

Seven Attitudes to Dissolve Conflicts

By Daniel Robin

If you notice yourself getting dug in or angry in the face of differing views, *ailment* ask for a time out and step out of the content for a moment and notice if you are presently moving toward your true goal. If not, *sovaldi* or if the situation is just getting too uncomfortable, check to see which of the seven strategies shown below would be most helpful in turning your conflict into collaboration.

1. **Define what the conflict is about.** Studies on spousal disputes showed that about 75% of the time, partners are fighting about different issues. Ask the other person "What's the issue?" then "What's your concern here?" or "What do you feel we are fighting about?" Eventually ask "What do you want to accomplish?" and "How can we work this out?"
2. **It's not you versus me; it's you *and* me versus the problem.** The problem is the problem. It's stupid to try to defeat the other side, because after losing, the first thing the other side thinks is *I need a rematch* (and I'll come back with more firepower so I can win this time). If we win at the other person's expense, we also pay a price in the long run. We have a world of rematches of rematches of rematches. Don't bring your adversaries to their knees, bring them to the table.
3. **Identify your shared concerns against your one shared separation.** Deal with the conflict from where the relationship is strongest (where you agree), not weakest. It's easier and thus more likely to be effective if you move from areas of agreement to areas of disagreement, than the other way around. Find common ground by meeting the other person where they are. Acknowledge their viewpoint. Stand on this common ground as a stronger platform from which to work out respective differences.
4. **Sort out interpretations from facts.** Never ask people who have been in a fight what happened. You'll get their interpretation, their opinion, their version of what occurred. Instead ask, "What did *you* do or say?" Then you get perceptions that are much closer to facts, not merely opinions. Facts help clarify perceptions, which is basic to conflict dissolution.
5. **Develop a sense of forgiveness.** Reconciliation is impossible without it. Many people are willing to bury the hatchet, but they insist on remembering exactly where they buried it — in case they need it for the next battle. Let it go completely (or decide when you will). A brilliant definition of forgiveness: "giving up all hope for a better past."
6. **Learn to listen actively.** Turn it around, from "when I talk, people listen to me," to "when I listen, people talk to me." Habit Five in Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." Take time to backtrack and verify what you hear. Listen with the intent to understand; not with the intent to respond. Take the first step toward reconciliation by being willing to listen with the intention to understand, and by being willing to listen first. This unblocks the logjam of right/wrong thinking, of ego and power struggle, of compassion over fear.
7. **Purify your heart.** You can't get conflict and violence out of other people without first getting it out of your own soul. We can't eliminate the weapons of the world without first getting them out of our own hearts. Consider what you *really* want and find the place inside you that can lead you to it. Peace begins at home. Peace begins with you.

Share this article with people around you. Experiment with these strategies, and you'll be paving the way for peaceful and rewarding interactions in your business and personal life.

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