants directly.	☞ Interrupt, subordinate, and stereotype others.
☞ Have poor eye contact.	☞ Have good eye contact.	☞ Have intense and glaring eye contact.
☞ Have poor posture and defeated air.	☞ Have straight posture and competent air.	☞ Have invading posture and arrogant air.
☞ Withhold information, opinions and feelings.	☞ Be able to disclose information, opinions and feelings.	☞ Conceal information, opinions, and feelings.
☞ Be an ineffective listener.	☞ Be an effective listener.	☞ Be an ineffective listener.
☞ Be indecisive.	☞ Initiate and take clear positions.	☞ Dominate.
☞ Apologize, avoid, and leave.	☞ Approach with skill.	☞ Be loud, abusive, blaming and sarcastic.

* Adapted from Robert E. Alberti and Michael L. Emmons, *Stand Up, Speak Out, TALK BACK!* (New York: Pocket Books, 1975), p. 39. Reprinted from: Colleen Kelley, *Assertion Training: A Facilitator's Guide*. San Diego, Calif: University Associates, Inc., 1979. Used with permission.

Conflict Resolution Styles			
Problem Solving	Confrontation	Avoidance	
			Typical behavior
			Effect on others
			Was this behavior effective? Explain.

Observation Chart

3 COMMUNICATION: AN OVERVIEW

Chapter Three Background

Why Communication is Important in Conflict Resolution

Communication is an essential ingredient for conflict resolution. You can't resolve a conflict that you don't understand, and you can't understand the conflict until you have complete and accurate information. You need to be able to talk about concerns and feelings, to speak about what you would like to change and what you need to resolve the problem. You also need to find out exactly what the other person wants to change and what he/she needs to resolve the conflict.

Poor communication can sometimes be at the root of conflict. If one person misinterprets what another person has said, and reacts in a way that the speaker finds offensive, the interaction can quickly escalate into conflict. Once the two people are able to communicate clearly — to both understand and make themselves understood — they may find that there really is no problem. Or, the problem may be small and easily solved. Even if the problem is large, once clear communication is established, they can begin to work together to find mutually beneficial solutions.

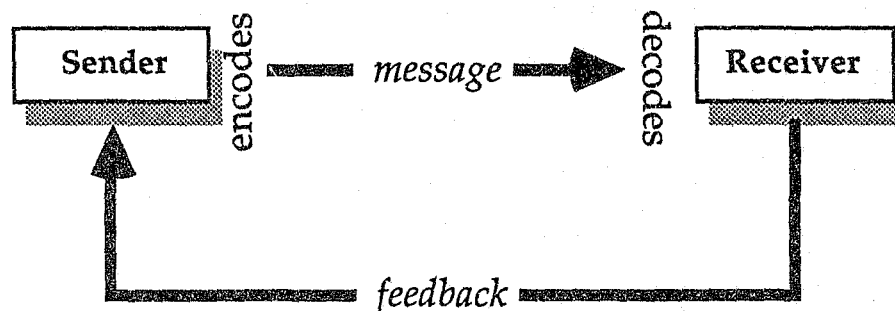
Thus, communication is an important element in conflict resolution in two ways:

- Clear communication is a necessary tool for getting to the bottom of conflicts and finding satisfactory resolutions;
- Unclear communication may itself be the cause of conflict.

In this chapter we will look at the process of communication and the factors that influence it. This will lay the groundwork for Chapter 4, in which we will examine some specific, well-tested techniques for effective listening and speaking.

The Process of Communication

In linguistic terms, communication can be defined as "the sending and receiving of messages." Even though the definition sounds simple, the process — when examined closely — is actually quite complex.



It begins with a "sender," a person who has a thought that he/she wants to convey to another person (the "receiver"). First, the sender must "encode" this thought — that is, put it into words. The receiver must then hear the words and "decode" the message — that is, interpret the meaning of the words. Once the message is received, the receiver becomes the sender, and encodes a message of his/her own which is called "feedback." This feedback helps the original sender to know whether the message he/she intended was correctly understood. In this way, communication proceeds.

Each step in the communication process is fraught with opportunities for error and/or misinterpretation. If the sender is unclear in his or her own mind about what he/she wants to say, or if the sender uses ambiguous words and gestures, the receiver may decode the message incorrectly. Even when the sender is crystal clear, if the receiver does not listen closely, or makes inaccurate assumptions about what the sender is trying to say, he/she may still get the wrong message.

Thus, communication is a two-way street. If you want to be heard correctly, you must send a complete message. If you want to hear accurately, you must listen carefully.

Factors Influencing Communication

If we were all identical — if we shared the same life histories, experiences, and culture — the process of communication might always proceed smoothly.

But people are individuals unique and different from one another. We come from different families; we have different ethnic backgrounds and cultures; we have different personal experiences; we want different things from life and from each other; we have different dreams, wishes, and expectations.

Because of all these differences, we may not respond in the same way to the same situations, and this makes communication much more complicated. With so many potential differences that can affect the process of communication between two people, it is difficult to identify just how an exchange might have broken down. It can also be difficult to predict ahead of time where a problem might arise so that care can be taken to prevent it.

Dean Barnlund, professor of Speech and Communications at San Francisco State University, has simplified the situation for us by grouping all these differences into four major factors:

- Values
- Perceptions
- Assumptions
- Communication Style

Barnlund proposes that communication between two people will be easier to the extent that they are alike in each of these four factors. Conversely, communication will be difficult to the extent that there are differences between the two people in one or more of these areas.

Values

Our *values* are based on our beliefs — what we believe to be morally right and correct, what we believe to be important, what we believe to be true. Values are those beliefs we hold most dear — whether religious, social, or cultural. They define who we are and inform the decisions we make about how we live our lives.

As was discussed in Chapter 1, value differences are one major cause of conflict, and conflicts involving values are usually the most difficult to discuss and resolve. The reason is that when we encounter someone with values very different from our own, we often experience those

values as a threat to ourselves and to our way of life. These perceived threats elicit strong emotions and reactions. We therefore have a great deal of difficulty communicating clearly and effectively when opposing values are involved in a conflict.

Consider the situation of two people from different cultures, one of which places ultimate value on individuality and competitiveness, the other which prizes working cooperatively for the good of the group. If these two people try to work on a task together without being aware of these differences, they will very likely run into difficulty. The cooperator may find the individualist to be selfish and arrogant, while the individualist might see the cooperator as dependent or unassertive.

It will be difficult for communication to proceed smoothly unless these value differences are identified, and unless each person is open to learning about and understanding the values of the other and how those values affect the other's behavior.

Perceptions

Psychologists have long known that it is possible for two individuals to experience the same event or look at the



same object, and perceive entirely different things. For example, when a group of people is asked to describe the picture at left, some will say that it portrays a young woman, while others will insist that it portrays an old woman. Similarly, trial lawyers know that two witnesses to the same event can give accounts that completely contradict one another — even when neither is deliberately lying.

The reason for these differing *perceptions* is that we each bring to every situation a mind set that shapes what we see and hear. This mind set is formed from our values, our previous experiences, our culture, and our expectations.

When two people have differing perceptions of the same event, misunderstanding and conflict can result. Until these differences are identified, communication will be very difficult. In order for communication to proceed, each person must be willing to look at the situation from the other person's perspective or point of view, and — even more important — to accept that point of view as valid in its own right.

Assumptions

An *assumption* is a statement or judgement that is accepted to be true without proof or demonstration. Assumptions about other people or situations spring from our values and our perceptions. We assume or infer things about others based on what we believe and what we perceive.

For example, a student who is accused of stealing a classmate's backpack quickly averts his/her eyes. Seeing this, the teacher might conclude that the accused student is guilty. (The assumption is that averting one's eyes is a sure indication of guilt.) In fact, the accused is so embarrassed by the accusation that he/she doesn't know how to respond and so looks away.

Stereotypes

A *stereotype* is an assumption shared widely by many people. When we encounter people of a particular age, ethnic group, gender, or physical build, we may draw conclusions about them and interpret their behavior based on this single characteristic. Because stereotypes so often operate unconsciously, they are a particularly powerful form of assumption.

Suspensions

A *suspicion* is an assumption that involves doubt or mistrust. For example, a student in disagreement with a locker-mate over care of the locker might assume that a book has been thrown on the floor just to annoy him/her. This assumption about the motivation behind the locker-mate's behavior is a suspicion.

When two people enter into a discussion with very different assumptions about the subject being discussed or about their relationship, there is ample opportunity for miscommunication. To the extent that these assumptions can be verbalized and clarified, communication will proceed more smoothly.

Communication Style

There are, of course, as many styles of communicating as there are people attempting to communicate. How close we stand while talking, the tone and loudness of our voice, the words we use — all are aspects of our *communication style*. Although closely matched styles will not guarantee a smooth exchange, a similarity in styles makes it easier for two people to focus on the content of the discussion. The more different the styles, the more work is necessary. When styles are so diverse that they clash, then this clash can become the disagreement itself.

For example, in certain cultures, making direct eye contact during conversation is considered a sign of openness, directness, and even friendliness. In other cultures, direct eye contact is interpreted as aggression, disrespect, or as a sexual provocation. In an encounter between two people representing these differing cultures, both may find themselves feeling extremely uncomfortable, confused, and distracted from the content of the discussion. Unless each comes to understand the cultural origins of the other's behavior (and perhaps adjusts his/her own behavior accordingly), communication will be very difficult.

As communicators, we must remember that *how* we say what we say, including our non-verbal cues, will have as much of an impact on the listener as *what* we say.

**Attitudes Essential
to Effective
Communication**

Because of the many potential areas of difference between people, *it is dangerous to assume that we totally understand another person, or that they completely understand us*. We cannot automatically see into another person's mind or heart. Thus, effective communication requires an openness to differences — even differences that may make us uncomfortable.

Willingness

For this reason, communicating effectively is not automatic or easy. It may not always be achieved by "just being yourself." It requires hard work to stay aware of the differences in values, assumptions, perceptions, and communication styles that might be affecting the quality of our exchange with another person. This is particularly true in the midst of a conflict. To do this work well, one must have a large measure of patience and also a *willingness* — to give, receive, and clarify information, feelings and needs. If that willingness is not present, efforts to communicate can be futile.

Respect

Respect is another requirement for successful communication. It will be difficult to explore differences in deeply held values, assumptions, perceptions, or communication style if we immediately judge or discount what the other person believes and feels to be true. We must be willing to show that what the other person has to say is just as important as what we have to say. Because communication is fundamentally an educational experience, each person must believe that he/she can learn something from the other. Without respect, there is no equality, and without equality, honest effective communication is not possible.

In its highest form, communication is not simply a mechanical sending and receiving of messages. *Truly effective communication is an actual connecting of people that allows for the exchange of thoughts, feelings and ideas which leads to understanding.*

Learning to Communicate

The ability to communicate well with others is not something with which we are born. But communication can be learned, and we all have the potential to communicate effectively.

A beginning point in learning to communicate effectively is to examine our present habits and patterns of communication. How do we presently communicate in conflict situations? Do we become silent, refusing to talk? Do we badger? Interrupt? Fight? When do we become defensive? What do we want when trying to communicate? Answering such questions for ourselves and discussing these questions with others will help us to

better understand who we are and who we want to be as communicators.

In introducing the concept of effective communication to high school students, it is useful for them to have an opportunity to form their own individual definitions for effective communication. It is difficult to become a better communicator without a specific idea of what effective communication means. The important word to emphasize in this process is "effective." It would be easy, for instance, for a student in conflict to describe communication as "a conversation where I make Carlos understand that I am right and he is wrong."

The activities in this curriculum are designed to help teachers and students look at components of communication and experiment with them. They are intended to provide contexts in which students can draw conclusions about their values, perceptions, attitudes and styles of communication. If students don't already have working ideas about what makes effective communication, they will be forming them as they proceed. If they have ideas in place, they may be altering them in the process. Discussing and experimenting with these ideas will be a vital part of this study.

Conclusion



Poor communication is an important reason why conflicts turn into fights. Good communication can turn conflicts into learning experiences. With poor communication anger increases; with good communication anger decreases. This idea can be stated in another way: with poor communication, conflicts grow; with good communication, people grow.


In the next chapter, we'll look at specific techniques for listening and speaking that enhance the effectiveness of the communication process.


3 COMMUNICATION: AN OVERVIEW

Chapter Three Activities

Through the lessons in this chapter, students will develop an understanding of the process of communication and the factors that influence the effectiveness of that process.

Each "key" activity (designated with a  symbol) has been grouped with its corresponding "supplementary" activities (designated with a  symbol). The key activities are highly recommended to assure that students master the basic concepts. Supplementary activities are optional and may be used to provide further skills practice, or to strengthen students' understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

	Communication Assessment	To examine personal values and styles of communication.	3-11
		To identify communication strengths and the communication skills that need improvement.	

	Defining Effective Communication I	To foster a discussion about effective communication, leading students to consider what it means to them. Students will see what values their peers hold as well.	3-14

⌘	Factors That Influence Effective Communication	To identify factors that influence effective communication. To give students practice observing how these factors — values, perceptions, assumptions and communication style — may interfere with effective communication when they are not acknowledged or discussed.	3-15
⊕	What's Important To Me	To examine students' values in specific situations. To experience how value differences may affect communication.	3-18
⊕	Value Differences	To have students demonstrate their opinion regarding various value issues, and to explain to each other why they agree or disagree.	3-21
⊕	Perception	To promote awareness of how perceptual limitations can affect communication. To promote acceptance of divergent points of view.	3-23
⊕	The Blind Men and the Elephant	To illustrate how perceptions influence how we view events, what assumptions we make, and our ability to communicate effectively.	3-26
⊕	The Maligned Wolf	To understand that there may be two points of view or perceptions of any event.	3-28
⊕	Assumptions	To understand how assumptions can influence effective communication. To recognize assumptions that people make and how these can lead to conflict.	3-31
⊕	Communication Style	To identify ways in which communication style influences effective communication.	3-33
⌘	Defining Effective Communication II	To determine whether students' understanding of effective communication has changed as a result of previous lessons.	3-35



Communication Assessment

- OBJECTIVE:** To examine personal values and styles of communication.
To identify communication strengths and the communication skills that need improvement.
- DURATION:** 60 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Worksheet: "Communication: What's Important" for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute the questionnaire and explain that it is a tool to help students assess their own communication style. Allow 10-15 minutes for completion.
 2. Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students and have students discuss their answers to the questionnaire items.

Communication: (worksheet) What's Important

1. The person I have the best discussions with is _____. The discussions are so enjoyable because....

2. The person I have the most trouble having discussions with is _____. The reasons the discussions are difficult are....

3. When having a conversation or discussion, I get mad when people do the following....

4. If I'm having an argument and I want to make it better, I do the following....

Communication: What's Important

(worksheet, p.2)

5. Because of how I talk to people, I think they see me in this way....

my friends

adults

6. Usually, I would like people to think that I am

my friends

adults

7. People like to talk to me because....

8. In talking with people, I think I could improve on....



Defining Effective Communication I

- OBJECTIVE:** To foster a discussion about effective communication, leading students to consider what it means to them. Students will see what values their peers hold as well.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Paper and pencil
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Have each student write a one-sentence definition of effective communication.
 2. The group will hear and discuss each definition. The purpose is not to be critical, but to understand the underlying values of the definitions.
 3. (OPTIONAL) Teachers could lead the discussion toward a group consensus that could serve as the group's working definition.

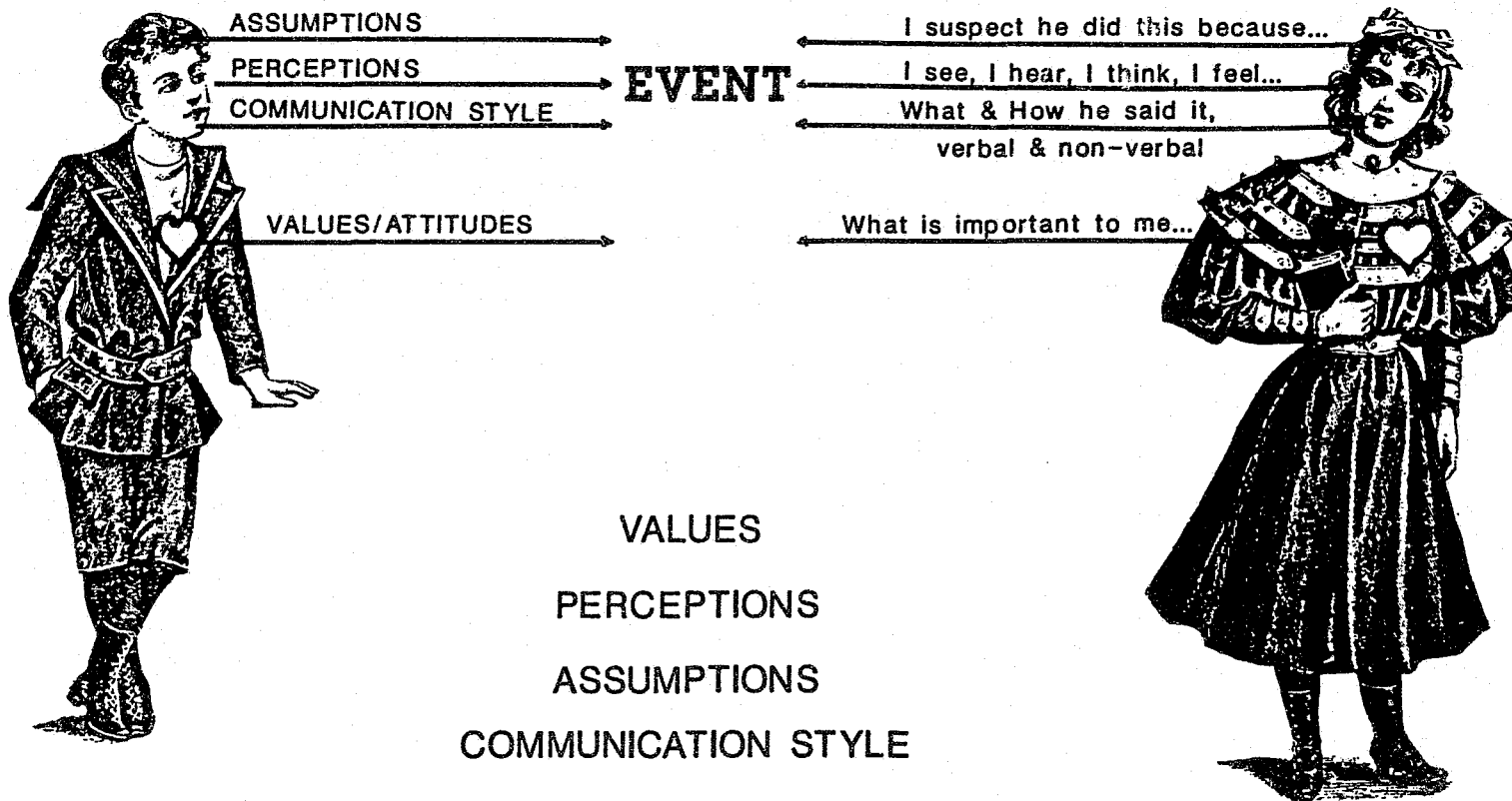
NOTE: Have students retain the one-sentence definitions produced in Step 1, as they will be needed later in "Defining Effective Communication II."



Factors That Influence Effective Communication

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify factors that influence effective communication.
- To give students practice observing how these factors — values, perceptions, assumptions and communication style — may interfere with effective communication when they are not acknowledged or discussed.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment: 30 minutes to 1 hour of TV watching; and 30-45 minutes class discussion
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: "Factors That Influence Effective Communication"
"Factors That Influence Effective Communication" Observation Sheet
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Using the teacher background material, review the section on "Factors That Influence Effective Communication." Distribute the handout and discuss the assignment with students.
 2. The assignment is to watch a TV program(s) and fill out the handout. The students are to identify the factors that contributed to a conflict or a misunderstanding and to describe what happened.
 3. Have students choose one or two TV programs to watch (half-hour to an hour show). The students should agree to watch the same program in order to have a discussion and make comparisons during the next class.
 4. After the assignment is completed, frame a discussion around their observations.

Factors That Influence Effective Communication



Adapted from a concept of Dr Dean Barnlund, San Francisco State University

Factors That Influence Effective Communication Observation Sheet

TV program:

1. Who was involved in the conflict or misunderstanding?
2. What was the conflict or misunderstanding about? Explain what happened.
3. What factors interfered with effective communication?
4. What were the differences for each factor? Fill in the chart below.

	Values	Perceptions	Assumptions	Communication Style
Person A				
Person B				



What's Important To Me

- OBJECTIVE:** To examine students' values in specific situations.
To experience how value differences may affect communication.
- DURATION:** 55 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Values — Case Worksheet
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Ask students what values are.
 2. Using background material, discuss how similarities and differences in values may affect communication between people. Will this be any different in a conflict situation?
 3. Distribute Values — Case Worksheet and have students read and complete it.
 4. Divide the class into small groups. Assign one situation to each small group for discussion.

Values

Case Worksheet

Case 1.

Robert Kelly was opposed to smog, high taxes, pollution and cigarettes. He was a handsome man who had terrible financial problems.

One day he was walking along the street when a studio talent scout walked up to him. He offered him a well-paying job advertising cigarettes. The job would pay enough to rid Robert Kelly of his debts.

Mr. Kelly happened to despise cigarettes because he believed that they kill people. He had told all his friends of his opinion. Mr. Kelly needed the money to help his family and pay his taxes.

Now, he had the option of going against his previous morals and doing the commercial or keeping his morals and his debts, a decision for which his family would suffer.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO? WHAT VALUES ARE INVOLVED IN MAKING THIS DECISION?

Case 2.

You are asked to make a judgment about U.S. foreign policy. The leaders of country XYZ are about to be thrown out by the citizens there because they are not doing the kind of job that the majority of the citizens desire. Those leaders appeal to the U.S. for armed support to keep the citizens from removing them.

The U.S. Government is concerned because the current leaders vigorously support the U.S.A. in international disputes, while the new leaders, wanted by the citizens of XYZ country, are not expected to support the U.S.A. in international matters and would probably request the removal of a large American Air Base on their territory.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE? WHAT OPPOSING VALUES ARE INVOLVED IN THIS DECISION?

Case 3.

You are a junior high school student. You are in English class, and your teacher is someone you like and trust a lot. The teacher steps outside the classroom door to speak privately to a student about a personal problem the student is having.

While the teacher is out of the room, one of the other students breaks open the cabinet where the teacher keeps her purse and steals \$2.00 from her wallet.

When the teacher returns a few minutes later, she goes to the cabinet to get something from her purse and realizes some of her money has been stolen.

The teacher tells the class that she will leave the room for two minutes and would like whoever stole the money to put it on her desk before she returns to the room, no questions asked. Otherwise, she will have to call everyone's home and discuss the incident with their parents.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO? WHAT VALUES ARE INVOLVED IN MAKING THIS DECISION?



Value Differences

OBJECTIVE: To have students demonstrate their opinion regarding various value issues, and to explain to each other why they agree or disagree.

DURATION: 55 minutes

MATERIALS: None

PROCEDURE: 1. Write the following words across the chalkboard:

Strongly Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly
agree disagree

2. As you give value statements, have the students line up in front of the chalkboard under the word that describes how they feel about the position statement.

Some examples of value statements are:

- Marijuana should be legalized.
- The drinking age should be lowered to 18.
- Interracial marriages should not be allowed.
- Students should not get grades on tests.
- Affirmative action programs hurt minorities.
- My family is the most important thing in my life.
- Women should stay home and care for children.

(Add more of your own.)

3. Pick one value statement for the students to discuss in small groups of 6-8.

Make sure that each small group has a mixture of students who agreed and disagreed with the statement.

4. Each student is to take a turn at explaining why he/she did or did not agree with the value statement.

Rule for this discussion: No put downs!

Remind the students that although they may disagree and have strong feelings about what is being said, they are not to interrupt. They can ask questions to get more information *after* each student is finished with his/her explanation.

5. Reconvene students into a large group and process the small group discussions.

Some questions could be:

- How was it to have to state your opinion knowing that others in the group disagreed with you?
- How did you feel towards the students who disagreed with you? Why?
- Were you able to see someone else's point of view? Did this affect your point of view?
- What did you learn from this activity?



Perception

OBJECTIVE:

To promote awareness of how perceptual limitations can affect communication.

To promote acceptance of divergent points of view.

DURATION:

15 minutes

MATERIALS:

Young Girl/Old Woman drawing

PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss the information below with the class:

Even when we speak the same language, we can misunderstand each other, because we can not see into others' minds or hearts. *Never assume you totally understand the other person, and never assume that he/she understands you completely.* People are individuals unique and different from each other.

Although we know in our head that we are not the same, we talk and listen to each other as if we were all the same...that he or she is "just like me." We come from different families, we have different ethnic backgrounds and cultures, we have different personal experiences. We want different things from life and from each other. We have different dreams, wishes, and expectations. We respond differently to the same situation.

2. Show the picture of Young Girl/Old Woman.
3. Ask students what they see in the picture. Emphasize the idea that people perceive differently by asking questions such as "would you talk to this person on the bus?" or "who in your family does this person remind you of?" Assist students who have difficulty identifying both aspects of the drawing.

4. Ask questions such as:

Why did some people see a young girl while others saw an old woman? Is there a "correct" way to see the picture?

Is anybody able to see both aspects simultaneously?

How might interpersonal conflicts result from people perceiving information differently? How might such conflicts be resolved?



Picture designed by the American psychologist E. G. Boring.



The Blind Men and the Elephant

- OBJECTIVE:** To illustrate how perceptions influence how we view events, what assumptions we make, and our ability to communicate effectively.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Colored pens/crayons, paper
Teacher copy of The Blind Men and the Elephant
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Read the poem "The Blind Men and the Elephant" one stanza at a time.
 2. At the end of each stanza, ask students to draw what the elephant looks like.
 3. At the conclusion of the poem, ask students to draw a composite picture of the elephant based on the perceptions of the six blind men.
 4. Ask students:
 - a. What caused the disagreement between the blind men?
 - b. What assumptions are being made by each blind man?
 - c. Whose opinion was right or wrong?
 - d. How could this dispute be resolved?

Parable of the Blind Men and the Elephant

by John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)

It was six men of Indastan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind)
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho. what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis might clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out his eager hand,
And felt about the knee
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth who chanced to touch an ear
Said, "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope
Then, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indastan
Disputed loud and long
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong
Though each was partly in the right
And all were in the wrong!



The Maligned Wolf

- OBJECTIVE:** To understand that there may be two points of view or perceptions of any event.
- DURATION:** 15 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of "The Maligned Wolf" for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Read the story "The Maligned Wolf" aloud to the group.
 2. At the conclusion, ask questions such as:
 - a. How did you feel about the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood" before you heard this story?
 - b. Now that you've heard the wolf's story, how do you feel about him?
 - c. How did you feel about Little Red Riding Hood before you heard this story?
 - d. How do you feel about Little Red Riding Hood now?
 - e. Have you ever looked at some situation in your own life one way, but changed your mind after you listened to another person tell his or her side of the story?
 - f. What have you learned from this story about perspective?
 3. (OPTIONAL) Students choose a fairy tale and write a 1-2 page version of the story from the antagonist's point of view. (e.g. Little Miss Muffet — from the spider's point of view; The Three Little Pigs — from the wolf's point of view, etc.).

The Maligned Wolf*

(handout)

The forest was my home. I lived there, and I cared about it. I tried to keep it neat and clean.

Then one sunny day, while I was cleaning up some garbage a camper had left behind, I heard footsteps. I leaped behind a tree and saw a little girl coming down the trail carrying a basket. I was suspicious of this little girl right away because she was dressed funny—all in red, and her head covered up as if she didn't want people to know who she was. Naturally, I stopped to check her out. I asked who she was, where she was going, where she had come from, and all that. She gave me a song and dance about going to her grandmother's house with a basket of lunch. She appeared to be a basically honest person, but she was in my forest, and she certainly looked suspicious with that strange getup of hers. So I decided to teach her just how serious it is to prance through the forest unannounced and dressed funny.

I let her go on her way, but I ran ahead to her grandmother's house. When I saw that nice old woman, I explained my problem and she agreed that her granddaughter needed to learn a lesson all right. The old woman agreed to stay out of sight until I called her. Actually, she hid under the bed.

When the girl arrived, I invited her into the bedroom where I was in the bed, dressed like the grandmother. The girl came in all rosy-cheeked and said something nasty about my big ears. I've been insulted before so I made the best of it by suggesting that my big ears would help me to hear better. Now, what I meant was that I liked her and wanted to pay close attention to what she was saying. But

* Reprinted from *A Curriculum on Conflict Management*, 1975 by Uvaldo Palomares et al., Human Development Training Institute, San Diego, CA 92101 wherein it was in turn adapted from *The Maligned Wolf* by Leif Fearn (Individual Development Creativity, 1974, Educational Improvement Associates, San Diego, CA)

she made another insulting crack about my bulging eyes. Now you can see how I was beginning to feel about this girl who put on such a nice front, but was apparently a very nasty person. Still, I've made it a policy to turn the other cheek, so I told her that my big eyes helped me to see her better.

Her next insult really got to me. I've got this problem with having big teeth, and that little girl made an insulting crack about them. I know that I should have had better control, but I leaped up from that bed and growled that my teeth would help me to eat her better.

Now let's face it—no wolf could ever eat a little girl—everyone knows that—but that crazy girl started running around the house screaming—me chasing her to calm her down. I'd taken off the grandmother clothes, but that only seemed to make it worse. All of a sudden the door came crashing open, and a big lumberjack is standing there with his axe. I looked at him, and all of sudden it came clear that I was in trouble. There was an open window behind me and out I went.

I'd like to say that was the end of it. But that Grandmother character never did tell my side of the story. Before long the word got around that I was a mean, nasty guy. Everybody started avoiding me. I don't know about that little girl with the funny red outfit, but I didn't live happily ever after.



Assumptions

OBJECTIVE:

To understand how assumptions can influence effective communication.

To recognize assumptions that people make and how these can lead to conflict.

DURATION:

30 minutes

MATERIALS:

Worksheet: "Assumption Case"

PROCEDURE:

1. Distribute the Assumption Case worksheet and have students fill it out.
2. Discuss the case and answers.
3. Ask students to think of a time when they made an assumption that got them into a conflict.

Have them share the conflict.

Ask them what they learned from the experience and what they would do differently next time.

Assumption Case (worksheet)

Students in your class are organizing a basketball game to be played on Saturday. This is not a school activity and not all students wish to participate.

Two athletic-type students, John and Carla, are organizing the game and inviting other students to be part of the two teams that will play each other.

One boy and two girls don't get invited to play, and, as a result, their feelings are hurt. These three students are shorter than most other students.

You are very active on the school basketball team and like all kinds of sports. However, you have not been involved in organizing this game for Saturday.

Two of the students that did not get invited to play in the basketball game come to you after class and say in a sarcastic way, "You think you're such a good sport, why don't you think of others once in a while?"

Questions:

1. What assumptions are being made? By whom?
2. Did the students making assumptions have a basis for them?
3. What could the students have done instead of making assumptions?



Communication Style

OBJECTIVE:

To identify ways in which communication style influences effective communication.

DURATION:

45-55 minutes

MATERIALS:

Communication Style Worksheet for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Ask students what is meant by communication style. Use teacher background material to frame a discussion of how communication style helps or hinders interactions between people.
2. Distribute Communication Style Worksheet. Have students complete worksheet.
3. Divide class into small groups of 5 students each to discuss their answers to the worksheet questions.
4. Have each group report out to the entire class.
5. Ask students what generalizations they can make about the effect of communication style on communication.
6. (OPTIONAL) Have students write a situation depicting a conflict resulting from different communication styles.

Communication Style (worksheet)

Directions: Read the following situation and answer the questions below.

Amalia and Gwen are discussing their ideas about what happened on their favorite TV show last night. Each becomes more excited as she tries to sell her idea. As Amalia becomes more excited, her voice gets louder and louder and she begins to move closer to Gwen as she continues. Gwen begins to say less and less and tries to back away from Amalia. Gwen doesn't like to hear Amalia yelling and thinks that Amalia is angry. Finally, Gwen says, "I don't want to discuss things with you any more. You always end up getting angry if I don't agree with you."

1. What communication style differences can you identify in this situation?
2. How do these differences affect the interactions between Gwen and Amalia?
3. How is Amalia feeling at the end of the interaction? How is Gwen feeling?
4. What assumptions is each person making about the other?
5. What can Amalia and Gwen do to communicate more effectively?



Defining Effective Communication II

OBJECTIVE:

To determine whether students' understanding of effective communication has changed as a result of previous lessons.

DURATION:

30 minutes

MATERIALS:

Paper and pencil

Each student's one-sentence definition of effective communication written previously as part of "Defining Effective Communication I"

PROCEDURE:

1. Have each student again write a one-sentence definition of effective communication.
2. Have students compare this definition to the one they wrote before. How has the definition changed? Why?
3. Have the group listen to and discuss each definition. Discuss any changes in understanding of what effective communication is.
4. (OPTIONAL) Teachers could lead the discussion toward a group consensus definition.

4

SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Chapter Four Background

In the previous chapter, we looked at the process of communication and the factors that affect its quality. We also reviewed the attitudes that are necessary in order for the process of communication to be effective.

Having a general understanding of communication, however, does not guarantee that one will be able to communicate well. It is essential also to translate this understanding into specific behavior — to be able to speak and act in a way that will promote a productive exchange. For this reason, it helps to become familiar with communication skills and techniques. In this chapter, we will examine some well-tested, proven techniques for communicating effectively.

Barriers to Communication

A good place to begin in learning about communication skills is to become aware of behaviors that are ineffective — that is, to identify the things we commonly see people do that hinder communication.

It is important that students be encouraged to identify for themselves what specific actions or elements are provocative and create communication roadblocks. Discussing this process as a group broadens each student's view of communication in general and demonstrates that many of the difficulties they encounter are not unique to themselves or even uncommon. There are a number of common roadblocks to effective communication. The chart on the next page summarizes them and gives examples of each.

Roadblocks to Communication*

ORDERING:	You must...	You have to...	You will...
-----------	-------------	----------------	-------------

THREATENING:	If you don't, then...	You had better or else...
--------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

PREACHING:	It is your duty to...	You should...	You ought...
------------	-----------------------	---------------	--------------

LECTURING:	Here is why you are wrong...	Do you realize...
------------	------------------------------	-------------------

PROVIDING ANSWERS:	What I would do is...	It would be best for you...
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------

JUDGING:	You are bad...lazy!	Your hair is too long...
----------	---------------------	--------------------------

EXCUSING:	You'll feel better...	It's not so bad...
-----------	-----------------------	--------------------

DIAGNOSING:	You're just trying to get attention...	I know what you need...
-------------	--	-------------------------

PRYING:	Why?	What?	How?	When?
---------	------	-------	------	-------

* Adapted from materials produced by the Center For Human Development, 1980.

Active Listening

Teaching communication skills can be tricky. Few people, especially students, want to be taught a set of techniques that they feel will be judged insincere. Although we teach skills, as we pointed out earlier, the process of being a good communicator is as much attitude as it is technique. All the wonderful listening skills available will not help the person who doesn't want to communicate.

Willingness is something we can't teach. We can, however, examine our patterns and habits and notice what fosters willingness or reluctance in ourselves and in others. The behaviors in the "receiver" that seem to do this best have been termed "Active Listening."

Active listening is a way of responding to the speaker which implies that the listener is trying to understand what the speaker is saying, feeling and doing. It shows the listener's belief that communication is not a one-way process and that what is being said deserves to be heard and understood. When empathy and respect are shown, and judgement is reserved, people are encouraged to continue talking and will feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts and feelings.

Active Listening Guidelines

In using the techniques of active listening, it helps to keep in mind the following guidelines:

- 1) Empathize. Try to put yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how he or she feels.
- 2) Demonstrate your understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behaviors:
 - tone of voice
 - facial expressions
 - gestures
 - eye contact
 - posture

- 3) Do not interrupt, offer advice, or give suggestions.
Do not bring up similar feelings and problems from
your own experience.

Active Listening Techniques

Active listening is difficult because it requires strict attention and the ability to be objective in situations that often spawn strong opinions and judgements. Like most aspects of good communication, it can be practiced and should arise from the individual's true willingness to be part of a fruitful exchange.

Whether it is completely natural or learned, all good active listeners do the following:

Encourage:

This technique is used to convey interest and to encourage the speaker to continue talking. To encourage, the listener should use neutral words, and avoid agreeing or disagreeing. One sign of encouragement is nodding of the head. Or encouragement might be accomplished verbally. For example,

"Can you tell me more.....?"

Clarify:

Clarifying means literally "to free from confusion." Clarifying is helpful in getting the information you need in order to understand what is being said or to gather information necessary to understand a problem. Examples of clarification are:

"How did you react when ____ happened?"

"How long has this situation been going on?"

"Have you been friends in the past?"

Restate:

Restating is repeating in your own words the main thoughts and ideas the speaker has expressed. This demonstrates that you have heard and understood what is being said and allows you to check the meaning and interpretation of what you have heard. Restating does not mean that you agree or disagree with what the speaker is expressing. Examples include:

"Then you see the problem as..."

"So what you're telling me is..."

"So you would like to trust your parents more. Is that right?"

Reflect:

Reflecting shows that you understand the feelings behind what is being expressed. Reflecting can help the speaker clarify what he/she is feeling or may serve to acknowledge the feelings being expressed. Examples of reflecting are:

"You seem frustrated because you didn't get the grade you were expecting."

"It sounds like you feel pretty angry about what happened."

Summarize:

By pulling all the information together — both facts and feelings — summarizing can help the speaker be sure that he/she has given you all the information. Summarizing may also give the speaker a chance to correct or add anything and can serve as a way to focus further discussion. For example:

"You have spoken about A and B and C. Could you talk a little more about X?"

Validate:

A validation is a statement that acknowledges the speaker's worth, efforts, and feelings. Examples of validating statements are:

"I appreciate your taking the time to talk about this."

"You've really worked hard to solve this problem."

"It must be difficult to do that."

While all of these techniques encourage the speaker to talk and indicate your understanding and acceptance, it is important to remember that *none of these techniques imply agreement by the person using them.*

Sending Clear Messages

Active listening is just one half of the effective communication equation. While we can use all of the skills we've learned as an active listener, providing the other person with accurate information is just as important as listening in ensuring effective communication. The speaker, as the initiator of a conversation, sets the tone and therefore can do much to keep a conflict situation from escalating.

I-Messages

When we're angry and upset with other people, it's easy to blame them for what has happened or accuse them of ill will. For example, Marie, upset when she learns her friend Anita has divulged a personal secret, confronts Anita after school:

"You're a lousy friend. You're always spreading gossip. You just can't keep anything to yourself..."

Although there may be grains of truth in Marie's accusations, approaching Anita in this manner only serves to make her defensive. Most likely Anita will counter with her own accusations, and the dispute will escalate. A "You-Message" (called so because the emphasis is on blaming the other person) is rarely effective in helping bring people together to work on the problem between them.

If Maria truly wants her friend to understand how she feels about what has happened, she can accomplish much more by stating her concerns in the form of an "I-Message." In an I-Message, the speaker simply describes his/her feelings about the other person's behavior and how this behavior has affected the speaker. For example, Marie might say to Anita:

"I felt really angry when I heard that you had told other people that my parents are getting a divorce because I don't trust you not to tell others what I tell you..."

I-Messages and You-Messages have very different impacts on the listener. In response to a You-Message, the listener is likely to feel judged or blamed, and may conclude that the speaker thinks he/she is a bad person. The listener may be so busy defending him/herself from the attack that he/she has no chance to understand the speaker's side of the story, much less to think about what could be learned from the problem.

Because an I-Message focuses on the speaker's wants, needs, or concerns, the listener is less likely to feel judged. Thus, he/she will be more able to listen to what the speaker is saying.

A formal I-Message has four parts. These parts begin:

"I feel..."	[State the feeling.]
"when you..."	[Describe the specific behavior.]
"because..."	[Describe the effect of the other person's behavior on <i>you</i> .]
"And what I want is..."	[State what would make the situation better for you.]

Example:

"I feel frustrated when you borrow my books and don't return them on time, because I can't finish my homework. I need you to get them back to me when you say you will."

In practice, the construction of an I-Message may depend on the situation. Sometimes the order of the parts might be changed, and sometimes not all the parts would be included. The important thing to remember is that the I-Message should always focus on the speaker, rather than the listener. It should state the speaker's feelings, rather than place blame on the listener.



Perhaps the most difficult part of using an I-Message is remembering to use it at all. In the midst of intense feelings, most of us are more likely to blame, accuse, or lecture before we stop to assess our own feelings and needs in a reflective way. It takes time and practice for the I-Message to become a natural response to conflict.


In the activities that follow, students will learn to distinguish "You-Messages" and "I-Messages," and will experience the impact that each has on a listener. Then they will learn to construct I-Messages, practicing with imaginary situations and with a current conflict in their own lives.


4


SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATIONChapter Four
Activities

Through the activities in Chapter 4 students will develop the listening and speaking skills necessary for effective communication in non-conflict as well as conflict situations.

Each "key" activity (designated with a  symbol) has been grouped with its corresponding "supplementary" activities (designated with a  symbol). The key activities are highly recommended to assure that students master the basic concepts. Supplementary activities are optional and may be used to provide further skills practice, or to strengthen students' understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

	Why Is Listening Important?	To motivate students to be good listeners.	4-13
---	-----------------------------	--	------

	Choose one of these three activities:		
	Robbery Report	To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.	4-14
	Peanut Butter & Jelly		4-17
	Graham Cracker Houses		4-19

	Good and Poor Listening	To identify good and poor listening behaviors.	4-21
---	-------------------------	--	------

Key	Active Listening Techniques	To learn the techniques of active listening.	4-24
Key	Active Listening Triads	To practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.	4-26
⊕	Applying Active Listening Techniques	To further practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.	4-30
⊕	Active Listening — Restating & Reflecting	To practice the Active Listening skills of Restating & Reflecting.	4-32
Key	Angry Words	To practice using Active Listening Techniques to defuse anger.	4-36
⊕	In The Heat of the Moment	To practice using Active Listening in conflict situations. To explore possible ways to defuse anger in a conflict situation.	4-38
Key	Active Listening — Listening for Feelings	To distinguish thoughts from feelings. To understand the part feelings play in conflict. To listen for the feelings behind statements.	4-39
⊕	Test of Listening for Feelings	To identify a speaker's feelings by listening to the tone of voice and inflection used.	4-42
⊕	A Feeling Continuum	To identify degrees of feelings. To practice using feeling words that accurately describe the emotion being experienced.	4-44

Key	Non Verbal Communication of Emotion	To acquaint students with the various ways feelings are expressed nonverbally.	4-46
⊕	Feeling Monologues	To discern feelings being expressed when they are not directly stated.	4-47
		To distinguish between many different kinds of feelings, even those that may be similar.	
⊕	Stories About Emotion	To further students' ability to identify unstated feelings.	4-49
⊕	Big Red	To practice distinguishing between facts and feelings.	4-50
		To identify underlying feelings.	
		To build skill in summarizing.	
Key	Communication Stoppers	To identify behavior patterns which inhibit effective communication.	4-54
		To practice effective communication skills.	
Key	Constructing I-Messages	To express wants and needs in an assertive, non-threatening manner.	4-63
⊕	I-Message Triads	To give further practice in sending I-Messages and in using Active Listening in conflict situations.	4-68
⊕	Stating the Feeling	To further practice constructing I-Messages with emphasis on how to describe feelings accurately.	4-70
⊕	Describing Behavior	To further practice constructing I-Messages.	4-74
		To practice describing behavior objectively, accurately and in ways that do not create defensiveness in the listener.	

⊕	"This Affects Me Because..."	To recognize and formulate statements that clearly describe the effect of specific behavior on the listener.	4-79
⊕	Taking Responsibility	To give students practice taking responsibility for their feelings and thoughts.	4-83
⊕	How Would I Feel?	To use the word "I" to express ownership of feelings and thoughts.	4-85
		To identify feelings in different situations.	
⊕	Constructive Feedback	To use effective communication skills to give constructive feedback.	4-87
⚙	Active Listening/ Clear Messages	To review and practice the effective communication skills of Active Listening and sending clear messages.	4-88



Why Is Listening Important?

- OBJECTIVE:** To motivate students to be good listeners.
- DURATION:** 5-10 minutes
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:** Ask students: If you could not hear for one day, what would you miss?
- Try to elicit answers that include:
- Getting information (someone tells you where the pencil sharpener is)
 - Learning (how to do something)
 - Understanding what someone needs (e.g. taking care of a younger child)
 - Knowing how someone feels (your friend is excited because she just got a new kitten)
 - Enjoyment (music, television, movies)
 - Finding out what you need (be sure to bring back a permission slip)
 - Sharing and being close to someone you like (problems, joys, etc.)
 - Defending yourself against blame or danger (a honking horn when you cross the street)



Robbery Report

OBJECTIVE: To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.

DURATION: 20 minutes

MATERIALS: One copy of the Robbery Report Worksheet for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Select three volunteers who think that they are very good listeners to play the part of the report chain. Number the volunteers one through three and send them out of the room.

2. Distribute copies of the Robbery Report Worksheet to the class.

3. Read over the robbery report with the class. Explain the activity:

When the first volunteer is called in, the teacher will read the robbery report to the volunteer.

Next, Volunteer 2 will be called in and Volunteer 1 will repeat the robbery report from memory to Volunteer 2.

Next, Volunteer 3 will be called in and Volunteer 2 will recite the robbery report to Volunteer 3.

Volunteer 3 will then repeat the robbery report to the class.

4. Explain to the students that when the activity starts, the class should be noting on their handouts any changes or omissions made as each volunteer tells the other about the incident.

5. When the volunteers have finished with their reports, read the original robbery report aloud once more, with all students present.

6. Ask the three student volunteers:

How did you feel as you tried to remember the message?

What made it difficult or easy to remember the message?

Ask the class as a whole:

- How did the report change?
- Was anything important left out?
- What would have made it easier for the volunteers to remember the robbery report?
- What can get in the way of clear communication?

Robbery Report

(worksheet)

Message:

Please listen carefully because I have to go to the hospital right away. I just called the police from the gas station on the corner. Wait here and report the robbery to them. I was walking into Johnson's Hardware Store, and this guy came running out and almost knocked me over. He was carrying a white bag, and it looked like he had a gun in his left hand. He was wearing a Levi jacket with the sleeves cut out and a green and blue plaid shirt and blue jeans with a hole in the right knee. He had skinny legs and a big stomach. He wore wire-rim glasses and high-top red Converse tennies. He was bald and had a brown moustache and was six and a half feet tall, probably in his mid thirties.

Directions:

For each repetition of the report, note anything the person missed, added, or changed from the previous report.

First volunteer:

Second volunteer:

Third volunteer:

/ALTERNATE

Peanut Butter and Jelly*

OBJECTIVE: To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.

DURATION: 40-50 minutes

MATERIALS: FOR EACH PAIR OF STUDENTS:

1 container of peanut butter
1 container of jelly
Enough small containers for peanut butter and jelly for each pair of participants
2 pieces of bread
1 blindfold
1 knife
paper towels (for clean-up)

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide the class into pairs, designating one person as sender and one person as receiver in each pair.
2. Blindfold receiver(s).
3. Place materials on table(s).
4. Inform students that the goal of the exercise is to prepare an edible peanut butter and jelly sandwich in 5 minutes.
5. Explain the rules:
 - Senders can speak, but they can't touch anything. In fact, they should clasp their hands behind their back.
 - Receivers cannot say anything, nor can they see. They must listen carefully to follow the sender's instructions.

* Developed by Marilyn Burns, Educational Consultant

6. Signal students when to begin and when to stop. Instruct students to put down their knives when time is called.
7. Clean up.
8. Pass around sandwiches to all who want some while discussing the exercise.

DISCUSSION:**Questions for Senders:**

1. What were the three most difficult things about sending instructions? Why?
2. As the activity progressed, how did you solve your difficulties?
3. How did you feel during the activity?
4. Were you and your partner able to attain the goal? Why?
5. What was the most important thing you learned from this activity?
6. Did you discover anything else?

Questions for Receivers:

1. What were three listening barriers that you noticed?
2. Were you able to find ways to work around some or all of them? If so, how?
3. How did you feel during the activity?
4. Were you and your partner able to attain the goal? Why?
5. What was the most important thing you learned from this activity?
6. Did you discover anything else?



Graham Cracker Houses

OBJECTIVE: To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.

DURATION: One hour

MATERIALS: Graham crackers, canned frosting, knives, trays, waxed paper, and partitions

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Before beginning this activity with the group, build a simple house from graham crackers using frosting as the mortar. Place it behind a partition.

Set up a building station for each group of four with a tray, knife, crackers, and frosting. Each station should be behind a separate partition.
 2. Divide the students into teams of four and explain that the goal is for each team to duplicate the model as closely as possible, while keeping the Roles and Rules in mind:

ROLES: Each team has one observer, one messenger and two builders.

RULES: Only the observers can see the model. They give building instructions to the messengers, who move to where the builders are and give the instructions to the builders, who carry them out. The messengers cannot see what the builders are making. Messengers then return for more directions. This continues until the house is finished. Questions, discussions, hand gestures are allowed, drawing is not.

3. When all are finished, display the model and "duplicate" houses for comparison.

4. Discuss activity with the group, using such questions as:

- What was learned about the importance of listening?
- What made the task more difficult? Easier?
- How did your team function?
- What was your reaction to your specific role?



Good and Poor Listening

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify good and poor listening behaviors.
- DURATION:** 20 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Active Listening Guidelines on chart paper or chalkboard
One copy of Active Listening Guidelines for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. The teacher will choose a student to be his/her partner.
Ask the student to tell you about a difficult day at school.
As the student speaks, you:
 - look away
 - look bored
 - interrupt
 - look at your watch
 - laugh in an inappropriate place
 - yawn
 2. Ask students:
 - Was I listening to (student)?
 - How could you tell I wasn't listening?
 - What *specifically* was I *doing* that told you I was not listening?
 - How did (student) react when he/she thought I wasn't listening?
 - How do you think (student) felt when I wasn't listening?
 3. Ask students to identify nonlistening behaviors.
Write them on the board or on chart paper.

4. In this next role play, you may continue with the same student or choose another partner.

Ask the student to describe a problem he/she is facing. As your partner speaks, demonstrate Active Listening by:

- keeping eye contact
- facing partner
- nodding
- restating
- asking questions to clarify the problem
- not interrupting
- validating the speaker
- empathizing

5. Ask students:

What *specifically* was I *doing* that told you I was listening?

When I listened to (student), how do you think he/she felt?

How did (student) react when he/she thought I was listening?

6. Ask students to identify good listening behaviors.

Write them on the board or on chart paper.

7. Review Active Listening Guidelines with students.

Active Listening Guidelines (handout)

In using the active listening techniques, it helps to keep in mind the following guidelines:

- 1) Empathize. Try to put yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how he or she feels. To do this it is helpful to think of a time when you felt a similar way.
- 2) Demonstrate your understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behaviors:
 - tone of voice
 - facial expressions
 - gestures
 - eye contact
 - posture
- 3) Do not interrupt, offer advice, or give suggestions. Do not bring up similar feelings and problems from your own experience.



Active Listening Techniques

- OBJECTIVE:** To learn the techniques of active listening.
- DURATION:** 55 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of Active Listening Techniques handout for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute the Active Listening Techniques handout.

Review and explain each technique and ask students for examples.

Tell students that these techniques are the primary tools of active listening.
 2. Choose a student to be your partner and do a short skit (3 minutes) to demonstrate the use of the skills. The scenario is a friend (the student) seeking the advice of another friend (the teacher) regarding a problem. The Listener should model Active Listening Techniques and *not give advice*.

Ask questions that will help the speaker clarify his/her own ideas and generate his/her own solutions.

Ask students to watch how the teacher uses the active listening techniques. Try to use each technique at least once during the skit.
 3. Have students complete examples on the Active Listening Techniques handout. Discuss the completed examples with the class.
 4. Emphasize that using these techniques does not mean the listener agrees with what the speaker is saying, but that he/she hears and understands.

Active Listening Techniques (handout)

Statements that help the other person talk.

Statement	Purpose	To do this...	Examples
Encouraging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To convey interest 2. To encourage the other person to keep talking 	...don't agree or disagree ...use neutral words ...use varying voice intonations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Can you tell me more...?" 2.
Clarifying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To help you clarify what is said 2. To get more information 3. To help the speaker see other points of view 	...ask questions ...Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "When did this happen?" 2.
Restating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show you are listening and understanding what is being said 2. To check your meaning and interpretation 	...restate basic ideas and facts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "So you would like your parents to trust you more, is that right?" 2.
Reflecting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show that you understand how the person feels 2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else 	...reflect the speaker's basic feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "You seem very upset." 2.
Summarizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review progress 2. To pull together important ideas and facts 3. To establish a basis for further discussion 	...restate major ideas expressed including feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed..." 2.
Validating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person 	...acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings ...show appreciation for their efforts and actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter." 2.



Active Listening Triads

OBJECTIVE: To practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.

DURATION: 50 minutes

MATERIALS: One copy of Active Listening Techniques handout for each student

One copy of the Active Listening Triads Observation Sheet for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Review active listening techniques with students.
2. Divide students into groups of three: one speaker, one listener, and one observer.

The speakers should talk for 4 minutes about something important to them. Some suggestions are:

- Something you would like to change about yourself
- Something you would like to learn or improve
- The most difficult or most frightening or most embarrassing experience you ever had.

The listeners should practice using the active listening techniques.

At the end of 4 minutes, call time.

3. Process the activity in small groups for 5 minutes by having the observers ask —

The speaker:

- How did you feel?
- What did the listener do that encouraged you to talk more?
- Did the listener do anything that discouraged you from talking?
- How did you feel at the end of the discussion?
- What did the listener do that you found especially helpful?

The listener:

- What made it difficult or easy for you to listen?
 - What techniques were easiest or most difficult for you to use?
4. The observer can give the listener feedback on how effectively the listener used the active listening techniques.
 5. Tell students to rotate roles and repeat the exercise until each person has had an opportunity to be in each role.
 6. Ask the class:
 - What are the benefits of using Active Listening — for the speaker, for the listener?

Active Listening Techniques (handout)

Statements that help the other person talk.

Statement	Purpose	To do this...	Examples
Encouraging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To convey interest 2. To encourage the other person to keep talking 	...don't agree or disagree ...use neutral words ...use varying voice intonations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Can you tell me more...?" 2.
Clarifying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To help you clarify what is said 2. To get more information 3. To help the speaker see other points of view 	...ask questions ...Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "When did this happen?" 2.
Restating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show you are listening and understanding what is being said 2. To check your meaning and interpretation 	...restate basic ideas and facts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "So you would like your parents to trust you more, is that right?" 2.
Reflecting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show that you understand how the person feels 2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else 	...reflect the speaker's basic feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "You seem very upset." 2.
Summarizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review progress 2. To pull together important ideas and facts 3. To establish a basis for further discussion 	...restate major ideas expressed including feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed..." 2.
Validating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person 	...acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings ...show appreciation for their efforts and actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter." 2.

Active Listening Triads (observation sheet)

During the discussion between the speaker and the listener, note:

What active listening techniques did the listener use?

What did the listener do that was effective?

What could the listener have done differently?

When time is called -

Ask the speaker:

- What did the listener do that encouraged you to talk more?
- Did the listener do anything that discouraged you from talking?
- How did you feel at the end of this discussion?
- What did the listener do that you found especially helpful?

Ask the listener:

- What made it difficult or easy for you to listen?
- What techniques were easiest for you to use? Which the most difficult?
- What active listening techniques would you like to practice more?



Applying Active Listening Techniques

- OBJECTIVE:** To further practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.
- DURATION:** 35-45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Active Listening Grid handout for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Give students the "Active Listening Grid." Explain that the "Situation" on the handout is what is being said by someone to them.

Give them about 15 minutes to fill in possible responses to each of the statements.
 2. Ask students to share the responses as a group.

Active Listening Grid

For each situation, write a response for each Active Listening technique

Situation	Encouraging	Clarifying	Restating	Reflecting	Validating
This assignment is stupid. Why does he make us do this?					
Mom is always bugging me about cleaning. She's such a nag.					
I have no friends at school. No one likes me.					
John is such a slob. He throws stuff all over the locker.					
She keeps flirting with my boyfriend. She's such a creep.					



Active Listening — Restating and Reflecting

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice the Active Listening skills Restating and Reflecting.
- DURATION:** 20 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of "Heart Surgery" or "Spend-A-Buck" for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Review the active listening techniques of restating and reflecting. Explain to students that often, even when a person is listening, he/she might incorrectly hear or misinterpret what has been said.

To avoid misunderstanding, it is helpful to check back with the person, summarizing or restating the main ideas and feelings of his/her statement.

Emphasize that it is not necessary to repeat every word the person said, but to make sure you've got the main ideas and feelings.
 2. Announce to students that they will now practice the skills of restating and reflecting. In this game, everyone has a chance to speak, but before each one does, he/she must restate and reflect the ideas and feelings of the other speaker to his/her satisfaction.
 3. Have the class break into small groups and designate a group leader to act as referee.

Explain that the referee's job is to make sure that before someone speaks, they have restated/reflected what the other person just said.
 4. Demonstrate briefly.

5. Distribute the "Heart Surgery" or "Spend-A-Buck" handout to students.

Have students read the paragraph and then select the patient they think should receive the heart or how best to spend the money the class has been given. Emphasize that each person will have an opportunity to speak and that each must paraphrase the previous speaker's opinion before they state their own opinion.

6. After each group has completed the activity, discuss these questions in the large group:
 - a. Did you feel that the group members really heard and understood you?
 - b. How did you feel when you heard your opinion restated and your feelings reflected?
 - c. How did you feel when you had to restate/reflect another's opinion?
 - d. Did restating/reflecting help or hinder the discussion? How?
 - e. Is it easier or harder to talk to someone who practices the active listening technique of restating/reflecting? Why?
 - f. What makes it difficult to restate/reflect?
 - g. When is it important/useful to restate/ reflect?

Heart Surgery Exercise (handout)

You are surgeons at a big hospital. Your committee must make a very important decision. Seven patients need a heart transplant. There is only one heart donor at this time. *All* patients could receive the heart. Which patient would you choose to receive the heart? Why? Your committee must agree on the choice.

PATIENTS:

1. A famous brain surgeon at the height of her career. Single, black woman. No children. She is 31 years old.
2. A 12 year old musician. Japanese girl.
3. A 40 year old teacher. Hispanic male, two children.
4. A 15 year old pregnant woman. Unmarried, white, no other children.
5. A 35 year old Roman Catholic priest.
6. A 17 year old waitress. White, high school dropout. Helps her family with her earnings.
7. A 38 year old scientist close to discovering a cure for A.I.D.S. Chinese woman, no children, lesbian.

Spend A Buck

(handout)

Your class has just been given \$5000 by an anonymous donor. Your committee's job is to decide how the money will be spent. You must pick from the choices below. Each choice will require the whole \$5000, so only one item can be chosen. If your committee cannot agree on how to spend the money, it will go back to the donor.

CHOICES:

1. The entire class will go to Disneyland for one day (or a similar place in your area).
2. You donate the money to a drug program that helps students from your school who have a problem with drugs and alcohol.
3. Each student in the class will receive \$3.00 a week until the money runs out (approx. 1 year).
4. A 27" color television, a VCR, a video camera, and a library of video movies for the classroom.
5. You pay your favorite rock group to come to school and put on a concert.
6. You donate the money to a hospital that is doing research to find a cure for cancer.



Angry Words

- OBJECTIVE:**
- To practice using Active Listening Techniques to defuse anger.
 - To examine how students feel and behave when someone is angry.
 - To identify effective ways of dealing with an angry person.

DURATION: 30-45 minutes

MATERIALS: Chalkboard or chart paper

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Present this background information to the class:

It is often difficult to deal with people who are angry and who act out their anger.

When we are aware of our feelings, we can better manage our behavior to have more positive results.

Therefore, it is important to discuss the reactions we have when we face an angry person.

2. Ask the class to discuss the following three questions.

The first three are designed to help the students develop an awareness of their feelings toward anger, and the behavior that results from those feelings.

- a. What words, feelings, and images come to mind when you hear the word anger?
- b. How do you act when you are angry?
- c. How do you act/feel when someone else is angry around you?

The last two questions are aimed at generating ideas from the students about how they can better handle an angry person. The ideas can be recorded on the chalkboard or on chart paper.

- d. What are some ways you can defuse someone's anger?
 - e. How can you keep from getting caught in the other person's anger?
3. Ask the students to describe scenarios in which someone is angry about something.

Call for volunteers to role play the speaker and the listener in each situation. Explain that the job of the listener in each role play is to try to defuse the anger of the person doing the speaking by using the Active Listening Techniques.

4. Discuss each role play focusing on how each player felt and what the listener did to help the other person lessen their angry response.

Which Active Listening Techniques are *most effective* in defusing anger?



The Heat of the Moment

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice using Active Listening in conflict situations.
To explore possible ways to defuse anger in a conflict situation.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Ask students to share conflicts in which they felt they were not heard.
 2. Ask two students to role play the conflict as it was described. The student whose conflict it was may or may not choose to play the role.
 3. Have the class critique the role play for poor listening. Ask questions such as:
 - What could the first party have done to help resolve the conflict?
 - How could the second party's anger be defused?
 4. With the class's suggestions, replay the scene and note what changes occurred for each party.

What did they learn about each other? What made them more willing to work together?
- NOTE:** Listening effectively to defuse anger is an important and difficult skill. Try to allow plenty of time for practice and class discussion and feedback.



Active Listening: Listening for Feelings

OBJECTIVE:

To distinguish thoughts from feelings.

To understand the part feelings play in conflict.

To listen to the feelings behind statements.

DURATION:

25 minutes

MATERIALS:

Active Listening Guidelines on chart paper

PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss these background points with the students:

- a. We all have feelings that are an important and normal part of our lives. No matter how individuals' feelings may differ on the same subject, *feelings are never right or wrong*.
- b. Often in the middle of an argument, we aren't fully aware of what we are feeling. We may say that we feel angry when we are really feeling hurt or afraid. Or, we may claim that we don't feel anything.
- c. Often, when someone is asked what they feel, they will state a thought instead of a feeling. Sometimes, it is too risky to share a feeling, so, we offer what we think about the feeling, our opinion or conclusion.

Example: "How did you feel when your brother borrowed your records without asking?"

"I felt like punching him" is not a feeling. What feelings could have made him want to throw a punch?

- d. The identification of feelings is an important part of a resolving disputes. When people know each others' feelings, this knowledge can change the nature of the conflict and help them to find an appropriate resolution.

2. Ask the students to state which of the following are feelings and which are thoughts. Generate more yourself or have the students create statements that the class must label as a thought or a feeling.

A statement beginning "I feel that.." or "I feel like.." is usually a thought, not a feeling.

For the statements that represent thoughts, have the students state the feeling they think would have produced that thought.

I feel that you don't understand me.
(What is he/she feeling?)

I feel embarrassed.

I feel like he better leave me alone.
(What is he/she feeling?)

I feel like I don't want to go home.
(What is he/she feeling?)

I don't need them.
(What is the feeling here?)

I'm excited about my new bicycle.

3. Discuss with students the fact that feelings are a very important part of the problems between people.

When people in conflict know each others' feelings, this changes the nature of the conflict and helps them discover ways to solve the problem.

4. Explain to students that "Active Listening" is the ability to hear not just the factual content, but also the emotions in what people say.

Further, it involves being able to give feedback to the speaker about the feelings you hear being expressed.

Giving this feedback is a powerful means of checking to be certain you have understood the message clearly and that the communication has been effective.

5. Ask students to imagine the feelings of the people in the following examples:

Manuel did better than Joe on his class project. Now Joe is calling Manuel names.

A fight starts.

Rosa is being sent to the Principal's office for talking in class. She storms out of the room and on the way to the office, she roughly bumps into Dwight in the hall. Dwight yells at Rosa to watch where she's going. Rosa turns around and hits Dwight.

A fight starts.

6. Discuss the above examples. Ask what happened because of the feelings. What will happen in these situations if no one intervenes? What could happen if the students in conflict are able to state their feelings.
7. We can tell what a person is feeling by
- ☛ looking — nonverbal, expression, body language,
 - ☛ listening to what they say or how they say it,
 - ☛ asking "How do you feel?"
8. Once the disputing students hear one another's feelings, they can more easily understand one another and find a lasting solution to their problem. Example: If Dwight realizes that Rosa is angry *and why*, then their problem can be more easily solved.
9. Ask students for suggestions as to how they might identify feelings, or how they might encourage people to share their real feelings. What questions can they ask? How can they respond?
10. Summary: Everyone has feelings. Feelings are different from thoughts. Understanding one another's feelings helps students to work out problems.



Test of Listening for Feelings

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify a speaker's feelings by listening to the tone of voice and inflection used.
- DURATION:** 10-15 minutes
- MATERIALS:** One copy of Listening for Feelings
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Announce to students:
"I am going to read some sentences to you. After I read the sentence, I want you to tell me what the feeling is behind the sentence. There may be more than one right answer because everyone experiences things differently and also because we often have more than one feeling at a time."
 2. Read each sentence from Listening for Feelings and allow students to respond. (Some sentences may be read in 2 or 3 different ways to further demonstrate how tone of voice and inflection can show different feelings.)
- VARIATION:** Cut up and distribute the sentences on Listening for Feelings to students. Ask each student to read his/her sentence, and have the class identify the feeling being expressed.

Listening For Feelings (statements)

1. "I just can't figure it out. I give up."
2. "Wow! Eight days until Christmas vacation."
3. "Look at the picture I drew!"
4. "Will you be calling my parents?"
5. "What a drag, there's nothing to do."
6. "I'll never do that well. He always does better than I and I practice."
7. "You never get mad at him, always me."
8. "I'm getting a new 10-speed."
9. "I *feel* like writing in my book. It's mine anyway."
10. "Yeah, I guess I was mean to him. I shouldn't have done it."
11. "Am I doing this report right? Do you think it will be good enough?"
12. "You narc! You'd turn in your own brother."
13. "I can do this part on my own. I don't need your help."
14. "Leave me alone. Nobody cares what happens to me anyway."
15. "I'd like to tell him that, but I just *can't*. He'd probably punch me!"



A Feeling Continuum

OBJECTIVE:

To identify degrees of feelings.

To practice using feeling words that accurately describe the emotion being experienced.

DURATION:

15 minutes

MATERIALS:

Chalkboard or chart paper

PROCEDURE:

1. Explain that feelings, like clothes, come in different sizes as well as different styles.
2. Start by asking students to suggest a few feelings, such as lonely, scared or jealous.
3. Write each feeling on the board and underneath it put the following scale:

a little				very much
1	2	3	4	5

4. Using three of the basic feelings suggested by students, offer two situations for each feeling and ask students to determine not only the feeling, but the degree of feeling on the scale of one to five. For example:

Your friend tells you you look nice today.	(feeling)	(degree)
--	-----------	----------

All your friends were invited to a party, but you weren't.	(feeling)	(degree)
--	-----------	----------

You just won \$1,000,000.	(feeling)	(degree)
---------------------------	-----------	----------

A teacher makes a joke about a wrong answer you gave.	(feeling)	(degree)
---	-----------	----------

Your parents are getting a divorce. (feeling) (degree)

Your cousin was selected for the all-city basketball team. (feeling) (degree)

5. Next, offer students the following situations and ask them to identify the feeling and the degree of feeling.

Two students get into a serious fight in the hall. (feeling) (degree)

Someone just told you to shut up. (feeling) (degree)

You got an A on an English paper you worked hard on. (feeling) (degree)

Your boy/girlfriend just told you he/she likes someone else. (feeling) (degree)

Your house got robbed and your records & tapes were stolen. (feeling) (degree)

Your friend got arrested for possession of marijuana. (feeling) (degree)

Your friend told you he/she likes your new hair style. (feeling) (degree)

Your parents ground you for a week and you will miss a basketball playoff game. (feeling) (degree)

Someone you really like wants to go out with you. (feeling) (degree)

DISCUSSION:

1. When someone is feeling an emotion, how can you tell how strong the feeling is (expression, tone of voice, posture, gestures, words)?
2. What is the effect of feelings on a conflict situation?
3. Is it easier to resolve a conflict if feelings of anger or frustration are slight or very strong? Why?



Nonverbal Communication of Emotion

- OBJECTIVE:** To acquaint students with the various ways feelings are expressed nonverbally.
- DURATION:** 15-20 minutes
- MATERIALS:** 3 x 5 cards or slips of paper with a feeling or emotion written on each
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Brainstorm a list of feelings or emotions with students and write them on the board.
 2. Discuss with the group what nonverbal behavior is. Explain that we communicate even when we do not use any words. Demonstrate examples.
 3. Ask each student to select a card or slip of paper on which has been written an emotion or a state of being.
 4. Have each student portray to the group, nonverbally, what is written on the paper.
 5. The group then tries to guess what is being expressed.
- NOTE:** You can ask the group to guess with or without the list of feelings brainstormed in front of them. Doing it without may challenge both the actors and the guessers a little more.
6. To generate class discussion, ask these questions:
 - a. What clues did you use in guessing what was being expressed — parts of the body, posture, facial expression, type of body movement?
 - b. What made it hard to guess what was being expressed?
 - c. Why is it important to be able to "read" or understand someone's nonverbal communication?



Feeling Monologues

OBJECTIVE:

To discern feelings being expressed when they are not directly stated.

To distinguish between many different kinds of feelings, even those that may be similar.

DURATION:

30 minutes

MATERIALS:

Slips of paper with a feeling or emotion written on them

Handout: "A List of Feelings" for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss the handout, "A List of Feelings," explaining that it is not meant to be complete. Allow students to brainstorm any additions they may want to make. Be sure the suggestions are feelings or states of being, not thoughts.
2. Have each student draw a slip of paper with a feeling written on it. Give the students several minutes to plan a monologue that will express the feeling or state of being they have drawn. They must not say the word, but must use words that will convey the feeling.
3. The students each deliver their monologues, while the group tries to guess the emotion being shown. Again, you can choose whether or not you want the group to use the handouts while guessing.
4. Have the group discuss each monologue. Ask questions such as:
 - a. What helped you guess what the feeling was? (words used, tone of voice, posture, etc.)
 - b. What made it easy or difficult to write the monologue?
 - c. Were some feelings easier to describe than others? Why?

A List of Feelings (handout)

To be used with the communication exercises that focus on listening for feelings, and to show the large range of feelings people are capable of experiencing. The list can be expanded as the class works through the exercises.

ashamed	foolish	mixed up	sympathetic
angry	funny	(confused)	self-conscious
afraid	friendly	malicious	sedate
at peace	frustrated	miserable	superior
anxious			
brave	guilty	nervous	tense
bashful	grief-stricken	nice	timid
bored	greedy	persecuted	tenacious
	grateful	paranoid	
cold	horrified	pleasant	unworthy
cruel	hateful	proud	uneasy
crabby	hopeful	peeved	
conceitful	happy		victimized
contemptuous	helpless	remorseful	vindictive
cheerful	heartbroken	regretful	
		righteous	wary
			worried
devilish	impatient		
disappointed	independent	shocked	
disgusted	insulted	sorrowful	
depressed	inferior	sad	
disdained	intimidated	shy	
dumb		surprised	
	jealous	secure	
embarrassed	joyful	strange	
excited		smart (cocky)	
enthusiastic	loving	silly	
envious	lonely	sour	
empty	left out	spiteful	
		self-pitying	
frightened	mellow	suspicious	



Stories About Emotion

- OBJECTIVE:** To further students' ability to identify unstated feelings.
- DURATION:** This is a homework assignment. The class discussion following completion of the assignment will take about 55 minutes.
- MATERIALS:** Pen and paper
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Students will write a 1-2 page story. The story should narrate an event in which the main character experiences a particular emotion or state of being. The story should show clearly what the central emotion of the character is without directly naming it.

A discussion of narrative and descriptive storytelling techniques may be necessary.
 2. In class, have students volunteer to read their stories. The class discussion should center around the feeling they think is being expressed by each story.



Big Red

- OBJECTIVE:**
- To practice distinguishing between facts and feelings.
 - To identify underlying feelings.
 - To build skill in summarizing.
- DURATION:** 25-30 minutes
- MATERIALS:**
- 1 copy of the story "Big Red"
 - "The Skill of Summarizing" worksheet for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute a copy of the "Skill of Summarizing" worksheet to each student.
 2. Explain that you will read the story "Big Red" aloud. At the end of each paragraph, you will stop reading and they will fill in their worksheets with a summary of the two most important facts and the main feeling communicated in the paragraph. This should be a summary, not an exact repetition.
 3. At the end of each paragraph, have students share their responses.
 4. When the story and the worksheets have been completed, ask the students:
 - a. What made it easy/difficult to distinguish the feelings being communicated? What clues did you hear?
 - b. Was it easy to distinguish between facts and feelings?
 - c. Did different people hear different things?
 - d. What do you think accounts for these differences?

Big Red

(the story)

- A. Hi, I'm Big Red. I live on the edge of a big forest with my mother. We used to live on the edge of a big lake, but we had to move from there when they converted our cottage into a condo. Ah, well, anyway, that isn't what I wanted to tell you about. You see yesterday my mother asked me to take a basket of cookies to Granny, who lives on the other side of the forest. Well, I was watching one of my favorite TV shows at the time and I told my mother I'd do it later. Well, you imagine what she said! When she wants something done, she wants it done right then. No consideration of what the other person might be doing.
- B. So I grabbed the stupid cookies and left. On the way, I ran into this dude called the Big Bad Wolf. Actually, I didn't just run into him, he jumped out at me. I'll tell you, he's so ugly! And he thinks he's so cool. I was in a bad enough mood already and I wasn't going to take anything off this guy. So I told him to get out of my way and leave me alone or I'd take care of him after I delivered the cookies. I guess I looked like I meant it, because off he went.
- C. Well, when I got to Granny's she was in bed. I thought she looked sick or something. I said, "Oh, Granny, your big hairy face grosses me out! Your eyes are all watery, your nose is all wet. You look awful!" And she said she'd feel better when she had her dessert. I suddenly realized she meant that I was dessert. There was just something about the way she had said it. I knew I was right when she jumped out of bed straight at me.

We have been unable to identify an author or source for the story "Big Red," but we would be happy to credit the author if he/she will contact us.

- D. Well it turned out that it wasn't Granny at all. The Big Bad Wolf had taken a shortcut to Granny's (I don't know why I didn't go that way. It's really a lot faster. You just go through this grove of trees, over the hill ... well you don't care about that.) Although I didn't have a whole lot of time to think about it, I did wonder what had happened to Granny. After all, even though I didn't want to come over in the middle of watching TV, Granny is one of my favorite people.
- E. Suddenly Granny appeared. She looked really funny. She had been out stomping grapes to make the Christmas wine. I think she must have fallen in because she was purple from head to toe. I think Big Bad Wolf must have thought she was the purple monster from the Blue Lagoon, because he took one look at her, screamed and fled. I ran to Granny and gave her a big hug.

Skill of Summarizing

(worksheet)

A. Two most important FACTS

1. _____

2. _____

The FEELING _____

B. Two most important FACTS

1. _____

2. _____

The FEELING _____

C. Two most important FACTS

1. _____

2. _____

The FEELING _____

D. Two most important FACTS

1. _____

2. _____

The FEELING _____

E. Two most important FACTS

1. _____

2. _____

The FEELING _____



Communication Stoppers

- OBJECTIVE:** To identify behavior patterns which inhibit effective communication.
- To practice effective communication skills.
- DURATION:** 40 minutes
- MATERIALS:** The "Communication Stoppers" scripts* for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Reproduce two copies of each script. Ask two students to read the script for one of the communication stoppers (e.g. Interrupting).
 2. Ask the class to identify what is blocking communication and why.
 3. Ask the pair of students to replay the scene spontaneously, using good communication skills.
 4. Ask the class to critique the role-play on what worked and what didn't work. Ask for suggestions to improve communication.
 5. Repeat steps 1-5 for each type of communication stopper.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #1)

Script 1: Interrupting*

Person 1: Guess what! I learned how to divide fractions today!

Person 2: I learned how to do that last week. The thing that's really hard is formulas.

1: Oh really. I was so happy when I finally learned how to...

2: Formulas are very hard, interesting though. Once you understand the formula, you are working on it's fun. The most interesting formula for me is the way you find out the diameter of a circle.

1: Oh. I haven't gotten to formulas yet. When I learned to multiply fractions I felt the same way, I...

2: Multiplying fractions is easy. I can teach you how.

1: I already know how. What was hard for me was understanding how to divide them. I just...

2: My big sister is taking trigonometry. If you think fractions are complicated, you should see her trigonometry book. There are more numbers and little symbols in there! It really looks hard.

1: I guess trigonometry is just as hard for her as fractions are for us. My cousin is...

2: Naw. Trigonometry isn't hard for her. She enjoys it. I'll tell her to help you with your fractions. She can teach you how to multiply and divide them.

1: But I already know...

2: Hey, I have to go now. See you later.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #2)

Script 2: Probing*

Person 1: Hi. Say, I wanted to tell you that I went to my grandparents' farm last weekend and . . .

Person 2: Which grandparents?

1: My mother's parents. Anyway, I was at the farm and I...

2: Where is their farm?

1: It's about 30 miles north of here.

2: Up in the mountains?

1: No, close to the mountains, but not up in the mountains. Anyway, when I was at their farm I learned how to milk their cow, and...

2: Who taught you?

1: My mother.

2: Your mother? I thought you were at your grandparent's farm.

1: Yes, but my mother grew up there and she knows how to milk cows.

2: Oh. Did it take you long to learn?

1: No. Anyway, I...

2: Why did you want to milk a cow?

1: Because I — because I just did.

2: Did you drink any of the milk?

1: No.

2: Well, why not?

1: That's what I've been trying to tell you. The cow stepped right into the bucket of milk.

2: Well, why did the cow do that?

1: I don't know. Why don't you ask the cow?

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #3)

Script 3: Judging*

Person 1: My teacher is going to show us how to make wooden puppets and we're going to put on a puppet show for the first graders.

Person 2: Well, that sounds like a dumb idea.

1: It's going to be fun, but I don't know if I can make a puppet.

2: Yeah. You are kind of clumsy and awkward.

1: Oh. Well, anyway I am going to try.

2: Gee, that's very fine. You're a good kid, even if you can't do things very well.

1: Oh. The hardest part will probably be attaching the strings.

2: You are a worrier. You're getting all upset about it.

1: No, I'm not. It just seems like it's going to be kind of hard. Maybe I'll make a clown.

2: Don't make a clown. Clowns are dumb. Make something good.

1: Like what?

2: I don't know.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #4)

Script 4: Interpreting*

Person 1: What did you do last weekend?

Person 2: I stayed home and read a book.

1: Oh. You're on restriction again!

2: No. I just felt like doing it.

1: You must be behind in your school work again.

2: No. I'm all caught up.

1: Aw, come on. The teacher made you do it.

2: No. It wasn't because of the teacher.

1: Then you're just trying to get in good with the teacher.

2: The teacher doesn't even know about it.

1: It must have been a pretty boring weekend.

2: No. I really enjoyed it.

1: You're weird.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #5)

Script 5: Confronting*

Person 1: I hit a home run!

Person 2: Well, why don't you just go ahead and brag about it?

1: Well, I do feel good about it.

2: You brag all the time.

1: Oh. Does it bother you?

2: Yes, and that's not all. You make me nervous the way you play. You're always trying to steal a base and taking chances. I want you to cut it out!

1: Well, so far so good. I don't make an out very often.

2: That's because you're lucky. You drive me crazy the way you play.

1: Gee. That's too bad. I only do my best.

2: Well, your best isn't good enough. You just don't concentrate like you should.

1: Oh. Say, how have you been doing lately?

2: Don't worry about me. Just get with it and improve your own playing ability.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #6)

Script 6: Advising*

Person 1: Hey, what's the matter?

Person 2: Oh, I've got a problem.

1: What is it?

2: One of my friends is moving away.

1: Oh. Don't get upset about it. Just make some new friends.

2: Well, I probably will. It's just that I'm really going to miss my friend.

1: Don't feel so sorry for yourself. Friends come and go. You'll get over it. Take my advice and just go make some new friends.

2: Well, that's easy for you to say. It's not your friend.

1: It's happened to me before. I just forget. That's what you ought to do. If you feel bad you have nobody to blame but yourself.

2: Gee. Thanks for the kind words.

1: That's okay. Anytime you need a friend just come to me.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #7)

Script 7: Dominating*

Person 1: Hi. I wanted to tell you about what I did last night.

Person 2: Oh. What was it?

1: I went to the football game with my aunt and uncle and we...

2: I went to the game last week. I went with one friend and then we saw some of my other friends there. We sat together and cheered for the team. We cheered louder than anybody there. All the people around us were cheering too.

1: I cheered too, but the team lost the game. They almost won, but...

2: Yeah, I heard about it. In the last few minutes the other team made another touchdown. Reminds me of all those games last year. We lost so many close games in the last few minutes that we should have won.

1: Even if we lost it was still a good game. I...

2: Yeah, but not as good as the one I saw. Last week the team was really playing well. We started off with two touchdowns in the first quarter. The best play was made when they intercepted that pass and ran it back for a touchdown. Wow! Everybody just went wild.

1: I know. We intercepted two passes last night, but...

2: Best game I ever saw. I liked the way it ended too. They just held those guys back for the entire last quarter. Those guys just couldn't move the ball at all because our defense was so good. They kept calling for time out and trying different plays, but nothing worked. Well, I have to go now. Thanks for telling me about the game you saw last night.

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.

Communication Stoppers (scripts, #8)

Script 8: Putting Down*

Person 1: Hey, you knothhead, watch where you're going!

Person 2: Oh, did I step on your toe?

1: What's the matter with you? Are you weird or something? Couldn't you feel it?

2: Gee, no, I didn't. I'm sorry.

1: Well get with it, stupid.

2: Listen, I said I was sorry.

1: Yeah, yeah. You're sorry and that makes it okay. You're a real dummy.

2: Look, you jerk. If you don't want to get stepped on just stay out of the way.

1: Who do you think you're calling a jerk, you big dope.

2: You. You big idiot.

1: I'm not an idiot.

2: Yes you are. Besides that you're a real bonehead.

1: I am not

2: You are too.

1: You're a dingbat.

2: You're a weirdo.

1: Nincompoop!

2: Dope!

* From Geraldine Ball, *Human Development Program Magic Circle Level VI*. La Mesa CA: Human Development Training Institute, 1974.



Constructing I-Messages

- OBJECTIVE:** To express wants and needs in an assertive, non-threatening manner.
- DURATION:** 45-60 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Pencils
"Skits" handout (copies for yourself and two students)
"Design an I-Message" handout for each group
- PROCEDURE:**
1. On the chalkboard or on chart paper, write the following:

	Skit 1		Skit 2	
	words	feelings	words	feelings
 2. Present the information below to the class:

In this activity, you are going to learn how to talk to people when you are mad at them or frustrated with them and you really want them to listen.

The first thing we will do is show you two skits about the same story. You will see two different ways a person can talk about a problem. Listen carefully for the kinds of words the actors use and how they express their feelings towards each other.
 3. Ask for two volunteers and ask them to read the parts of Marie and Anita in Skit #1 on the "Skits" handout.
 4. After Skit #1 has been read, ask students to discuss these questions:
 - a. How do you think Marie felt about Anita in this skit?
 - b. How do you think Anita felt about Marie?
 - c. Do you think that Anita is going to stop spreading rumors about Marie? Why or why not?

List the feelings generated by the class on the board or paper under the heading Skit #1.

5. Have the same students read Skit #2, or you may choose two other students.
6. After Skit #2 has been read, discuss these questions with the class:
 - a. How do you think Marie felt about Anita this time?
 - b. How do you think Anita felt about Marie this time?
 - c. Do you think Anita will tell more rumors about Marie? Why or why not?
7. Ask students to compare the statements made in Skit #1 with those made in Skit #2. Focus the discussion on the use of "I" statements and "You" statements in the two skits.

Write these statements under the headings "I" and "You" on the chalkboard for each skit. Discuss with the students the effects of using these words.

8. Write the I-message formula on the chalkboard or easel. Go over the steps with them.
 - "I feel..." (State the emotion)
 - "when you..." (State the behavior — be SPECIFIC)
 - "because..." (State the effect the behavior has on YOUR life)

Give an example such as "I feel frustrated when I'm teaching and you talk to the person next to you because I lose my train of thought."

9. Explain the following information:

How you construct an I-Message will depend on the situation. Sometimes you will change the order in which you give the parts of the message and sometimes you will only say two of the three parts.

The important thing to remember is that the I-Message should focus on *you*, not on the listener. It should state *your* feelings and what *you* want, rather than placing the blame on the listener.

10. Ask the class to construct a brief "you" message and write it on the board so that everyone can see as well as hear how the message is constructed. Then turn the "you" message into an "I" message and write it on the board too.
11. Hand out "Design an I-Message" sheets and have students complete the exercise. Review their responses as a group. At the conclusion, ask the following questions:
 - a. Was it difficult to make I-messages? Why or why not?
 - b. If these stories were really happening to you, do you think that giving an I-message would work?
 - c. How do you think I-messages will be useful when helping two other people resolve a conflict?

Skits

(handout)

Skit #1: Marie: Anita, you're a lousy friend. You're always spreading gossip. You just can't keep things to yourself. I told you that Darlene and I had an argument. Now it's all over school that we're going to have a fight. We spent half the morning straightening things out, then your gossiping messed things up all over again. You're a blabbermouth! I'll never tell you anything again.

 Anita: Why don't you just shut up! Who cares what you think anyway? I was just getting you some back-up. You don't appreciate anything. You're not worth having for a friend.

Skit #2 Marie: I was really angry when I heard that you told people I was going to fight Darlene after school. We had already made up, and she got angry all over again. I was also hurt that what I told you in confidence as a friend, you told to other people. I want to be your friend, but I feel like I can't trust you right now, and it's hard for me to spend time with you.

 Anita: I'm sorry, Marie. I feel really bad about messing things up because I really like you, and I was only trying to help. I don't want to lose you as a friend, and I promise I won't do anything like that again. If you ever tell me anything in confidence, I will keep it to myself.

Design an I-Message (handout)

With practice, I-messages are easy to use. Once you get in the habit of using them, you will be surprised at how much more willing people will be to listen and respond to your requests. I-Messages are especially helpful for people who refrain from asking for what they want for fear that whomever they ask will get angry. Often, conflicts escalate because one or both parties have stored up anger to the exploding point before confronting one another. If, when the conflict was small and simple, they had talked together with I-Messages, the conflict could have been resolved quickly and easily.

Instructions: Complete the following I-messages:

1. You're at a party. Your friend has had too much to drink. He wants to drive you home.

I feel _____
when you _____
because _____

2. You've heard that one of your classmates has told three other students that you got an A because you cheated in your last History test.

I feel _____
when you _____
because _____

3. When you get home from school, you go to the kitchen to get a piece of pie. It turns out that your sister just ate the last two pieces.

I feel _____
when you _____
because _____

4. Your friend stayed up late helping you study for your History final.

I feel _____
when you _____
because _____



I-Message Triads

- OBJECTIVE:** To give further practice in sending I-Messages and in using Active Listening in conflict situations.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Tell the class they will be practicing constructing I-Messages in three conflict situations. You may give examples of situations or let the groups choose their own.
 2. Divide students into groups of three.
 3. Explain the three roles:
 - a. Sender — Gives descriptive I-Message to the receiver so that he/she will be able to respond.
 - b. Receiver — Responds defensively, using no Active Listening skills. Offers two defensive responses, so the sender must keep trying to rephrase the I-Messages.
 - c. Observer —
 1. Observes the process
 2. Helps with evaluation by:
 - a. asking the receiver and sender how they reacted to the exercise
 - b. making observations of the sender's work, and making positive suggestions.

4. Stress that each member of the group should take a turn at each role.

Have each group create and enact three different short scenarios with one person using I-messages to describe behavior, one person receiving the message defensively, and one person observing the interaction.

5. For further practice with the skills and with observation, it is recommended that this exercise also be done in a "fishbowl" as follows:
 - a. Form the group in a semi-circle.
 - b. Ask group for suggestions of role play situations in which one person has to deliver a difficult statement to another person.
 - c. Have two volunteers role play the situation in front of the group, with one person using I-Messages and the other reacting defensively.
 - d. Discuss the role play with the whole group having the group give positive suggestions and feedback to the role players.



Stating the Feeling*

OBJECTIVE: To further practice constructing I-Messages with emphasis on how to describe feelings accurately.

DURATION: 30 minutes

MATERIALS: Handouts: Conflict Situations #1 & #2 for each student

PROCEDURE: 1. Discuss with the class:

An important part of delivering an effective I-Message is accurately describing feelings. When describing your feelings, it is important to:

- a. *Use feeling words that accurately describe how you feel.*

Be sure you use a word that describes what you are actually feeling about the behavior that bothers you. The feeling you have in the situation is your own and is not right or wrong.

- b. *Don't use the same word to describe all your feelings.*

Some people limit themselves to using only a few words to describe their feelings, such as happy, sad, angry, good and bad. It helps the other person to understand how you are affected by their behavior when you can label the real feeling you have.

* Adapted from *Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills*, by Neil H. Katz and John W. Lawyer, 1985, (Kendall Hunt Publishing: Dubuque, Iowa), pages 68-81.

- c. *Don't use stronger feelings to build your case.*

Your description of your feelings when giving an I-Message should genuinely reflect your emotion. Using an inappropriate feeling just to manipulate the listener will invalidate your message and will not lead to open and clear communication about a problem.

- d. *Don't use "victim" words.*

Victim words such as let down, hurt and disappointed tend to result in feelings of guilt on the part of the listener, and, therefore, do not result in a willingness to change the problem behavior being addressed.

2. On the two Conflict Situation handouts, have students identify which feeling responses are appropriate, which are inappropriate, and why.
3. In small groups, have them discuss their answers.

Conflict Situation #1

(handout)

For some time now, you have been planning to go to a big rock concert. You and your best friend have rented a limo for your date. On Wednesday night, you got home a half an hour later than the time your father had told you to be in. You protested that it wasn't your fault and that you tried to call, but you couldn't because the line was busy. In spite of your protest, your father grounds you for a week and you can't go to the concert.

Response	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. I feel hateful			
2. I feel victimized			
3. I feel angry			
4. I feel embarrassed			
5. I feel a little disappointed			

Other appropriate responses:

Conflict Situation #2

(handout)

Your mother insists that you go to the wedding of a family friend even though you've said you don't want to go because there won't be any other kids there. The wedding turned out to be as boring as you thought it would be.

Response	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. I feel resentful			
2. I feel persecuted			
3. I feel furious			
4. I feel intimidated			
5. I feel discounted			

Other appropriate responses:



Describing Behavior*

- OBJECTIVE:** To further practice constructing I-Messages.
To practice describing behavior objectively, accurately and in ways that do not create defensiveness in the listener.
- DURATION:** 30-45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: Conflict Situations #3, #4, and #5 for each student
- PROCEDURE:** 1. Discuss this information with the class:

An important part of delivering effective I-Messages is describing objectively and accurately the behavior that is bothering us. Because describing behavior is a difficult thing to do, the following guidelines will be helpful:

- a. *Describe the behavior accurately* — This is tricky. Behavior is what is *seen* or *heard*. People, however, tend to describe behavior subjectively. They interpret the behavior and focus on what they think it means rather than on what they saw or heard. Two students exchanging answers on an assignment could be "described" as cheating, but that is an interpretation. The behavior actually seen was "exchanging answers."
- b. *Specify the right behavior* — If you are imprecise in describing another's behavior, and talk about something other than what is bothering you, the problem will not be solved. This actually happens quite often, partly because people have difficulty speaking clearly when confronting others. Also, problem situations are not always easily described,

* Adapted from *Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills*, by Neil H. Katz and John W. Lawyer, 1985, (Kendall Hunt Publishing: Dubuque, Iowa), pages 68-81.

and the specific problem-causing behavior may be difficult to pinpoint.

- c. *Avoid using inflammatory words* — Inflammatory words used in an I-Message often trigger an emotional reaction in the other person. If you say "When you failed to..." the person will probably focus on the word "fail" and its negative connotation. This response will block his or her ability to really understand what you are saying.
 - d. *Avoid using generalizations* — The words "always," "never" and "constantly" are generalizations and imply that there are no exceptions to what you are saying. They are rarely true, especially in regard to someone's behavior. If you use an absolute, the other person will likely bring up the exceptions, instead of focusing on the behavior that concerns you.
 - e. *Avoid using adjectives and adverbs* — It is important to be as specific and as objective as possible when describing behavior. Adjectives and adverbs are not specific and can lead to arguments about "how long is long?" or "what do you mean by regularly?" Additionally, these words can add blame to the message because they often carry a judgment. "Writes inadequate papers.." or "repeatedly speaks out of turn" do not give the kind of information someone needs to change the behavior.
2. You may want to write the italicized phrases above on the board or on chart paper as a reference for the students.
 3. Distribute "Conflict Situations" handouts. Have the students read the scenarios and fill them out, assessing each statement for its appropriateness. For statements that are marked inappropriate, tell them to note the specific reason, such as "uses inflammatory language."
 4. When the class has completed the handouts, discuss the scenarios and their assessments of the responses as a group.

Conflict Situation #3

(handout)

You feel that your girl or boyfriend has been "flirting" with two or three of your friends and you are feeling jealous. You have tried to talk with her/him, and he/she has told you not to worry. You see that the behavior that is bothering you has continued, and you decide to have a serious talk.

You say...	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. "When you obviously flirt with him/her..."			
2. "When you ignore my feelings and..."			
3. "When you pay attention to someone else...."			
4. "When you always laugh and joke with...."			
5. "When you encourage him/her to be playful with you..."			
6. "When you come on to someone else...."			
7. "When you act so interested in other boys/girls...."			
8. "When you are constantly smiling and nodding at him/her..."			

Other appropriate responses:

Conflict Situation #4

(handout)

Your math teacher gives homework almost every day and often does not return the papers. You want your papers back so that you can observe your progress. You want to talk to him/her about it.

You say...	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. "When you fail to return our work...."			
2. "When you are irresponsible about our papers...."			
3. "When our papers aren't returned so that we can check them...."			
4. "When you are so slow returning our papers..."			
5. "When we don't get our work back, we don't know how we've done.."			
6. "You always keep our papers..."			
7. "When you throw our papers away...."			
8. "When you don't do your job and correct our work..."			

Other appropriate responses:

Conflict Situation #5

(handout)

You and your locker mate have different standards for keeping the locker, and you feel it is often messy. The two of you have talked about it and you both agreed to keep your own things on your own shelves and off the floor. Since this talk you have found your locker mate's things on your shelf and on the floor.

You say...	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. "When you leave your things on the floor and on my shelf..."			
2. "When you leave things in the locker a mess...."			
3. "When you don't keep your things neat and organized.."			
4. "When you disregard my stuff and put your things anywhere.."			
5. "When you never keep your things on your own shelf..."			
6. "When you wait so long to clean up the locker...."			
7. "When you leave your ratty books on my shelf..."			

Other appropriate responses:



"This Affects Me Because..."*

- OBJECTIVE:** To recognize and formulate statements that clearly describe the effect of specific behavior on the listener.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: Conflict Situations #6 and #7 for each student
- PROCEDURE:** 1. Discuss this information with the class:

Another important part of effective I-Messages is a description of the effect the problem behavior has on your life. There are five key guidelines.

- a. *Specify the effect as concretely as possible* — Be clear about the real effect the behavior is having on you. "It bothers me," or "I don't like it" are not effects. Use the word "because" and then describe the results.
- b. *State the effect on YOUR life* — Unless you show the other person how your life is directly affected by their behavior, they will probably not be motivated to change the behavior. Avoid talking about the effect on someone else's life - "because Jean doesn't like to see our locker messy."
- c. *Avoid using reasons* — Explaining why you are upset with someone, rather than how their behavior affects you, does not help persuade the other person to change. Using reasons will obscure your explanation of the negative behavior. Example: "because I need to know when you're coming home."

* Adapted from *Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills*, by Neil H. Katz and John W. Lawyer, 1985, (Kendall Hunt Publishing: Dubuque, Iowa), pages 68-81.

- d. *Don't exaggerate the effect* — "Because I will never be able to look you in the eye again." Exaggeration usually will create defensiveness or skepticism in the other person, even though we may think that it will drive home the point more strongly.
 - e. *Don't use effects that "sound good" but aren't true* — People often hold the belief that "my negative effect isn't good enough." Do not search for the "best" effect. Instead, determine the real effect on your life and state it. I-Messages usually work because of their honesty without hidden agendas. Most people will respond to a sincere, straightforward approach.
2. Give students a copy of Conflict Situation #6. After they have filled it out, discuss it.
 3. For additional work on the "because" and "when you" statements, give students Conflict Situation #7 for homework. Explain that they are to think of a situation and six responses. They may choose "when you" statements or "because" statements for the response column. All responses should start the same way. One response should be appropriate and the other five should be inappropriate. In class, have the students exchange and complete each other's sheets, indicating which responses are appropriate, which are inappropriate, and why. Follow this with a class discussion of the situations and responses created by the students.

Conflict Situation #6

(handout)

Your locker mate and you are still having difficulty with the upkeep of the locker. The agreements you have made have not been kept. You decide you should try to describe the effect of his locker behavior on you.

Response	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	
1. "...because I don't like my friends to see such a messy locker."			
2. "...because it gets so messy that I want to throw up."			
3. "...because it makes it hard for me to find my things and keep them organized."			
4. "...because it's annoying to me."			
5. "...because my things can get lost and occasionally wrinkled and torn."			
6. "...because having a clean locker means we are responsible."			
7. "...because my girlfriend won't wait for me when I can't find my assignments in the locker."			

Other appropriate responses:

Conflict Situation #7

(handout)

Situation:

You say	Is it appropriate?		Why?
	Yes	No	

Other appropriate responses:



Taking Responsibility

OBJECTIVE: To give students practice taking responsibility for their feelings and thoughts.

DURATION: 30 minutes

MATERIALS: One copy of Seven Short Scripts for each student

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Discuss these points with the group:
 - a. To begin being responsible for our decisions and actions, we need to assume responsibility for our feelings and thoughts.

Speaking in second or third person when we are angry or upset shifts the responsibility to another person.

"This assignment is stupid" does not state the real feeling, while "I'm really frustrated by this assignment" acknowledges how the speaker feels.

A response that begins with "I" allows us to talk about how something affects us, and to begin thinking about what changes we might make.
 - b. When we disguise feelings in second or third person statements, we often are hiding a need or want that we would like to have met. The student who declares "Nobody can understand this silly math book" is probably saying "I don't understand this page, and I could use some help."
 2. Distribute the handouts and ask students to volunteer in pairs to read one of the small scenes. After each scene, discuss with the class what the second person might really have meant. Ask students to reword the statement to express the feeling by beginning with "I."
 3. In discussion, compare the two different responses. Which is clearer? Easier to listen to? To respond to? How might this help when you are in a conflict situation?

Seven Short Scripts (handout)

Example: First: It's time to turn in your English paper, John.
Second: I can't write about this subject. It's a ridiculous subject.

What he really meant:

I'm having trouble thinking of what to write about on this subject, maybe we could discuss it.

Script 1. First: Let's go to Teresa's party Friday night.
Second: Parties are so boring and dumb.

Script 2. First: Are you having some trouble with the math teacher?
Second: Oh, you know, everybody knows he's a terrible teacher.

Script 3. First: Aren't you going to basketball tryouts?
Second: I already know that Coach Jones doesn't like me and thinks I can't play.

Script 4. First: Are you going to ask Jean out? I think she likes you.
Second: She's too busy to pay attention to me.

Script 5. First: I saw that fight you had this morning. How'd it start?
Second: He just acts like a jerk all the time and gets me upset.

Script 6. First: You need to do the dishes before you go to school. You left them again last night.
Second: How come Wally never does any chores?

Script 7. First: I think your girlfriend is flirting with John.
Second: Who cares? She's probably doing it just to get me mad.



How Would I Feel?

OBJECTIVE:

To use the word "I" to express ownership of feelings and thoughts.

To identify feelings in different situations.

DURATION:

15 minutes

MATERIALS:

Handout: "Situations Worksheet" for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Stress the need for each person to take responsibility for his/her own feelings and opinions when giving an I-message.
2. Read the situation which follows, then ask "How does this person feel?" After the students name some possible feelings, ask students to complete the "Situations Worksheet."

You and John go to a party at Tanya's house. This is your first date with John, but you have had a crush on him for the past two months. John begins to drink beer at the party. You have made an agreement with your parents not to drink and not to ride in a car with anyone who has been drinking. You ask John to stop drinking, but he doesn't want to.

3. Have students discuss their responses to the "Situations Worksheet" in small groups.

Situations Worksheet

How would you feel in the following situations?

1. Thursday is a school day — for the most part just like any other. However, there is a quiz in history class — and tryouts are scheduled for the school play. Suppose you were waking up on a day like this. How would you feel?
I feel....
2. You and another student were candidates for the Student Council. You lost the election.
I feel....
3. On Monday, you receive an invitation to a party for the coming Saturday night. You would like very much to accept the invitation, but you have already agreed to babysit that night.
I feel....
4. You need a new coat, and your parents have agreed to let you pick it out alone. When you return with the coat you have chosen, they object to both the color and the style of it.
I feel....
5. You have practiced hard to make the track team. When the names of the new team members are posted, yours is not included.
I feel....
6. You are standing on the edge of the high dive for the first time.
I feel....
7. You were looking forward to having your favorite cereal for breakfast. When you get to the kitchen you find your brother has just finished the last of the milk.
I feel....



Constructive Feedback

- OBJECTIVE:** To use effective communication skills to give constructive feedback.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** An empty chair
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Ask students to discuss feedback they have received in the past that they didn't like. How did they react and why?
 2. List on board what students didn't like about feedback they received.
 3. Choose one example and ask another student to restate the feedback to the first student in a constructive manner. Does the first student feel differently now? Why? What made the difference? Did he/she feel more willing to change his/her behavior?
 4. Ask students to share a piece of feedback they have always wanted to *give* someone but were afraid to give. The recipient does not have to be present and it is not necessary to use the person's real name.

Have a student state his/her feedback to an empty chair as though the person were present. Ask the student if he/she can see anything destructive in the way he/she stated the feedback.

Have the class give feedback to the speaker also. Then, have the student give the feedback in a more positive way to the chair and then to a volunteer class member. The class member can role play a response and tell how he or she received the feedback. Repeat with as many students as possible.



Active Listening/ Clear Messages*

OBJECTIVE: To review and practice the effective communication skills of Active Listening and sending clear messages.

DURATION: 20-30 minutes

MATERIALS: Handout: "Active Listening Techniques"

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Review the active listening techniques and highlight the I-Message work that has just been completed.
 2. Pair the students and have each pair designate a listener and a speaker. Give the speakers a couple of minutes to think of a conflict situation that they can talk about for several minutes.
 3. The exercise involves four short segments during which the speaker will talk to the listener about the issue they have chosen. The four segments are structured like this:

	Speaker	Listener
1.	Poor message	No active listening
2.	Clear message	No active listening
3.	Poor message	Good active listening
4.	Clear message	Good active listening

* Adapted from *Conflict Management: Managing Interpersonal and Group Conflicts* by Jay Rothman, 1986

Active Listening Techniques (handout)

Statements that help the other person talk.

Statement	Purpose	To do this...	Examples
Encouraging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To convey interest 2. To encourage the other person to keep talking 	...don't agree or disagree ...use neutral words ...use varying voice intonations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Can you tell me more...?" 2.
Clarifying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To help you clarify what is said 2. To get more information 3. To help the speaker see other points of view 	...ask questions ...Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "When did this happen?" 2.
Restating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show you are listening and understanding what is being said 2. To check your meaning and interpretation 	...restate basic ideas and facts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "So you would like your parents to trust you more, is that right?" 2.
Reflecting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show that you understand how the person feels 2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else 	...reflect the speaker's basic feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "You seem very upset." 2.
Summarizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review progress 2. To pull together important ideas and facts 3. To establish a basis for further discussion 	...restate major ideas expressed including feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed..." 2.
Validating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person 	...acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings ...show appreciation for their efforts and actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter." 2.

5

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Chapter Five
Background

In order to resolve the conflicts we face in our lives effectively, we need certain understandings and skills. As we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2, it is important to understand the nature of conflict itself, as well as our individual way of approaching it. In Chapters 3 and 4, we began to develop the skills — both listening and speaking — that are necessary for good communication in conflict situations.

Beyond these understandings and skills, it also helps to have in mind a *conflict resolution process* — a specific sequence of steps that we can follow when we find ourselves involved in a conflict. This process provides a context for applying our communication skills and our understanding of conflict. By following the process, we will be more likely to reach the source of the problem, so that we can identify appropriate solutions and create a lasting resolution.

In this chapter, we will look closely at a conflict resolution process which is useful for handling the everyday interpersonal conflicts that we encounter. We will also examine a range of other formal and informal processes that have proven successful in resolving conflicts, from interpersonal to intergroup.

**The Collaborative
Conflict Resolution
Process***

The collaborative conflict resolution process is an informal form of negotiation, in which two people in conflict attempt to express and resolve their differences. In order for the process to work, both people must be willing to cooperate and work together. The process has two major parts:

- First, some personal time for each person to reflect and plan;
- Second, a meeting where a problem solving method is used to resolve the conflict.

Planning and Reflection The most important ingredient in conflict management is planning — figuring out ahead of time what our needs are and how we feel about the situation. When it comes time to sit down with the other person, we will need to communicate this information clearly. We'll also need to get accurate information about the other person's view of the conflict. By planning in advance, we will be better able to express our needs and feelings in a non-threatening way. We'll also be better prepared to gather information from the other person in a way that encourages him/her to work with us to resolve the conflict.

When each person has clarified his/her thinking beforehand, time is saved and the possibility of misunderstanding is decreased. This increases the chances of having a successful discussion. Planning ahead also allows time for both people to calm down, enabling them to listen and express themselves more effectively.

Finally, the planning time is also a good opportunity to reflect more generally on our way of handling conflict in our lives. As we learned in Chapter 1, conflict can have a positive outcome. But in order for this to occur, we first need to look at our current way of responding to conflict and become aware of the consequences of this behavior. By mapping our conflict cycle and recognizing its negative

* Although this formulation of the process is our own, some of our concepts draw from the process of "principled negotiation" as presented in *Getting to Yes*, by Roger Fisher and William Ury, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1981.

aspects, we can identify alternative responses that we might want to try, and thus begin the shift to a more positive conflict cycle. An excellent time to undertake this reflection is when we are about to talk with another person about a specific conflict.

It may not always be practical to take time out before actually sitting down with the other person to attempt to resolve a conflict. However, when possible, try to give yourself the opportunity to think and prepare for the discussion.

Surface Issues and Underlying Issues

Several things should be considered in this planning and reflection stage. First, it is important to identify all of the issues that may be at stake in the conflict.

In Chapter 1, we described the various causes of conflict and noted that they fall into three levels:

- 1) Conflicts over resources
- 2) Conflicts over psychological needs
- 3) Conflicts involving values.

It is rare for conflicts to have a single cause. More often, they involve multiple issues — some more fundamental than others. For this reason, as we think about why a conflict is upsetting to us, it is important to look beyond the more obvious surface issues to see what underlying issues might also be at stake. If only the more obvious issues are addressed, the conflict will often re-emerge over another surface issue. If a lasting solution to a problem is to be found, it is essential to identify and address the underlying issues as well.

For example, Jane loaned some records to her friend, Brenda. When Brenda accidentally damaged the records, Jane became enraged. After a thorough discussion of the problem, it became evident that the damaged records were only the surface problem. The underlying issue was that Brenda had spent the evening studying with Jane's boyfriend, and Jane was jealous. The jealousy and mistrust stemmed from a threat to Jane's needs (security with her boyfriend) and values (what constitutes a friend or how a friend should behave). Resolving the surface

issue of the damaged records (a resource) would address only a part of the problem. Unless the underlying issues were also addressed, a conflict could reoccur over another issue, or the friendship might be lost.

Positions and Interests

Second, we need to distinguish our position on each issue from the real interest which is at stake for us. Initially, our reaction to a conflict often takes the form of a *position*, an action that has been decided upon. For example, a position might be:

"If you come home late one more time, I won't be here."

A position carries a demand or a threat that veils what the person really means. This threat often elicits defensiveness from the other person and tends to escalate the conflict.

The *interest*, on the other hand, is the real need that has brought us to take this position. In this case, the interest might be stated as:

"I need you to call me when you're going to be late, so I can plan accordingly."

Or,

"When you arrive late, I feel taken for granted and begin to wonder if you really care for me."

If solving the conflict is really important to us, we need to look beyond our initial position to honestly examine our own real interests and needs in the situation. It also helps to think about what the interests of the other person might be.

The Conflict Resolution Environment

Third, we can consider the outside influences that may affect our attempts to resolve the conflict, by asking the following questions:

- Have we chosen a mutually convenient time to talk?
- Have we chosen a place that is quiet and free of interruptions?

- Have we allotted enough time to discuss the problem and to reach a resolution?

Having an appropriate setting and enough time to work on a problem is important to the success of this process.

Additional Questions for Reflection

Some questions that may serve as a further guide in this reflection and planning stage are:

- What is it that specifically concerns me about the situation?
- How does the situation affect me?
- Why is this conflict important to me?
- What are my real needs in the situation?
- Are my personal values being challenged? Which ones?
- How do I view the other person? What are my assumptions and suspicions about him/her?
- What do I most want this person to understand about me?
- What exactly would make the situation better for me?

Problem Solving

The period of planning and reflection is followed by the second major part of the conflict resolution process — a face-to-face discussion between the two people involved in the dispute. To guide this discussion, it is useful to follow a sequence of steps known as problem solving.

1. *Set the Tone.*

Set the tone. It's amazing how beneficial getting off on the right foot can be. To do this, begin by stating your positive intentions about the relationship and the current situation. For example:

"I want to resolve this problem."

"I want to hear your point of view."

"This relationship is important to me, and I would like it to last."

It also helps to validate and acknowledge the other person's positive intentions with a statement such as:

"I appreciate your willingness to work this out."

"Thank you for taking the time to meet with me."

2. *Define and Discuss
the Problem.*

Define and discuss the problem. It will not be possible to find a resolution to the conflict unless both people agree about exactly what the problem is. Coming to this mutual definition is the meat of the problem solving method, and the importance of this step should not be underestimated.

Be sure to define the problem thoroughly, including all surface and underlying issues for both people. A problem vaguely or inaccurately defined will not be satisfactorily resolved. Similarly, a problem that is incorrectly defined may lead to a good solution to the wrong problem.

During this interaction, both people will be identifying interests and needs, and separating them from positions. It may also be necessary to discuss the values, assumptions, and suspicions that are affecting the conflict.

If the discussion is to be fruitful, the use of effective listening and speaking skills will be essential. Remember to give each other equal and uninterrupted air time. Listen carefully to make sure that you are being understood, and that you are understanding what the other person is expressing.

3. *Summarize
Progress.*

Summarize progress. Once it appears that the problem has been defined, it is helpful to stop and summarize the discussion. This is the best way to confirm that both people have heard and perceived the same information. It also serves to validate each person's efforts and the progress made so far. This short step is the bridge between defining the problem, and identifying possible solutions to the problem.

4. *Explore
alternative
solutions.*

If the previous steps have been done well —

- the problem correctly defined
- needs clearly expressed and addressed
- assumptions and suspicions explored
- each person heard and understood by the other

— you probably will have gone most of the way toward finding a good solution to the conflict.

The next step involves the exploration of alternative solutions for each of the issues previously identified as part of the conflict. The suggested solutions should be discussed carefully to determine the advantages and disadvantages of each, including its possible future consequences.

Among the solutions, it is important to include some that will address the present problem, and also some that will help to prevent the problem from occurring in the future.

To be effective, the solutions should meet several criteria:

- They should be acceptable to both parties;
- They should be specific, stating exactly what each person will do, and how and when it will be done;
- They should be balanced, so that each person is contributing something to the resolution of the problem.

5. *Set a Time for
Follow-up.*

Set a time for follow-up. Before ending the meeting, agree on a time to check in with one another in the near future. It is difficult to predict all the consequences of the agreed-upon solutions. For this reason, it is essential to establish a checkpoint when both people will know that they can bring up any unexpected problems that might have emerged. This will also encourage both people to be accountable for what they have agreed to do.

Summary of the Collaborative Conflict Resolution Process

The Collaborative Conflict Resolution Process can be summarized in these steps:

Part I: Individual Planning and Reflection

- Identify surface and underlying issues
- Identify the interests behind the positions
- Arrange for a setting conducive to discussion

Part II: Problem Solving with the other person

- 1 Set a positive tone
- 2 Define the problem
- 3 Summarize progress so far
- 4 Explore alternative solutions
- 5 Set a time for follow-up

Formal Negotiation

Earlier we referred to the collaborative process outlined above as an "informal" form of negotiation. Most often however, the term "negotiation" refers to a much more formal process that has somewhat different goals from the approach we have just described. We usually hear about negotiation in the context of problems between factions or groups, such as labor-management or other business disputes.

In formal negotiation, each side prepares by developing a set of strongly-stated positions and demands. The problem-solving phase is largely devoted to bargaining and trading. Relatively little attention is given to the expression of feelings or the exploration of underlying issues. The goal is not so much to build mutual understanding as it is to reach a mutually-agreeable compromise as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For example, with the end of their contract approaching, the Teachers Association and the School District prepare to discuss new contract provisions. The teachers prepare a

set of demands that include a pay increase of 5%, and a reduction in the maximum class size from 33 to 25. The school district representatives maintain that due to diminishing enrollments and tightened federal assistance, they are prepared to offer only a 2% pay increase. They state that they also find it necessary to dismiss some low-seniority teachers, so that even though there are fewer students, class sizes will remain at 33.

In eleventh-hour, all-night discussions, both sides agree to a compromise: the teachers agree to accept the 2% pay increase; in return the school district agrees not to dismiss any teachers, allowing the maximum class size to drop to 25.

Third-Party Conflict Resolution Processes

Sometimes — despite great skill and determination — it is not possible for two individuals or groups to resolve a conflict. If suspicion and mistrust are strong, communication may break down. Or the issues may be too numerous and complex to be adequately identified by the people involved.

In situations like this, it is often useful to involve an outside, objective person or team of people to assist in finding a resolution. This additional person or team is known as a “third party.”

There are a number of well-tested third-party processes. Like the formal and informal approaches to negotiation, these processes vary greatly in their goals and methods. They also vary in how much power and responsibility is given to the third party for making certain that a resolution is reached.

Conciliation

Conciliation has much the same goals and methods as the one-to-one conflict resolution process described earlier. The difference is the presence of a third party — the conciliator — who facilitates communication between the disputants as they express feelings and needs, identify issues, and explore possible solutions.

The term conciliation comes from the Latin *conciliare* meaning “to bring together.” And in fact, the function of the third party is exactly that — to bring the parties together both physically and psychologically, so that they

can move beyond hostility, suspicion, and avoidance to face the problems that divide them.* The goal is not simply to agree on a solution, but to help the disputants rebuild or repair their relationship so that they can develop mutually acceptable solutions that are completely their own.

Conciliation has a strong educational component. Ideally, the conciliation process leaves the disputants with understandings, skills, and a foundation of trust that will enable them to cope effectively with conflicts that may arise between them in the future. For this reason, conciliation is especially appropriate when those in conflict are involved in an ongoing relationship (whether as neighbors, roommates, friends, spouses, or business partners.)

Mediation

"Mediation" and "Conciliation" are often used synonymously. The two processes are similar in that the mediator, like the conciliator, has no authority to decide who is right or wrong, or to impose a solution on the people involved in the conflict.

In most forms of mediation, however, the primary emphasis is given to finding a solution to the immediate problem. In contrast to conciliation, less attention is focused on the relationship between the disputants and the quality of their communication.

"Mediation" derives from the Latin *mediare*, which means "to divide in the middle." In mediation, a third party literally steps between the parties in dispute and assists them in finding a solution to their problem. Some mediators bring the parties together to do this, and others work with each individual separately, carrying ideas, suggestions and reactions back and forth. And often they will incorporate a combination of both methods, meeting separately with each party when it seems that new

*This is the Community Board definition of conciliation. Traditionally the definition of "conciliation" is limited to the process of bringing people together in the same place.

information and concerns might be surfaced with the assurance of confidentiality.

As in conciliation, agreements are entirely voluntary, and the responsibility for the solutions rests with the disputants. In contrast to a conciliator, however, a mediator may take a very active role in offering possible solutions, framing proposals, and recommending a course of action.

Arbitration

Arbitration is fundamentally different from both mediation and conciliation in that the disputants relinquish the authority for making a decision to the third party — the “arbitrator.” Both parties agree ahead of time to abide by the decision, which becomes legally binding.

During an arbitration hearing, each party argues his or her position. Unlike conciliation and mediation, in arbitration there is little or no dialogue between the parties, and no exploration of underlying needs and issues. Instead, the arbitrator functions very much like a judge. He/she considers both arguments, renders a decision in favor of one party or the other, and writes an “award” to explain the reasoning behind the decision.

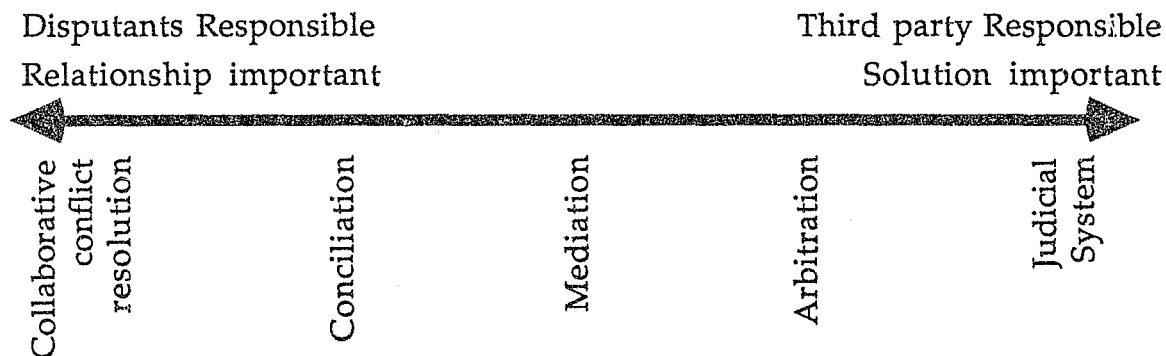
Arbitration is commonly used in commercial disputes and in disagreements over labor-management contract provisions. It developed as an alternative to the courts, providing a faster, less expensive way of handling problems that could take years to settle in the more cumbersome and overloaded judicial system.

The Spectrum of Conflict Resolution Processes

It becomes easier to remember the distinctions between the conflict resolution processes we have described by arranging them on a continuum or scale. (See diagram.) The scale has two parallel dimensions:

- 1) The degree of third-party responsibility for finding a solution to the problem at hand;
- 2) The emphasis given to the establishment of communication between the disputants.

At the leftmost end of the scale, a third party has no role in finding a solution, and maximum emphasis is given to re-establishing communication between the people in dispute. At the rightmost end of the scale, a third party assumes the entire responsibility for finding a solution, and emphasis is on solving the problem at hand rather than on building good communication.



Notice that formal negotiation has been left off the continuum. Negotiation does not fit neatly into this scheme, because even though the responsibility rests entirely with the disputants, the emphasis is as much on finding a solution to the problem at hand as it is on establishing communication.

Conclusion



Effective conflict resolution involves a number of factors:




- An understanding of the nature of conflict itself;
- Awareness of our own style of responding to conflict;
- Communication skills that enable us to talk about conflict clearly and effectively;
- An appropriate conflict resolution process.

5 RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Chapter Five Activities

Through this set of activities, students will learn a conflict resolution process which will enable them to express and collaboratively resolve interpersonal and some intergroup conflicts.

Each "key" activity (designated with a  symbol) has been grouped with its corresponding "supplementary" activities (designated with a  symbol). The key activities are highly recommended to assure that students master the basic concepts. Supplementary activities are optional and may be used to provide further skills practice, or to strengthen students' understanding of a concept. Included with each activity is a copy of every worksheet, handout, or reading that you need to present the activity.

	What's the Story Here?	To distinguish between surface and underlying causes of conflict.	5-16
	Positions and Interests/Needs	To learn the difference between Positions and Interests/Needs in conflict situations. To differentiate between our own Positions and what we really need — our Interests.	5-18
	Conflict Resolution Step-by-Step	To give an overview of the Conflict Resolution Process and the steps and concepts that are involved.	5-22

key	Planning for Problem Solving	To learn the importance of planning ahead for problem solving.	5-25
key	Setting the Tone	To understand the importance of setting the tone for resolving a conflict.	5-27
key	Defining the Problem	To practice identifying issues and concerns in conflict situations.	5-29
key	Finding A Good Resolution	(Prerequisite — Defining the Problem) To learn what comprises a good resolution. To brainstorm solutions to each of the conflict situations in the "Defining the Problem" activity and to evaluate each according to the criteria of what makes a good resolution.	5-32
⊕	The Other Side of the Coin	To reinforce the concept that all conflicts are two- sided. To learn to think in detail about the other point of view in a conflict situation.	5-35
⊕	Happy Endings	(Prerequisite — The Other Side of the Coin) To examine existing solutions to problems and explore alternatives. To apply problem solving skills to finding mutually acceptable solutions.	5-36
⊕	Senior Prom	To use effective speaking and active listening techniques to discuss the Senior Prom conflict and to explore possible resolutions.	5-37

Key	Conflict Resolution Role Plays	To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process in various role play situations.	5-40
⊕	Additional Conflict Resolution Role Plays	To further practice using the Conflict Resolution Process.	5-51
⊕	Senior Trip	To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process with conflicts involving students and adults.	5-54
⊕	"I'll Pay the Check" — Fishbowl practice	To further practice the Conflict Resolution Process.	5-59



What's the Story Here?

- OBJECTIVE:** To distinguish between surface and underlying causes of conflict.
- DURATION:** Homework assignment and 45-50 min. class
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. As homework, have students write a two-page story describing a conflict. (This may be one of their own personal conflicts or one they have observed. If they are using the conflict of one of their friends, remind them to change the names being used.)

Have students include details of how the conflict started, any relevant background, feelings the people may have had toward each other — before, during and after the conflict, details about the specific interactions involved and the final outcome of the situation.
 2. In class, following the homework assignment, discuss the concept of surface and underlying causes of conflict. Explain that most conflicts have obvious or surface causes, such as two students who both want to sit in the same seat, and that these conflicts often have underlying causes as well. In this case, perhaps both students want to sit next to a special person, or it may be a power struggle for who will get his/her way.

Ask students for examples of conflicts where the surface cause is clear. Have the class discuss what the underlying causes may have been. Have students examine whether the surface causes of conflict are over resources, psychological needs, or values, then have students discuss which of these categories the underlying causes most often fit.

Remind students that in most situations, focusing on the surface cause of the conflict will not resolve the conflict. Addressing the underlying cause will not only resolve the conflict, in most cases, it will also help to prevent future misunderstandings of the same kind.

3. Select and discuss conflict stories written for homework. Ask students to identify the surface and the underlying causes of the dispute.
4. OPTION: The stories can be presented by the students as role plays, after which the class will have to decide what the surface and underlying causes of the conflict are.



Positions and Interests/Needs

- OBJECTIVE:** To learn the difference between Positions and Interests/Needs in conflict situations.
- To differentiate between our own Positions and what we really need — our Interests.
- DURATION:** 20 minutes
- MATERIALS:** "Positions and Interests" Worksheet
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Discuss the following situation with students: Two people are arguing over an orange. Each person wants the orange and neither is willing to give it to the other. Finally, a third person comes in and splits the orange in half, giving one half to each of the disputants.
- If each of these people had been asked what their real Need was for the orange, it would have become clear that one wanted the peel for a cake and the other wanted the orange to make juice. If both had discussed their real Interests or Needs, they would have been able to resolve the conflict in a way which would have given each of them what they wanted.*
2. Explain the difference between Positions and Interests. Emphasize that when people state their true needs, they are much more likely to reach a satisfactory resolution.

* The idea for this example was taken from *Getting to Yes*, by Roger Fisher and William Ury, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1981.

3. Read the following examples of Positions and ask students to identify the real Interest or Need behind the Position.

(a) Position: If you interrupt me again, I'm leaving.

Interest:

(b) Position: Change your clothes right now or you're not going with us.

Interest:

(c) Position: If you're late one more time I'll never go out with you again.

Interest:

4. Distribute the "Positions and Interests" Worksheet and have students complete it.

5. Discuss worksheet answers. As the class discusses the differences in the responses, have them discuss the different effects a Position or an Interest statement may have on the listener. Which is more likely to lead to a positive result?

Positions and Interests (worksheet)

For each of the following examples of Position statements, write the corresponding Interest or Need.

1. Position: If you wear any of my clothes one more time, you're going to get it.

Interest:

2. Position: You never pay me back on time. I always have to squeeze my money out of you. I'm never going to lend you money again.

Interest:

3. Position: If you ever come into my room and borrow my stuff without asking, I'm telling Mom.

Interest:

4. Position: If I see you talk to him/her one more time, we're through.

Interest:

5. Position: You criticize my friends one more time and you'll be sorry.

Interest:

6. Position: You look at me like that one more time, and you've had it.

Interest:

7. Position: Stop putting me down or I won't speak to you again.

Interest:

Positions and Interests (worksheet, p.2)

Add some Position and Interest statements of your own:

Position:

Interest:

Position:

Interest:

Position:

Interest:

Position:

Interest:



Conflict Resolution Step-by-Step

- OBJECTIVE:** To give an overview of the Conflict Resolution Process and the steps and concepts that are involved.
- DURATION:** 45-50 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Conflict Scenario — "The Seat Assignment"
Handout: "Conflict Resolution Process"
Chalkboard or chart paper
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Explain that you are going to demonstrate a Conflict Resolution Process. Use the conflict scenario, "The Seat Assignment," or ask students to volunteer a conflict to work with.
 2. Using the scenario, move through the steps of the Conflict Resolution Process:
 - a) Distribute conflict scenario and the Conflict Resolution Process handout to students.
 - b) Ask the questions under the heading, "Plan Ahead — Analyze" orally for each character in the dispute and solicit answers from the class. Record responses for Mr. Y and for Walter.
 - c) Ask a volunteer from the group to play the other person involved in the conflict. Using the problem solving steps, roleplay the situation.

(Teachers may feel more comfortable practicing this with someone from the class ahead of time. Often, however, the spontaneity adds to the effect of the demonstration.)

 - d) Process the role play with the class. Ask them to discuss and name the steps they saw you implement with the other person. Have the other person speak about the effect the process had on him/her.

The Seat Assignment (scenario)

On the first day of Mr. Y's English class, he assigned a seat to each student and told them that they could not change their seats during the semester. Several students protested, requesting a seat change. Walter's seat was in the back corner of the room and he could not see the chalkboard clearly. Walter asked Mr. Y if he could have a different seat and Mr. Y said no. When Walter asked, "Why not?" Mr. Y turned red, stood up very tall and said, "Because I'm in charge here and I said no! Is that clear?"

After class, Walter asked Mr. Y if they could talk after school. Mr. Y agreed.

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.



Planning for Problem Solving

- OBJECTIVE:** To learn the importance of planning ahead for problem solving.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handout: "What Specifically Concerns Me"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Discuss this background with the class:

Having a strategy is a vital part of managing our own conflicts. If we know beforehand what needs we have in a conflict and how we feel about what has happened, we will be better able to impart this information to the other person without making the situation worse. We must also think about how we can get information from the other person in a way that encourages him or her to work with us to solve the conflict. Like anything that is difficult or complicated, tackling a conflict constructively requires planning.
 2. Distribute the Handout, "What Specifically Concerns Me." Introduce it and discuss it as a tool that will help in preparing for handling interpersonal disputes. Have the class suggest their own conflict experiences as examples and discuss possible answers for each of the questions on the "What Specifically Concerns Me" handout.
 3. Ask the class to think of a conflict they have had or are having. Have each student fill out the "What Specifically Concerns Me" handout in preparation for the conflict they have in mind.
 4. In small groups have the class discuss their ideas about each of the items on the worksheet. Do they feel more prepared to resolve their conflict? Did considering the questions affect their views of the conflict or of the person they're in conflict with? Will planning ahead change what they might say to the person?

What Specifically Concerns Me (handout)

What specifically concerns me about this conflict?

How does this affect me?

Why is this important to me? What values of mine are involved?

Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person? What are they?

What would make the situation better for me?



Setting the Tone

- OBJECTIVE:** To understand the importance of setting the tone for resolving a conflict.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** None
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Discuss this background material with the class:
 - A. When a conflict arises between two people, it is usually expressed with angry words, accusations, insults or denials. To change our learned patterns in conflict, we need to find and/or develop different ways to respond in the heat of the moment.
 - B. If you discover yourself in an unproductive or negative discussion, you can begin to break the cycle by stopping what's happening.
 - C. To set the tone for a more productive discussion:
 - 1) *State your positive intention.* Let the other person know that you care, and that you want to resolve the conflict in a constructive way. For instance, "This situation is important to me and I would like to understand it better."
 - 2) *Acknowledge and validate the other person.* Assume that they have positive intentions and feelings too. "I appreciate that you want to work this out, too."
 - 3) If the discussion isn't possible at that moment (lack of time, one or both of you too angry), explain your reaction: "I feel confused right now. I need time to sort things out before we talk."

Discuss several examples of each of these, encouraging the students to respond in their own words.

2. Suggest a conflict scenario (see below) and have two students volunteer to role play their responses. Process the skit. Then, have them play the argument again, this time using a response that will set the tone for resolving the conflict.

Suggested Scenarios: (Encourage the class to generate some.)

Scenario 1: You are tense and tired because you've been studying for finals. You find yourself in the middle of a heated argument with your brother over who will use the desk and you wind up yelling at each other.

Scenario 2: You hear that one of your friends has been telling some other people about a fight you had with your boy/girl friend. You have been friends for a long time, but you are extremely upset to learn that he/she has been talking about your business. You ask him/her about it, and in the process you both start making accusations toward each other.



Defining the Problem

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice identifying issues and concerns in conflict situations.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: copies of "Conflict Situations"
copies of "Conflict Resolution Process"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Explain that an important part of resolving conflicts is to define the problem(s) correctly. Emphasize that unless a problem is correctly and completely defined (all surface and underlying issues) for each party in the dispute, a lasting resolution cannot be reached. The questions under the heading "Plan Ahead — Analyze" (on the "Conflict Resolution Process" handout) help provide direction for defining the problem from the point of view of each disputant. Remind students that it is not uncommon for two people in conflict to have different views of what the problem is. (See perceptions activities in Chapter 3).
 2. Distribute copies of "Conflict Situations." For each situation, have the students write one or two sentences to identify the problem:
 - What is the problem for person A?; for person B? (Make sure to include surface and underlying issues.)
 - Is it the same for both disputants?
 3. Divide students into small groups. After the students have answered the questions for themselves, have the small groups discuss and decide, as a group, on a problem definition for each disputant in each situation. Each group should have a recorder to take down their decisions.
 4. In the whole group, have each group share their problem definitions for each disputant, for each situation, and have the entire group decide on one problem or set of problems for each conflict situation. Have these written on chart paper and saved for use in a later activity.

Conflict Situations

(handout)

1. Sue's friend told her that Sally is trying to steal Sue's boyfriend. She told Sue that she saw Sally send him a note. Sally denies that she likes the boy, and says that she was only asking about an assignment. Sue does not believe her.
2. Jim is mad at Bill because Bill called him a name, and because it happened in front of friends. Bill says that he and Jim are friends, have always teased each other, and that the name was only in fun.
3. Tom says that Jeff pushed him in the hall for no reason. Jeff is much bigger than Tom. Tom tells one of his bigger friends, Sam, what has happened. Sam says he will beat up Jeff after school.

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.



Finding A Good Resolution

**PREREQUISITE
LESSON:**

Defining the Problem

OBJECTIVE:

To learn what comprises a good resolution.

To brainstorm solutions to each of the conflict situations in the "Defining the Problem" activity and to evaluate each according to the criteria of what makes a good resolution.

DURATION:

55 minutes

MATERIALS:

Handout "Conflict Situations" (one for each small group)

Chart paper with problem definitions for each situation (from previous activity, "Defining the Problem")

Chart paper or chalkboard

PROCEDURE:

1. Ask the class what they think makes a resolution a good one; what makes it work. List their suggestions on the chalkboard or chart paper.
2. Ask them also to discuss what would make a resolution not work for them. If it were their dispute, what wouldn't they want to see in the resolution?
3. Use the list they generated for what makes a good resolution to discuss the aspects of sound agreements:
 - ☞ they solve the problem
 - ☞ they are realistic (can be done)
 - ☞ they are something both parties are willing to do
 - ☞ they are balanced (each party is doing something to contribute to the solution)

4. Divide the class into three groups and give each group one conflict situation from the handout, and the corresponding definition of the problems developed during the earlier activity.
5. Have each group use the scenario and the definition of the problem as a basis to brainstorm solutions to the problem. After they have generated a sizeable list, have them analyze the list and narrow it down to the solutions that are most appropriate and realistic. Be sure the groups apply the principles of good solutions, and that they discuss the "what ifs" involved with each suggestion.
6. Have each group share and discuss their solutions for their conflict situation with the whole group.

Conflict Situations

(handout)

1. Sue's friend told her that Sally is trying to steal Sue's boyfriend. She told Sue that she saw Sally send him a note. Sally denies that she likes the boy, and says that she was only asking about an assignment. Sue does not believe her.
2. Jim is mad at Bill because Bill called him a name, and because it happened in front of friends. Bill says that he and Jim are friends, have always teased each other, and that the name was only in fun.
3. Tom says that Jeff pushed him in the hall for no reason. Jeff is much bigger than Tom. Tom tells one of his bigger friends, Sam, what has happened. Sam says he will beat up Jeff after school.



The Other Side of the Coin

OBJECTIVE:

To reinforce the concept that all conflicts are two- sided.

To learn to think in detail about the other point of view in a conflict situation.

DURATION:

Homework assignment, and time in class to read the students' stories

MATERIALS:

None

PROCEDURE:

1. Have the class generate a list of fairy tales, legends, stories, or even modern books or movies that all have a traditional villain (and, of course, a good guy). From whose point of view are these stories told? Have each student choose a story from the list. Their homework assignment is to rewrite the story (at least two pages) from the villain's point of view.

Examples: *Jack and the Beanstalk* from the Giant's point of view, *Cinderella* from the point of view of one of the stepsisters, or perhaps a capsule version of *Star Wars* from Darth Vader's point of view.

2. Allow class time for students who wish to read their stories to the group. Also, lead a discussion about how they reacted to exploring the opposite view of the story.



Happy Endings

**PREREQUISITE
LESSON:**

The Other Side of the Coin

OBJECTIVE:

To examine existing solutions to problems and explore alternatives.

To apply problem solving skills to finding mutually acceptable solutions.

DURATION:

30-45 minutes

MATERIALS:

The students' stories from "The Other Side of the Coin" activity

Chart paper for each group

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide the students into small groups of three or four, and have each group choose the story of one member of their group to work with.
2. Have them compare the story with the new point of view to the original. Then have the groups brainstorm a set of solutions that might be mutually acceptable to both the antagonist and the protagonist. Have the group evaluate the suggested solutions and decide on the best solution for the story they are dealing with. Make sure each group assigns a recorder to list all suggestions on chart paper.
3. Have the small groups each share their new solutions with the whole class.

VARIATION:

Ask students to create puppet shows depicting the fairy tale dispute and its resolution.



Senior Prom

OBJECTIVE:

To use effective speaking and active listening techniques to discuss the Senior Prom conflict and to explore possible resolutions.

DURATION:

45 minutes

MATERIALS:

Copies of story "Senior Prom"

PROCEDURE:

1. Distribute copies of "Senior Prom" for each student to read. Discuss with the whole class the ideas and issues in the story, their reactions and feelings, but *not* the possible solutions.
2. Break the class into small "Prom" committees, and have them discuss the issues and problems in the story and attempt to come to some viable solution.
3. Have each group share their solutions for the problem with the whole class. Be sure to have members of each group talk about how they experienced the process within their small group.

Senior Prom*

(reading)

by Jean D. Grambs

Mrs. Richardson looked at the three serious faces watching her from across her desk. There was Steve Johnson, President of the senior class — a good, hard-working President, honest and likable. Next to him was Janet Scanlon, secretary of the class, very bright, usually responsible, and quite sure of herself. Next to her was Eloise Ledas, chairperson of the Senior Prom committee. Her dark eyes and smooth olive complexion showed her Greek heritage. Her father, Pete Ledas, a history teacher at the high school, made a particular point of dwelling on the glories of ancient Greek history.

"It isn't that I want to interfere with your plans," Mrs. Richardson started to say. "But I guess that's what I'm doing." She smiled at the serious looking 17-year-olds facing her. They did not smile back, and remained quiet.

Urgently, Mrs. Richardson continued: "Now, the Senior Prom isn't just a dance for our own school. It's one of the biggest events of the spring in this town, and we want it to be a big success. I know you have already worked a long time on your plans and getting

committees started on decorations and all that." She looked at Eloise, hoping she would say something, but she just looked back at Mrs. Richardson.

"It wasn't just my idea to ask you to reconsider your plans," Mrs. Richardson went on, beginning to feel the difficulty of the task, "Of course, as sponsor for the senior class, I am in a way responsible for what you do, even though I know that you are conscientious and responsible." This attempt at flattery didn't seem to work.

"Mr. Perkins, a fine principal, was the first one to mention the problem to me this morning, when your posters were put up. He felt we should talk about it and see what is to be done." Mrs. Richardson stopped. She leaned back in her chair. It was time for the students to say something.

Steve spoke first, after several minutes. "I don't get it, Mrs. Richardson. Here we are, making our plans, we have everything fixed up for the best Senior Prom this place has seen, and then someone starts talking about 'prejudice' and 'stereotypes' and 'hurting people's feelings'. Honestly, Mrs. Richardson, they just miss the point."

"They sure do," said Eloise excitedly. "I guess I know a bit about prejudice and stereotypes, because we are Greeks, and

* From Jean D. Grambs, *Intergroup Education: Methods and Materials*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968, pp. 60-62.

you should hear some of the things people say sometimes. But just because we pick a fiesta theme for our dance and have some Mexicans with sombreros over their faces sleeping under a cactus for our poster, then we get put on the carpet and accused of all kinds of things."

"We thought it was a real cute idea," Janet spoke up. "With a Mexican fiesta theme, we can have real neat decorations, and play a lot of salsa music and that sort of thing. It's something different. We even thought we might have enchiladas and tamales for sale at the refreshment stand, if we can get some of the Mexicans to cook for us." She looked triumphantly at the other two, and they nodded in agreement; these were their ideas, and they liked them.

"That's exactly the point," Mrs. Richardson said. "The Mexican students object to having posters with Mexicans depicted as lazy and always sleeping in peasant clothes under a cactus. It isn't any more true of modern Mexico than it is of the Americans of Mexican descent who live here in town."

"But heck, Mrs. Richardson," said Steve, "there aren't more than ten or a dozen Mexican kids in our school; most of them go to the San Angelo High School. I don't see why they should care. No one's making fun of them. It's just a good idea for a dance is all."

"And all the posters are made, and all the programs are ordered and due from the printers today — why, we have already spent all the money we have for

the dance. We couldn't possibly work up another theme!" Janet's voice rose as she made her points.

"Why do they have to be so sensitive anyway? Are we going to let a few kids spoil the fun for all the rest of us — why, we expect about two hundred at our dance if it is a good one." Steve glared at Mrs. Richardson.

"Mrs. Richardson," Janet implored, "isn't there anything we can do?"

And that, thought Mrs. Richardson to herself, is exactly what she wanted to know, too.



Conflict Resolution Role Plays

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process in various role play situations.
- DURATION:** 30 minutes per role play
- MATERIALS:** "What Specifically Concerns Me" worksheet for each disputant
"Conflict Resolution Process" handout
Copies of one of the role play situations — one for each student
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Divide the class into groups of 4. Distribute copies of the role play to be enacted. Observers will get the entire sheet and each disputant will get their part only. Two people from each group should role play the situation. First the disputants complete the "What Specifically Concerns Me" worksheet as part of planning ahead. The other two people in the group will observe the role play and give feedback.
 2. When disputants have completed the problem solving process and have reached a resolution, observers should give feedback that is specific and constructive. Observers should highlight positive things as well as areas where improvements can take place. (Stop the role play after 30 minutes if disputants have not been able to resolve the dispute.)
 3. Switch roles having the observers become the disputants. They may use the same role play or you may want to distribute a second scenario.

What Specifically Concerns Me (handout)

What specifically concerns me about this conflict?

How does this affect me?

Why is this important to me? What values of mine are involved?

Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person? What are they?

What would make the situation better for me?

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.

The Locker: Sharing Space (role play)

Disputants: Two students who share a locker, Pat and Jackie.

Conflict: Pat and Jackie have shared the same locker for six months. Yesterday, Jackie accused Pat of being inconsiderate and taking up all the space in the locker. A heated argument started.

Character Background:

Jackie: At first, things worked out well with the two of you sharing the locker. But for the last two months or so, Pat has not taken any responsibility for keeping the locker clean and neat. You spoke to Pat about it once and nothing changed. Yesterday, you became very upset when you found your jacket dirty, and you yelled at Pat.



The Locker: Sharing Space (role play)

Disputants: Two students who share a locker, Pat and Jackie.

Conflict: Pat and Jackie have shared the same locker for six months. Yesterday, Jackie accused Pat of being inconsiderate and taking up all the space in the locker. A heated argument started.

Character background:

Pat: You recognize that you have been somewhat messy, but according to your standards it is not as bad as Jackie describes it. You feel that Jackie has a need for perfection. One of your concerns is that from the beginning Jackie used up more than his/her share of space in the locker and doesn't leave you enough room for your things.

He Say, She Say: (role play) Rumor and Gossip

Disputants: Two very good friends, Jamie and Terry.

Conflict: Jamie broke up with his/her girl/boyfriend. Jamie told Terry, a close friend, the whole story including all the events that led to the breakup. When Jamie returned to school after two days' absence, he/she found out that quite a few students knew of the breakup and all the details. Jamie blamed Terry for all the rumors and told Terry that he/she didn't want to be friends any longer. Terry convinced Jamie to meet with him/her to discuss what had happened.

Character background:

Jamie: You are very hurt and embarrassed that so many students know of something that is very personal to you. You blame Terry for all the rumors. You are worried that if you meet with Terry to discuss the situation, he/she will tell others what you talked about.



He Say, She Say: (role play) Rumor and Gossip

Disputants: Two very good friends, Jamie and Terry.

Conflict: Jamie broke up with his/her girl/boyfriend. Jamie told Terry, a close friend, the whole story including all the events that led to the breakup. When Jamie returned to school after two days' absence, he/she found out that quite a few students knew of the breakup and all the details. Jamie blamed Terry for all the rumors and told Terry that he/she didn't want to be friends any longer. Terry convinced Jamie to meet with him/her to discuss what had happened.

Character background:

Terry: You felt attacked and blamed. Jamie said some very unpleasant things to you. You did tell your best friend that Jamie had broken up with his girl/boyfriend and why. You never thought your friend would tell others and by the time it got back to Jamie some things about the story had been greatly exaggerated. You feel bad about what happened but did not like how Jamie approached you. However, you want the friendship to continue.

The Records: Property Damage

(role play)

Disputants: Two friends, Terry and Sammy.

Conflict: Terry loaned his/her records to Sammy. Sammy put the records in his/her car and forgot them there. It was a very hot day, and the heat damaged the records. When Sammy told Terry what had happened, Terry became very upset and an argument started.

Character Background:

Terry: You feel that Sammy was very irresponsible and you doubt that he/she can pay you back because six of your records were damaged, and it was a lot of money, about \$40.00. There's an underlying issue which you haven't raised yet, and that is that you feel a little suspicious because Sammy had invited over a girl/guy that you like a lot. In fact, the latter is a lot more important to you than the records.



The Records: Property Damage

(role play)

Disputants: Two friends, Terry and Sammy.

Conflict: Terry loaned his/her records to Sammy. Sammy put the records in his/her car and forgot them there. It was a very hot day, and the heat damaged the records. When Sammy told Terry what had happened, Terry became very upset and an argument started.

Character Background:

Sammy: You are really sorry for having damaged the records, but don't understand why Terry got so upset. After all, you said you would pay him/her back.

Siblings: (role play, p.1) Family Dispute

Disputants: Jessie, older (brother/sister). Rick, younger (brother/sister).

Jessie is 3 years older than Rick.

Conflict: Jessie is often left in charge of household chores because their mother works long hours to support the family. Jessie and Rick argue about household chores. Jessie is also very concerned about Rick because of the friends with whom he/she has been spending time.

After an argument, Jessie suggested they sit down and try to talk things over. Rick agreed.

Character background:

Jessie: In a way, you feel responsible for keeping the house and the family together. You complain that Rick doesn't do his/her share of housework. You always have to remind him/her of his/her responsibilities. At times, you do his/her share of the work (something he/she doesn't notice, or if he/she does, he/she doesn't acknowledge it).

You don't approve of his/her new friends. A couple of them were picked up for shoplifting and you've heard that most of them are into drugs.

Siblings: Family Dispute

(role play, p.2)

Disputants: Jessie, older (brother/sister). Rick, younger (brother/sister).

Jessie is 3 years older than Rick.

Conflict: Jessie is often left in charge of household chores because their mother works long hours to support the family. Jessie and Rick argue about household chores. Jessie is also very concerned about Rick because of the friends with whom he/she has been spending time.

After an argument, Jessie suggested they sit down and try to talk things over. Rick agreed.

Character background:

Rick: Jessie keeps nagging you about the housework. If he/she would only get off your back, you would do the housework more consistently than you have up to now.

It is important for you to be popular and have friends. This new group of friends has pretty much accepted you for who you are and that feels good. On the other hand, you too are concerned about the drug use and you are being very careful.

You want Jessie to treat you with respect and stop playing "big sister/brother, little brother/sister." Jessie hardly ever gives you messages when your friends call and once he/she listened in on your telephone conversation.

Stay Out Of My Way: Anger (role play)

Disputants: Two students that don't get along well, Chris and Cap.

Conflict: Chris and Cap have known each other for a year. They each have separate groups of friends. The animosity between them started when one of Cap's good friends, Kim, got into a fight with Chris. Kim is no longer in this school, but Cap and Chris have been picking on each other since. Yesterday, the two of them got involved in a physical fight. They were reported to the Dean.

The Dean has given these students the opportunity to sit down and try to work out their disagreement.

Character background:

Chris: You say that Cap teases and makes fun of you. You also say that Cap had spread rumors around implying that you were a coward. You decided to show Cap that you were not going to put up with the ridiculing anymore. You punched Cap during lunch, and that's how the fight started.



Stay Out Of My Way: Anger (role play)

Disputants: Two students that don't get along well, Chris and Cap.

Conflict: Chris and Cap have known each other for a year. They each have separate groups of friends. The animosity between them started when one of Cap's good friends, Kim, got into a fight with Chris. Kim is no longer in this school, but Cap and Chris have been picking on each other since. Yesterday, the two of them got involved in a physical fight. They were reported to the Dean.

The Dean has given these students the opportunity to sit down and try to work out their disagreement.

Character background:

Cap: You say that Chris acts like a big shot and often gives you mean looks. You also say that Chris has threatened you on several occasions. You felt that a physical fight was unavoidable between the two of you and started the rumors to provoke Chris.

Both of you are still very angry at each other, but you have agreed to try to talk things out.

The Class: Teacher/Student (role play, p.1)

Disputants: Ms. Ryan, an English teacher. Tony, a student.

Conflict: Ms. Ryan and Tony don't seem to get along. Last week, Ms. Ryan became very angry at the disruptive behavior of the entire class and started screaming at Tony for not turning in her homework on time. After that incident, Tony did not come to class for three days. Later, realizing that that was not the solution, Tony requested a meeting with Ms. Ryan. Ms. Ryan agreed to discuss the incident.

Character background:

Tony: You felt embarrassed and upset when Ms. Ryan yelled at you. You feel that she picks on you a lot. On another occasion, when many students were talking and not paying attention, Ms. Ryan got mad at you and blamed you for the disruption. When she heard you curse under your breath, she sent you to the counselor.

You think she doesn't like you, that you will get an F in English and you won't be able to graduate.

You feel that Ms. Ryan is being unfair because although you sometimes talk in class, you are not the only one, and you think you are doing your work.

The Class: Teacher/Student (role play, p.2)

Disputants: Ms. Ryan, an English teacher. Tony, a student.

Conflict: Ms. Ryan and Tony don't seem to get along. Last week, Ms. Ryan became very angry at the disruptive behavior of the entire class and started screaming at Tony for not turning in her homework on time. After that incident, Tony did not come to class for three days. Later, realizing that that was not the solution, Tony requested a meeting with Ms. Ryan. Ms. Ryan agreed to discuss the incident.

Character background:

Ms. Ryan: You claim that Tony sets a bad example for the class. He/she often clowns around and has a hard time not talking to his/her friends during class. You are frustrated because you have not been able to cover all the material that you were supposed to have covered by now.

You think that Tony is very smart and has a lot of potential. That is why you have been a little hard on him/her. You agree to try to talk to him/her after school.



Additional Conflict Resolution Role Plays

- OBJECTIVE:** To further practice using the Conflict Resolution Process.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes
- MATERIALS:** "What Specifically Concerns Me" worksheet for each disputant
"Conflict Resolution Process" Handout
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Instruct students to write a one page story describing a conflict between two people. They should include as many details as possible. Remind students to use fictitious names if the event actually happened.
 2. Divide the class into groups of five or six. Each group chooses a conflict scenario. Two people from each group volunteer to play the parties in conflict, and they play out the conflict using the Conflict Resolution Process. Make sure the students doing the role play use the "What Specifically Concerns Me" worksheet for their planning ahead. The other members of the group observe the role play and help evaluate it afterward. They should be prepared to comment on what they saw each person do that helped the process work.
 3. When finished, groups may choose a second scenario so that other students have direct experience with the problem-solving method.

What Specifically Concerns Me (handout)

What specifically concerns me about this conflict?

How does this affect me?

Why is this important to me? What values of mine are involved?

Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person? What are they?

What would make the situation better for me?

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.



Senior Trip

- OBJECTIVE:** To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process with conflicts involving students and adults.
- DURATION:** 45 minutes to an hour
- MATERIALS:** Handouts: "Senior Trip" story
"What Specifically Concerns Me"
"Conflict Resolution Process"
- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute and have the students read copies of the story, "Senior Trip."
 2. Divide the class into groups of four. There should be two people on each side of the dispute. Any additional students could act as observers or could role play the dispute in pairs.
 3. Have the groups choose roles. (There should be two students from the trip committee and two adults: the adults can be teachers, counselors or parents who object to the calendar.)
 4. Each set of disputants:

The two students from the trip committee should fill out the questions on the "What Specifically Concerns Me" handout. After completing this handout, each side should select a primary spokesperson and briefly discuss among themselves how they will play their role. This spokesperson will represent the members of the team in the discussion.

Have each group conduct the role play in their small group. The goal is to apply the Problem Solving Process to the dispute over the fashion calendar.

As disputants discuss and define the problem, they should stop every 3-5 minutes to get feedback and/or ideas from their partner. (The partner is responsible for giving the speaker feedback on how well he/she is using active listening and effective speaking techniques and presenting any additional concerns or issues, possible solutions, etc.

5. As a whole class, discuss the role plays and the different solutions that each group found. Lead the group to discuss how they reacted to the process and any difficulties or successes they experienced in using the process.

Senior Trip

(story)

The senior trip at Smithmont High School is an important annual event. For the students, teachers, administrators and even the rest of the residents in this small town, there are always two key questions to be answered: Where will the trip take this year's seniors, and how will the money be raised?

This year the Senior Trip Committee figured they had both questions answered early. A trip to Disneyland with an overnight stay was a nearly unanimous choice, and the fund raising idea seemed to them to be creative and original. They planned to produce an outdoor fashion calendar using students from the class as models for the monthly shots. For the summer months, they decided, they would use swimsuit photos. The yearbook photographer agreed to take the pictures, and they set to work.

Word of the fund raising project quickly traveled around the school, and by the time the faculty supervisors were ready to meet with the committee, they not only knew of the calendar, but had heard several strong opinions about it. The two supervisors and some of the teachers, administrators, and parents objected to the calendar, especially the planned swimsuit photos. They felt it was inappropriate and degrading for high school girls to be posing for such photos. The supervisors, one teacher and one counselor explained these reactions to the Committee and told them that they would need to find another way to raise the money for the trip. The Student Trip Committee members felt that there was nothing inappropriate about the calendar, and they were angry and frustrated with the decision.

Two students representing the Student Trip Committee agreed to meet with two of the adult representatives objecting to the calendar to try to reach a solution to the dispute.

What Specifically Concerns Me (handout)

What specifically concerns me about this conflict?

How does this affect me?

Why is this important to me? What values of mine are involved?

Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person? What are they?

What would make the situation better for me?

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.



"I'll Pay the Check" Fishbowl Practice

OBJECTIVE: To further practice the Conflict Resolution Process.

DURATION: 45 minutes to an hour

MATERIALS: Handouts: "I'll Pay the Check"
"What Specifically Concerns Me"
"Conflict Resolution Process"

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Distribute the story "I'll Pay the Check" and have the students read it. Add that David, afterward, suspects that Paul took advantage of him, becomes angry about the incident and decides to confront Paul.
 2. Have two students volunteer to play the two roles in front of the group. Give volunteers ten minutes to complete the "What Specifically Concerns Me" handout. Instruct them that they are to try to use the Conflict Resolution Process to solve the problem.
 3. Have the class discuss the role play as a group, giving the actors feedback on how they used the Conflict Resolution Process.
 4. Give other members of the class the opportunity to play the same roles, again receiving feedback from the rest of the group.

"I'll Pay the Check*"

(handout)

With murder in his heart and scrupulous politeness in his voice, Paul resumed the argument: "I invited Maureen for a sundae and I'll pay the check."

Three weeks of concentrated plotting had gone into the casual invitation which now placed her across from him in the booth. Despite the fact that his long length was daily into the desk behind her in geometry class, until today they had never exchanged more than three words in a row.

And though the lady seemed not unwilling to improve the acquaintance (her smiles were frequent and friendly), Paul would probably have gone right on with interminable planning had it not been for the happy chance which placed him close by when the pretty little Sophomore dropped her books in the hall.

But capricious Kismet, having helped him along that far, had now suddenly reversed loyalties and at the last moment sent in a complication in the form of David Parker. Paul seemed in imminent danger of losing his hard-gained ground. His tongue, never glib,

was further entangled by his sophomoric standing when arguing with a Senior. Even the friendly warmth of the soft brown eyes regarding him from across the table could not temper the torrent of indignation inside him. But he did have the vital bit of paper clenched in his hand, and possession is nine points of the law.

David, however, was accustomed to making his own laws, and he was clearly not disposed to countenance opposition to one of his favorite techniques for impressing a girl. When you have masterfully paid the bill, according to his reasoning, the least the damsel in question can do is to let you see her home. And right now David was exceedingly interested in seeing this particular girl home.

Paul stoutly reiterated his eleven-word argument. David, blocking Paul's escape from the booth, progressed from condescending to determined, and finally became definitely belligerent. The argument waxed louder — much louder.

Exasperation drove Paul's hand hard into his pocket, expressive of a wish to ram his fist into that handsome face. Then suddenly all the anger drained out of him, leaving him devoid of even enough ambition to move. A slightly greenish tinge eclipsed his freckles. His grip on the disputed check relaxed, and

* Excerpted from a story by Margaret Bird in *Best Short Shorts*, edited by Eric Berger, published by Scholastic Book Services, N.Y., N.Y. copyright 1958 Tab Books, pages 97-101.

he murmured lamely: "Well, if you insist."

Having taken victory for granted, David flashed a triumphant smile toward Maureen and sauntered off to wave a "five spot" at the grinning clerk.

Outside the air was cool and fresh from recent rain, but Paul's spirits were not revived. Glumly he watched that slender figure, face uptilted as she chatted gaily with the victor; then her clear voice penetrated his gloom: "...very sweet of you, but there's no need to bother. Paul is walking me home."

He could almost find it in himself to feel sympathy for the owner of the staring eyes and slightly ajar mouth as he, Paul, departed with Maureen. It didn't really seem that he was walking. He could have sworn that the sidewalk was becoming filmy and rose-tinted.

Her house loomed up all-too-soon, white and imposing against the gathering dusk, and they said their casual good-bye.

His call made her turn as she reached the top step. It was the worst thing to say, he knew, but he had to know.

"Maureen," he stammered.

"Yes?"

"Why did you? — come with me, I mean, instead of him?"

She paused a little, then said: "Well, didn't you ask me to stop at the fountain after school? Wasn't I with you? Beside," her nose crinkled as she smiled

impishly, "I just can't stand people who make such a big fuss over picking up checks. It's nice to know when to yield gracefully."

Striding down the walk with Maureen's invitation to "stop by sometime" ringing in his ears, he felt quite capable of flying. Probably the only thing that weighed him down to earth was the thirteen cents in his pocket.

What Specifically Concerns Me (handout)

What specifically concerns me about this conflict?

How does this affect me?

Why is this important to me? What values of mine are involved?

Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person? What are they?

What would make the situation better for me?

Conflict Resolution Process (handout)

Plan ahead — analyze

- What specifically concerns me about this conflict?
- How does this affect me?
- Why is this important to me? What are my values?
- Do I carry suspicions or assumptions about the other person?
- What would make the situation better for me?

Set the tone

- State positive intentions (e.g. "I want this relationship to last," "This is important to me," "I really want to understand this.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person (e.g. "I can see that you are just as concerned as I am," "I appreciate your willingness to talk about this," "Thank you for taking this seriously.")

Discuss and define the problem

- Each person states his/her issues and feelings. (taking turns — while one person states his/her issues and feelings, the other uses Active Listening).
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.

Summarize new understandings

Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Determine the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action; consider consequences and do a reality check.
- Choose solutions that are mutually satisfactory to all parties. Make sure the solution(s) is/are specific and balanced.

Plan for follow-up

- Agree on a time to check with one another in the future.

Appendix A

Values Implicit in Teaching Conflict Resolution Skills*

There are distinct values being taught in this conflict resolution skills curriculum. They include:

Conflict has positive value.

In the conflict are the elements for its resolution. One cannot resolve a dispute without constructively engaging it. It is necessary to learn what has generated the disagreement and the emotions associated with it. There is authentic information contained in the conflict.

This information is the "gold" of the conflict. The working of this gold will provide a successful resolution and/or reduction of tensions and hostilities between the disputants (even if they continue to respectfully disagree).

The peaceful expression of conflict has positive value.

It is essential that we begin to teach and model the concept that, through cooperation and peaceful expression of differences, we are able to get much more of what we authentically seek. In a heterogeneous, complex society where differences between people abound, it is imperative that new and effective forms of expression be openly promoted and encouraged. This reduces the fear most human beings have for conflict and promotes a social norm that honors the peaceful expression of concerns and issues.

* Excerpted from "Resolution of Conflict: the fourth 'R' of the educational system," by Raymond Shonholtz, to be published in *Developing Child/Developing Parent: a 'living' resource for the more effective parent*. Palo Alto: Serwitz Academy, 1988.

The voluntary resolution of conflict is a positive value.

It is much better if people decide for themselves how to come to terms with a disagreement than if a third person makes a resolution for them. The voluntary resolution of a conflict is the expression of disputant power. When those in conflict take the responsibility to resolve the issue or use a conciliator to assist them in resolving a problem, they retain full control over the dispute and are able to effectuate a result that particularly works for them.

This is very important for young people who often feel powerless. Teaching them that they are powerful and giving them the skills to voluntarily express and resolve their conflicts contributes to the building of self-esteem and promotes the positive social value of responsibility.

Diversity is a positive value.

While most conflicts arise out of communication difficulties, many communication problems emerge because the disputants are different in sex, race, ethnicity, age, education, or economic background. Listening and understanding are difficult to achieve between human beings. We do not always truly know what is being said, even if we believe we understand. This phenomenon is compounded when a physical or material difference is added to the equation. Prejudices, biases, and assumptions begin to abound when diversity is added.

Yet we live in a highly diverse society. In our schools, corporate training programs, and social settings, it is important to appreciate that diversity itself is a positive value. It offers a new insight into our assumptions and instructs us about cultures and individuals (be they a fellow student, neighbor, family member, or co-worker) in a way that could not be achieved were we to hold a negative notion of diversity. In this respect, conflict is an opportunity to learn about ourselves and others.

Finally, developing a system in the school, home, or work place where these values can be demonstrated is a positive value in itself.

These social values belong to the civic experience and are the responsibility of all citizens in a democratic society. They are not to be associated with skills which only professional people should have. Teaching how to use communication and conciliation skills and developing simple systems that encourage people to peacefully express and voluntarily resolve their differences is part of the civic right and responsibility of citizenship. This needs to be underscored. In a democratic society, only citizens have the power and ability to intervene in conflicts before there is a violation of law. The state can intervene only when a law has been violated. Thus prevention and early intervention efforts to reduce hostilities and the potential for violence between people can only be initiated by citizens serving in their civic capacity. Prevention is a civic and, therefore, community function. It is not a police function.

It is not only essential that young people learn this social responsibility early, it is critical that they learn how to successfully facilitate and conciliate a conflict between disputants. Making the resolution of conflict the "Fourth R" of the educational system serves to promote higher social values and norms and prepares students for their forthcoming civic roles and responsibilities in society.

Appendix B

Services
For EducatorsConflict
Resolution
Resources

The Community Board Program, Inc. began in 1976 as an innovative community conciliation organization serving San Francisco neighborhoods. Since its founding, the program has developed a nationwide scope, offering assistance to conflict resolution organizations throughout the United States, as well as several other countries. Community Board's mission is to provide training, develop programs, and carry out research which enhance the capacity of individuals and groups to resolve conflicts quickly, collaboratively, and peacefully. Community Board tailors its training and other services to meet the needs of those served.

Through its specialized program of "Resources for Schools and Youth," Community Board has developed and piloted student Conflict Manager programs in San Francisco elementary and secondary schools, and now assists in the development of similar programs in public and private schools nationally. Students trained in communication, conciliation, critical thinking and leadership skills serve as peer Conflict Managers who assist other students in resolving in-school disputes peacefully.

Contract
Trainings

Resources for Schools and Youth offers on-site training and assistance to schools and school districts, and to community conflict resolution programs in the development and implementation of student Conflict Manager conciliation models. Fees by contract.

**Conflict Manager
Training Institutes For
Educators**

Throughout the year, Resources for Schools and Youth offers Training Institutes for Educators. These Institutes prepare elementary and secondary school educators to plan, implement, and maintain student Conflict Manager programs. Participants learn to train students as Conflict Managers. Participants also learn to train teachers or staff in their school or district to be trainers of Conflict Managers. Detailed manuals accompany this training program.

About Our Staff

Community Board staff has extensive experience in both classroom teaching and community-based conciliation. Biographical information is available on request. Their experience in a range of educational settings qualifies them to provide educators and schools with the competence to establish student-to-student Conflict Manager programs of their own.

For Information:

Please contact:
Conflict Resolution Resources
for Schools and Youth

The Community Board Program, Inc.
149 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103.
(415) 552-1250.

Appendix C

Questions For Guiding
Discussion Of Role Play
Exercises*

The following processing questions are intended as a guide to maximize the students' learning from discussions, structured experiences and role plays. As you prepare activities or presentations, this guide will help you formulate questions which are most likely to aid learning.

**Stage 1:
Experiencing**

Students generate individual data from one or more of the sensing, thinking, feeling, wanting or doing modes. For the purposes of training students in conflict resolution, Stage 1 encompasses participation in a learning activity and the data which are generated from it. Usually, no questions are asked at this stage unless a participant is reluctant to participate, in which case he/she might be asked questions about his/her resistance.

**Stage 2:
Sharing**

Students report data generated from the experience. Questions are directed toward generating data:

- Who will volunteer to share? Who else?
- What went on/happened?
- How did you feel about that?
- Who else had the same experience?
- Who reacted differently?
- Were there any surprises/puzzlements?
- How many of you felt the same?
- How many of you felt differently?
- What did you observe?
- What were you aware of?

* Adaptation of: John E. Jones and J. William Pfeiffer, (Eds.) *The 1979 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*, San Diego, CA: University Associates, Inc., 1979. Used with permission.

**Stage 3:
Interpreting**

Students analyze the data generated from both themselves and the group:

- How did you account for that?
- How was that important?
- How was that good/bad?
- What struck you about that?
- How do those fit together?
- How might it have been different?
- Do you see some principle or feeling operating here?
- What does that suggest to you about yourself/the group?
- What do you understand better about yourself/the group?

**Stage 4:
Generalizing**

Students develop testable hypotheses and abstractions from the data. They work toward abstracting from the specific knowledge they have gained about themselves and their group to general principles:

- What might we draw from that?
- Does that apply to anything?
- What did you learn/relearn?
- What does that suggest to you about _____ in general?
- Does that remind you of anything?
- What principle/law do you see operating?
- What does that help explain?
- How does this relate to other experiences?
- What do you associate with that?

**Stage 5:
Applying**

Students bridge the present and the future by understanding and/or planning how these generalizations can be tested in a new place in their lives:

- How could you apply/transfer that?
- What would you like to do with that?
- How could you make this happen again?
- What could you do to hold on to that?
- What are the options?
- What might you do to help/hinder yourself?
- How could you make it better?
- What would be the consequences of doing/not doing that?
- What changes can you make for yourself?
- What could you imagine/fantasize about that?

A final stage could be added here, that of processing the entire experience as learning. Questions are aimed at soliciting feedback:

- How was this for you?
- What were the positives/negatives?
- How might it have been more meaningful?
- What changes would you make?
- What would you continue?
- What are the costs/benefits?
- If you had to do it over again, what would you do?
- What additions/deletions would help?
- Any suggestions?

Note: These questions are actually indirect statements that serve to obscure the trainer's own reactions to the experience. Questions in themselves are neither good nor bad; it is how the trainer uses them that determines their effectiveness.

Appendix D Bibliography: Conflict Resolution For Students

Allen, Andre and Gibbs, Jeanne. *Tribes — A Process For Peer Involvement*. Center Source Publications, Santa Rosa CA, 1978.

Benathy, Bela H., et al. *Interaction: Learning Leadership/Membership Skills*. Far West Laboratory, San Francisco, CA, 1980.

Chase, Larry. *The Other Side of the Report Card: A How-To-Do-It Program for Affective Education*. Goodyear Publishing Co., Santa Monica, CA, 1975.

Cihak, Mary K. and Jackson Heron, Barbara. *Games Children Should Play*, Sequential Lessons for Teaching Communication Skills in Grades K-6. Good Year Books, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1900 E. Lake Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025, 1980.

Fugitt, Eva D. *He Hit Me Back First! Creative Visualization Activities for Parenting and Teaching*. Jalmar Press, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274, 1983.

Glasser, William. *Schools Without Failure*. Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1969.

Hawley, Robert C. and Isabel L. *A Handbook of Personal Growth Activities for Classroom Use*. Education Research Associates, Box 767, Amherst, MA 01002, 1972.

Hendricks, Gay and Roberts, Thomas. *The Second Centering Book*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1977. (Grades 6-12)

Judson, Stephanie Ed. *A Manual on Nonviolence and Children*. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102, 1977.

Kreidler, William J. *Creative Conflict Resolution, More Than 200 Activities for Keeping Peace in the Classroom*. Good Year Books, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1900 E. Lake Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025, 1984.

Loescher, Elizabeth. *Conflict Management: A Curriculum For Peacemaking*. Cornerstone — A Center for Justice and Peace, 940 Emerson St., Denver, CO 80218, 1983.

Miller, Rick, et al. *Educating for Citizenship K-4*, four volumes. Aspen Systems Corporation, Rockville, MD, 1982.

Palomares, Uvaldo, et al. *Curriculum on Conflict Management*. Human Development Training Institute, 1727 5th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101, 1975.

Palomares, Uvaldo and Ball, Geraldine. *Human Development Program*. Levels I through VI. Human Development Training Institute, P.O. Box 1505, La Mesa, CA 92041, 1974.

Prutzman, Priscilla, et al. *The Friendly Classroom for A Small Planet*. Avery Publishing Group, Inc., Wayne, NJ, 1978.

Schmidt, Fran and Friedman, Alice. *Creative Conflict Solving For Kids*. Peace Education Foundation, Miami Beach, FL, 1983.

Weissberg, Roger P., et al. *The Rochester Social Problem Solving (SPS) Program*. Primary Mental Health Project, Center for Community Study, 575 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620.

Appendix E Activity Index

This index shows whether an activity is a "key" or "supplementary" activity, and then gives its name, its objectives, and the page on which it can be found. Supplementary activities include references to their keys. The activities are alphabetized by title.

⚙	Active Listening/ Clear Messages	To review and practice the effective communication skills of Active Listening and sending clear messages.	4-88
⚙	Active Listening — Listening for Feelings	To distinguish thoughts from feelings. To understand the part feelings play in conflict. To listen for the feelings behind statements.	4-39
⊕	Active Listening — Restating & Reflecting	(Key — Active Listening Triads) To practice the Active Listening skills of Restating & Reflecting.	4-32
⚙	Active Listening Techniques	To learn the techniques of active listening.	4-24
⚙	Active Listening Triads	To practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.	4-26
⊕	Additional Conflict Resolution Role Plays	(Key — Conflict Resolution Role Plays) To further practice using the Conflict Resolution Process.	5-51
⚙	Angry Words	To practice using Active Listening Techniques to defuse anger.	4-36
⊕	Applying Active Listening Techniques	(Key — Active Listening Triads) To further practice using the six Active Listening Techniques.	4-30
⊕	Assumptions	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To understand how assumptions can influence effective communication. To recognize assumptions that people make and how these can lead to conflict.	3-31

Key	Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving	To introduce and explore three approaches to handling conflict.	2-19
⊕	Big Red	(Key — Nonverbal Communication of Emotion) To practice distinguishing between facts and feelings. To identify underlying feelings. To build skill in summarizing.	4-50
⊕	The Blind Men and the Elephant	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To illustrate how perceptions influence how we view events, what assumptions we make, and our ability to communicate effectively.	3-26
Key	Breaking the Cycle	(Prerequisite — The Conflict Cycle) To understand what can be done to break a negative conflict cycle.	1-28
Key	Communication Assessment	To examine personal values and styles of communication. To identify communication strengths and the communication skills that need improvement.	3-11
Key	Communication Stoppers	To identify behavior patterns which inhibit effective communication. To practice effective communication skills.	4-54
⊕	Communication Style	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To identify ways in which communication style influences effective communication.	3-33
⊕	Conflict Collages	(Key — I Heard It Through the Grapevine) To reinforce understanding of the childhood messages received about conflict.	1-19
⊕	Conflict Continuum	(Key — Styles and Strategies in Conflict) To reinforce understanding of conflict responses by viewing different responses on a continuum from passive to aggressive.	2-18
Key	The Conflict Cycle	To understand that conflict is cyclical. To identify major components of the cycle. To understand what perpetuates the cycle.	1-22
⊕	Conflict Diary	(Key — My Conflict Resolution Style) To review kinds and causes of conflict and to begin to develop an awareness of conflict resolution styles.	2-14

⊕	Conflict in Our Lives	(Key — Kinds of Conflict) To identify the kinds and causes of local, national and international conflicts that appear in the news.	1-46
⊕	Conflict Observation	(Key — Escalation and De-escalation) To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle. To give students practice observing conflict and relating their observations to the Conflict Cycle.	1-34
⚓	Conflict Resolution Role Plays	To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process in various role play situations.	5-40
⚓	Conflict Resolution Step-by-Step	To give an overview of the Conflict Resolution Process and the steps and concepts that are involved.	5-22
⊕	Conflict Style Reading Assignment	(Key — Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving) To further examine and discuss the problem solving approach to conflict situations.	2-27
⚓	Constructing I-Messages	To express wants and needs in an assertive, non-threatening manner.	4-63
⊕	Constructive Feedback	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To use effective communication skills to give constructive feedback.	4-87
⚓	Defining Effective Communication I	To foster a discussion about effective communication, leading students to consider what it means to them. Students will see what values their peers hold as well.	3-14
⚓	Defining Effective Communication II	To determine whether students' understanding of effective communication has changed as a result of previous lessons.	3-35
⚓	Defining the Problem	To practice identifying issues and concerns in conflict situations.	5-29
⊕	Describing Behavior	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To further practice constructing I-Messages. To practice describing behavior objectively, accurately and in ways that do not create defensiveness in the listener.	4-74
⚓	A Different Approach	To demonstrate that there are alternatives to win/lose approaches to conflict.	2-9
⚓	Escalation and De-escalation	To understand what factors lead to the escalation and de-escalation of a conflict.	1-31

Key	Factors That Influence Effective Communication	To identify factors that influence effective communication. To give students practice observing how these factors — values, perceptions, assumptions and communication style — may interfere with effective communication when they are not acknowledged or discussed.	3-15
⊕	A Feeling Continuum	(Key — Active Listening — Listening for Feelings) To identify degrees of feelings. To practice using feeling words that accurately describe the emotion being experienced.	4-44
⊕	Feeling Monologues	(Key — Nonverbal Communication of Emotion) To discern feelings being expressed when they are not directly stated. To distinguish between many different kinds of feelings, even those that may be similar.	4-47
Key	Finding A Good Resolution	(Prerequisite — Defining the Problem) To learn what comprises a good resolution. To brainstorm solutions to each of the conflict situations in the "Defining the Problem" activity and to evaluate each according to the criteria of what makes a good resolution.	5-32
Key	Good and Poor Listening	To identify good and poor listening behaviors.	4-21
Key	Graham Cracker Houses	To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.	4-19
⊕	Happy Endings	(Key — Finding A Good Resolution) (Prerequisite — The Other Side of the Coin) To examine existing solutions to problems and explore alternatives. To apply problem solving skills to finding mutually acceptable solutions.	5-36
⊕	How Would I Feel?	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To use the word "I" to express ownership of feelings and thoughts. To identify feelings in different situations.	4-85
Key	I Heard It Through the Grapevine	To examine the childhood messages we received about conflict.	1-18
⊕	"I'll Pay the Check" — Fishbowl practice	(Key — Conflict Resolution Role Plays) To further practice the Conflict Resolution Process.	5-59

⊕	I-Message Triads	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To give further practice in sending I-Messages and in using Active Listening in conflict situations.	4-68
⊕	In The Heat of the Moment	(Key — Angry Words) To practice using Active Listening in conflict situations. To explore possible ways to defuse anger in a conflict situation.	4-38
key	Kinds of Conflict	To distinguish between the basic kinds of conflict: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup.	1-38
⊕	The Maligned Wolf	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To understand that there may be two points of view or perceptions of any event.	3-28
key	My Conflict Resolution Style	To have each student become aware of his/her own predominant conflict resolution style.	2-11
key	Nonverbal Communication of Emotion	To acquaint students with the various ways feelings are expressed nonverbally.	4-46
⊕	Observing Conflict	(Key — I Heard It Through the Grapevine) To observe a conflict and to identify elements involved in the conflict.	1-20
⊕	Observing Conflict Resolution Styles	(Key — Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving) To practice observing conflict resolution styles. To stimulate discussion about the various conflict styles around us and how they may affect us.	2-31
⊕	The Other Side of the Coin	(Key — Finding A Good Resolution) To reinforce the concept that all conflicts are two- sided. To learn to think in detail about the other point of view in a conflict situation.	5-35
key	Peanut Butter & Jelly	To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.	4-17
⊕	Perception	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To promote awareness of how perceptual limitations can affect communication. To promote acceptance of divergent points of view.	3-23
⊕	Perpetuating/ Changing the Pattern	(Key — Escalation and De-escalation) To reinforce understanding of the Conflict Cycle by assessing personal conflict attitudes, behaviors, and consequences using the Conflict Cycle.	1-32

Key	Planning for Problem Solving	To learn the importance of planning ahead for problem solving.	5-25
Key	Positions and Interests/Needs	To learn the difference between Positions and Interests/Needs in conflict situations. To differentiate between our own Positions and what we really need — our Interests.	5-18
⊕	Resolution Style Role Plays	(Key — Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving) To further examine specific conflict styles through observing conflict patterns and to explore how different styles affect each other.	2-25
Key	Robbery Report	To illustrate the difficulty of one-way communication and to further emphasize the importance of listening.	4-14
⊕	Senior Prom	(Key — Finding A Good Resolution) To use effective speaking and active listening techniques to discuss the Senior Prom conflict and to explore possible resolutions.	5-37
⊕	Senior Trip	(Key — Conflict Resolution Role Plays) To practice using the Conflict Resolution Process with conflicts involving students and adults.	5-54
Key	Setting the Tone	To understand the importance of setting the tone for resolving a conflict.	5-27
⊕	Spot the Conflict #1	(Key — Kinds of Conflict) To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict.	1-41
⊕	Spot the Conflict #2	(Key — Kinds of Conflict) To practice identifying the basic kinds and causes of conflict in the sonnet "On His Blindness" by John Milton.	1-44
⊕	Stating the Feeling	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To further practice constructing I-Messages with emphasis on how to describe feelings accurately.	4-70
⊕	Stories About Emotion	(Key — Nonverbal Communication of Emotion) To further students' ability to identify unstated feelings.	4-49
Key	Styles and Strategies in Conflict I	(JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITY) To identify ways people behave in conflict.	2-16
Key	Styles and Strategies in Conflict II	(HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITY) To explore more specific styles, strategies and behaviors common in conflict situations.	2-17

⊕ Taking Responsibility	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To give students practice taking responsibility for their feelings and thoughts.	4-83
⊕ Test of Listening for Feelings	(Key — Active Listening — Listening for Feelings) To identify a speaker's feelings by listening to the tone of voice and inflection used.	4-42
⊕ "This Affects Me Because..."	(Key — Constructing I-Messages) To recognize and formulate statements that clearly describe the effect of specific behavior on the listener.	4-79
⊕ Value Differences	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To have students demonstrate their opinion regarding various value issues, and to explain to each other why they agree or disagree.	3-21
🔑 What's Happening Here?	To understand and explore the basic causes of conflict. To practice observing the dynamics of a conflict.	1-37
⊕ What's Important To Me	(Key — Factors Influencing Effective Communication) To examine students' values in specific situations. To experience how value differences may affect communication.	3-18
🔑 What's the Story Here?	To distinguish between surface and underlying causes of conflict.	5-16
🔑 What Do You Mean?	To define conflict. To examine the positive and negative associations related to conflict.	1-15
⊕ When Can We Meet?	(Key — Avoidance, Confrontation and Problem Solving) To review the various conflict resolution styles through the use of skits. To develop a collaborative conflict resolution style scenario.	2-22
🔑 Why Is Listening Important?	To motivate students to be good listeners.	4-13

