Conflict Resolution

Conflict can happen when people start to disagree or feel hurt because of something another person did. Sometimes people see things different ways or want something to change. If conflict is handled poorly, things can get worse. If handled correctly, people will start to feel better, and relationships can grow stronger. This resource includes tips to help handle conflict.

DO

- Stay calm.
- Practice good listening skills.
  - Try repeating things the other person said and putting it in your own words.
- Be assertive.
  - It is important to make sure your voice is heard!
- Use "I statements" – "I think we have two different ways of looking at this…"
- Look for a compromise.
  - A compromise is a way for both people to get a little bit of what they want. This usually means that each person has to also be willing to let go of some of the things they desire.
- Finish the conversation with a plan.
  - You and the other person should agree to try to make the situation better – even if that means the plan is to take a break and talk more at a later time.

DON'T

- Talk about old problems.
  - Instead, focus on what is causing the current conflict.
- Use words like "never" or "always."
  - Words like this tend to make people feel like they are being attacked.
- Make accusations.
  - Be specific and focus on things you noticed.
- Fight about everything.
  - Only talk about one problem at a time.

SOME HELPFUL STEPS FOR SOLVING CONFLICT…

1. Be calm and pay attention to the tone of your voice and what your body is doing. Try to help the other person feel comfortable talking with you.
2. Use good listening skills to make sure the other person is understood.
3. Try to come up with as many ideas as you can to solve the problem.
4. Decide which idea to try and start making a plan.
5. If the plan you both agreed to stops working, talk again about ways to improve the plan.

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