

## **Conflict Management Group**

### **Group 9 Healthy and Unhealthy Ways of Managing/Resolving Conflict**

#### **Conflict triggers strong feelings and can lead to:**

- Hurt
- Disappointment
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Resentments
- Feeling “threatened” and insecure
- Break-Ups

#### **Unhealthy responses to conflict are characterized by:**

- An inability (blindness) to recognize and respond to what is of importance to the other person.
- Explosive, anger, hurtful, and resentful reactions.
- Blaming the other.
- A passive response – what would this look like?
- An aggressive response – what would this look like?

#### **Healthy responses to conflict are characterized by:**

- The ability to recognize and respond to what is of importance to the other person (what are they thinking or feeling?)
- A readiness to forgive and forget.
- The ability to seek compromise and avoid punishing the other.
- A belief that resolution (Win – Win) can meet the wants/needs of both people.

**For POSITIVE outcome in conflict – Some GREAT skills to have:**

1. **Ability to calm yourself** down when you get angry, anxious, or agitated.
  - Can you stay relaxed and thinking clearly?
  - Can you stay “focused” on the present conflict and not drag other historical baggage into things?
  - If you are getting “excited” or agitated do you know how to calm yourself down (deescalate your feelings)? Sooth yourself?
    - Music
    - Exercise (walks, running, etc.)
    - “time outs”
  
2. **Emotional Awareness** (remember “emotional intelligence”?)
  - THIS is KEY to managing conflict in a satisfying way!
  - If you don’t KNOW how you feel or WHY you feel that way – you cant talk or listen effectively with another person.
  - You MUST be connected (don’t hide) your feelings.
    - Sadness, jealousy, anger, frustration, etc. – don’t hide from these – admit them and accept them.
    - Be honest – don’t pretend you don’t have feelings or don’t care.
  
3. **Be aware of your non-verbal communication skills – “Body Language”**
  - This means:
    - Eye contact
    - Facial expression
    - Tone of voice
    - Posture
    - Touch
    - Gestures
  - By paying attention to your own body language and that of the other person – you will understand better where you both are coming from.
  - Simple nonverbal signals such as:
    - Calm tone of voice

- Reassuring touch
- Concerned facial expression

Can go a long way toward defusing a heated exchange.

#### **4. Use humor and play to deal with challenges.**

- Humor can help you say things that might otherwise be difficult.
- It's important to laugh WITH the other person, NOT AT THEM.
- When humor and play are used to reduce tension and anger you are in a better place to:
  - Reframe the conflict
  - Put things into perspective
  - Think it through
  - Avoid impulsiveness

**Lets practice this:**

**Scenario:**

You've been waiting "forever" and someone acts rudely and cuts in front of you in line.

**How do you handle this?**

**Ticket:**

Welcomed Healing Harmony - Conflict Management group this morning and opened session with the Serenity Prayer. Introduced topic for processing/discussion of skills that help develop positive conflict outcomes. Spent most of the group focused on what does not work in resolving conflict with children or partners. Talked and illustrated some behaviors such as remaining passive and becoming more and more resentful and angry. Talked about shouting and screaming in anger,, and that this choice will not resolve conflict. Then talked about a more assertive approach – speaking one’s feelings and relating them to the issues. Since al of the group today are women, we talked/processed that we sometimes need to help “men” understand what they are feeling and help them to find words that express this – otherwise the conflicts will increase without being resolved.

**Plan:**

- Continue increasing understanding of and integration of positive relationship skills.

**Individual Note:**

interactive with peers. Brought forth examples from own home life – both with kids and partner