

Pondering Point

There are two types of conflict: **External and Internal**. External conflict is what we experience when we have disagreements or worse, arguments with other people. Words are said back and forth triggering, at times, unhealthy conversations and although someone is expected to win out in this situation, does anyone really win?

Then, there is internal conflict. This is the struggle people have within themselves when they have to decide what is right and wrong and how to deal with their own emotions.

Resolving issues before they escalate into a conflict is a key to success in life, both personally and professionally. If a conflict does occur, how you manage yourself will go a long way to helping you feel good about yourself and effectively solving the issue.

Is it worth winning the battle to lose the war?

Wouldn't it be great if, at the end of the conflict, both parties felt positive about the outcome?

Wouldn't it be great if resolving the conflict brought both parties closer together?

Imagine... never needing to take back what you said in anger.

— From Pondering to Practice —

Activity

Conflict occurs when two passionate points of view collide.

It can get uncomfortable and be difficult to confront, especially when you are having an emotionally charged conversation. Practice this activity in altercations where you feel safe enough to process with the other person in the moment. After time, you will be able to use this technique in future conflicts.

Process what happened. Think about how the conflict arose.

Identify your feelings and share them with the other person. Encourage him/her to do the same.

Explore each other's reactions and discuss what each of you was attempting to achieve.

Talk about what you heard and see how well both of you listened to what the other person was saying.

Come to an agreement that you are ready to problem solve and begin discussing resolutions that satisfy both parties.

Consider how you will respond differently when confronted with conflict based on what you learned from one another.

Talking things out and taking time to understand why someone is passionate about something will help you see things from the other person's perspective and move the conflict closer to resolution.

Self Reflection Checklist

In times of conflict, it is important to know which aspects you can control and which you cannot. And since you cannot predict the actions or know the intentions of others, the only control you have is over your own actions and motives.

Use this checklist to reflect on the aspects of the confrontation over which you have control.

- What did I do well?
- What could I have done better?
- Did I tell the person how his/her actions and words hurt me in a calm and respectful way?
- Have I forgiven the other person for the actions and words used that hurt me?
- Have I forgiven myself for the things I have said and the way I reacted?
- Are there still things left to be resolved?
- What can I do to move on and put this behind me?

"Don't be afraid of opposition. Remember, a kite flies against the wind - not with it."
— Hamilton Wright Mabie, American essayist