

Conflict Resolution Principles

- 1. If possible, prepare the setting and plan for constructive confrontation.**
 - a. **Avoid** distractions and interruptions, non-private discussions, being overly tired or stressed, or being emotionally reactive
- 2. Take responsibility and initiative to directly address the issue.**
 - a. **Avoid** running from the problem, using the “silent treatment”, waiting for the other person to make the first move, or allowing problems to accumulate
- 3. Attack the problem – not the person - and propose viable options, alterations, or solutions**
 - a. **Avoid** judging, and criticizing the other person and/ or their personality, appearance, family of origin, etc., or attempting to “fix” or change them
- 4. Stay on the subject and focus specifically and concretely on the facts, actions, feelings, and events.**
 - a. **Avoid** sweeping generalizations, using the “kitchen-sink attack”, bringing up the past, making comparisons with others, or bringing in irrelevant issues
- 5. Take responsibility for your part of the conflict and be willing to humbly admit when you’re wrong.**
 - a. **Avoid** being proud, stubborn and arrogant by immaturely blaming the other person for your feelings or actions, or denying your humanness and blind spots
- 6. Learn and practice effective communication skills, including the use of self-disclosing “I” language.**
 - a. **Avoid** making accusatory “you” statements, or using exaggerations and extreme language (eg., “never”, “always”, “all”, “everyone”, etc.)
- 7. State your needs, wants, hurts, disappointments, and feelings clearly.**

- a. **Avoid** pouting, nagging, complaining, and denial, putting words in the other persons mouth, or expecting that the other person can read your mind
- 8. **Be honest, respectful, and courteous (Honey attracts more flies than vinegar!)**
 - a. **Avoid** lying to protect yourself or someone else, name-calling, belittling, and degrading the other person; or being abusive, intimidating, forceful, or violent
- 9. **Learn to respect, appreciate, and understand each other's needs, feelings, interests, and differences**
 - a. **Avoid** needing to think or feel the same way, or denying one another's differences in tastes, upbringings, viewpoints, customs, styles, and coping mechanisms
- 10. **Be willing to forgive an offense ("giving up our right to hurt back") in order to cultivate the growth, healing, and well-being of the other**
 - a. **Avoid** becoming resentful, bitter, punitive, alienated, and controlled by vengeful fantasies and actions
- 11. **Strive for mutual understanding, a "win-win" outcome, and the development of an "us-we-ours" view of the situation**
 - a. **Avoid** trying to change the other person; getting your way and your point across to "win"; or maintaining a self-centered "me-my-mine" attitude
- 12. **Agree to disagree, arrange to discuss an unresolved issue later, and/or agree to get outside help (from an unbiased, neutral, objective, mediator/therapist/arbitrator)**
 - a. **Avoid** letting it go unresolved; withdrawing; or pulling biased family members or friends for your support