

# SPREADING Kindness

**A Program  
Guide for  
The Kind & Safe  
Schools Initiative**



**Vol. III: Conflict  
Resolution, Peer  
Mediation & Restorative  
Justice Activities**

**Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Editor**

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### **Volume III: Conflict Resolution, Peer Mediation & Restorative Justice Activities**

**Barry K. Weinhold, Editor**

*“If there is any kindness I can show,  
or any good thing I can do to any fellow being,  
let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it,  
as I shall not pass this way again”*

*William Penn*

**A Project of the Kindness Campaign:  
A Subsidiary of the Colorado Institute for  
Conflict Resolution & Creative Leadership**

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# Spreading Kindness Volume III

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**CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
AND PEER MEDIATION  
ACTIVITIES**

# **INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEER MEDIATION ACTIVITIES**

**By Martha Crisp**

Conflict is a natural component of public school life. Students have the choice of handling conflict in constructive or destructive ways. The student mediation experience teaches students the nature of conflict and effective methods of dealing with conflict. Middle school (6<sup>th</sup> grade) students can be taught conflict analysis skills, active listening skills, interest-based bargaining skills and facilitation skills in order to assist other students in the conflict resolution process. This format will allow content areas to be expanded upon while providing opportunities to practice the skills through structured experiences, role-plays, and simulations. Finally, each activity is discussed with students to determine what they have learned, the importance of the skill to the Conflict Resolution Process, and how they will use the skills while they are at school or elsewhere. We recommend that you teach a six-week Conflict Resolution class for all 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students and then select the best students for additional training as student mediators to help resolve conflicts among the student body

Each activity introduced builds on what has gone on before and, in turn, acts as the base for what comes next. Each skill or concept is integrated into the program as a whole, so that while students are acquiring new skills, they are also practicing the skills that they have already mastered.

It is important for the teachers to be familiar with the curriculum and to be acquainted with the goals and objectives of each session. As a teacher, you can help students focus on these goals and objectives in briefings before activities begin. Keeping the goals and objectives of each activity in mind will enable you to help the students process what they have learned and then ask appropriate questions.

Some of these activities were adapted from School Initiatives Program Community Board Center for Policy and Training and from several workshops that I attended through District 11 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

We are most grateful to the students, principal, and faculty of my school. Through their hard work and dedication, the course outlined in this Manual was created. My school offered all incoming sixth graders these conflict resolution skills in an enrichment class titled "Conflict Resolution." This has proved beyond a doubt that students can do an excellent job of resolving their own conflicts and helping their peers do the same.

The training of conflict mediators can be very exciting and rewarding. This Manual is dedicated to all educators who want to provide students with new skills and resources in handling their own disputes and learning how to peacefully resolve conflict.

Conflict can bring opportunity, drama, development, and growth to individuals, groups and organizations such as schools. Conflict can increase group cohesion and trust and lead to more effective organizational performance. This is why this program is such an integral part of the Kindness Campaign, because when conflict is properly managed within a school setting students become kinder to one another. They also become more motivated, productive, and personally adjusted. I dedicate this section to Dr. Barry Weinhold, who has been a mentor to me as well as a founder of this exceptional campaign.

In addition to activities on Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Training you will find a section at the back of the Manual that introduces the concept of Restorative Justice and provides activities to help your school begin to integrate this approach into its school discipline program.

To supplement the activities in this Manual, I recommend The Colorado School Mediation Project in Boulder, CO that produces high quality curricular materials in conflict, with teacher's guides. You can order their catalog by calling their toll-free number at 1-877-853-5402 or look them up online.

## **SYLLABUS FOR A SIX WEEK CONFLICT RESOLUTION CLASS**

### **The Goal of the Course:**

The goal of this class is to offer practical skills in conflict resolution and peer mediation to upper elementary or middle school students. The length of the course outlined below is six weeks with 30 suggested lessons. It can be shorter than this, but we believe that this is the optimal length of time for students to learn these skills. We think that it needs to be offered to all students to have maximum effect. The best time to offer the course, in our opinion, is during the first semester. We believe the best group to offer it to is sixth graders.

### **Grading and Expectations:**

We believe in teaching in a manner so that everybody has the best opportunity to learn the skills without having to pass exams. Grading is based on class participation and journaling. Student will be asked to demonstrate what they have learned in skill practice activities in the classroom and by sharing their ideas and questions.

### **Class Participation:**

Class participation includes having students offer opinions in class, take part in structured activities, think about the topics covered in class, write in journals each day and share ideas from their journals from time to time.

### **The Personal Journal:**

Students will be required to keep a journal and write at least 2 pages every day. Topics will be assigned and sometimes there will be time at the end of the class for students to write in their journals. Collect student journals periodically to see if they are being used to expand on what is covered in class. Do not worry about spelling or grammar because the important thing is to see how students are thinking about the topics assigned. Advanced notice should be given when you are going to collect the journals; reassure them that you will be the only one reading their journals. The journal should have the assigned topic at the top of the page followed by student's thoughts.

## SUGGESTED WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

### **Week #1, Monday Class: Introductions and Expectations**

- “Getting To Know Each Other: String Toss” (15 minutes) – Page 9
- “The Conflict Continuum” (20 minutes) – Page 21
- “Conflict Resolution Class Ground Rules” (15 minutes) – Page 10
- Journal Assignment: Fill out School Put-Down Survey – Page 11

### **Week #1, Tuesday Class: Ground Rules and Agreements**

- “Conflict and Conflict Resolution Styles” (40 minutes) – Page 13
- Journal Assignment: What conflicts are the most difficult for me to resolve? What do I most need to learn about resolving conflicts?

### **Week #1, Wednesday Class: How Is Conflict Dealt With in Our Society?**

- “The Conflict Matrix” – (40 minutes) – Page 12
- Journal Assignment: How would society be different if everybody resolved conflicts peacefully?

### **Week #1, Thursday Class: Working Together to Resolve Conflicts**

- “Positive Sharing” (20 minutes) – Page 23
- “Put-downs & Conflicts” (25 minutes) – Page 24
- Journal Assignment: What did you learn about how put-downs can cause conflicts?

### **Week #1, Friday Class: Rules and Laws**

- “The Cafeteria Conflict-Role Play” (25 minutes) – Page 25
- “What Rules Should We Have At This School and How Should We Handle Conflicts?” (20 minutes) Class discussion (No activity)
- Journal Assignment: Homework is to utilize the Conflict Observation Form on Page 16 to note what conflicts you see existing in this school.

### **Week #2, Monday Class: Developing Deeper Understandings About Conflict**

- “Observing Conflicts” (15 minutes) – Pages 15 & 16
- “That’s Not Fair” (30 minutes) – Page 17
- Journal Assignment: When have you felt unfairly treated? What do you wish had been done to make things fair?

### **Week #2, Tuesday Class: Conflict Resolution Styles**

- “Conflict Resolution Styles?” (10 minutes) – Page 13
- “One Story With Three Endings” & Conflict Resolution Styles” (35 minutes) –Page 14
- Journal Assignment: What styles of conflict resolution do you use the most? Which ones would you like to use?

**Week #2, Wednesday Class: Conflict Resolution Methods: Wants & Needs**

“How To Recognize Conflicts of Wants and Needs” (10 minutes) – Page 59

“How To Prepare For A Conflict Resolution Session” (30 minutes)– Page 70

Journal Assignment: What conflicts of wants and needs do you have at school; at home?

**Week #2, Thursday Class: Conflict Resolution Methods: Values & Beliefs**

“It is Always Right To Be Right” (25 minutes) – Page 64

“ Resolving Conflicts of Values and Beliefs” (15 minutes) – Page 72

Journal Assignment: What are the main conflicts of values and beliefs you are aware of in the world today?

**Week #2, Friday Class: Understanding Conflict**

“Conflict Clues/hassle Line” (20 minutes) – Page 26

“My Basic Human Rights” (25 minutes) – Page 27

Journal Assignment: Describe where you have the hardest time asserting your basic human rights.

**Week #3, Monday Class: Understanding the Difference Between Observation & Evaluation**

“Observation or Evaluation?” (40 minutes) – Page 28

Journal Assignment: What kinds of evaluations do you make of others? Why?

**Week #3, Tuesday Class: Identifying Feelings in Conflict Situations**

“The Feelings Triangle” (40 minutes) – Page 32

Journal Assignment: What feelings are the most difficult for you, and why?

**Week #3, Wednesday Class: Introduction to Listening Skills**

“Effective & Ineffective Listening” (10 minutes) – Page 40

“Comparative Listening” (15 minutes) – Page 41

“Active Listening” (20 minutes) – Page 43

Journal Assignment: What gets in the way of really listening to another person?

**Week #3, Thursday Class: Empathy Training**

“Giving & Receiving Empathy” (40 minutes) – Page 46

Journal Assignment: How did it feel to give empathy? How did it feel to receive it?

**Week #3, Friday Class: Identifying Needs**

“The Collage of Needs” (40 minutes) – Page 48

Journal Assignment: When your needs aren't met, how do you feel?

Sharing from journals: What's working or not working for you about this class so far? What needs are being met/not met by this class?

**Week #4, Monday Class: Active Listening to Identify Needs**

“Chain of Belonging” (15 minutes) – Page 50

“Laying Your Cards on the Table” (30 minutes) – Page 51

Journal Assignment: How often do you experience a need for belonging, and how do you meet that need? How does it feel to communicate your feelings and needs using the Feelings and Needs cards?

**Week #4, Tuesday Class: I-Messages**

“I-Messages” (30 minutes) – Page 55

“Design an I-Message” (15 minutes) – Page 58

Journal Assignment: Practice sending an I-Message and write about what happened.

**Week #4, Wednesday Class: Resolving Conflicts of Wants & Needs**

“Skill Practice: Resolving Conflicts of Wants and Needs” (45 minutes) – Page 61

Journal Assignment: Identify the wants and needs involved in your current or past conflicts.

**Week #4, Thursday Class: Clarifying Values & Beliefs**

“The Values Continuum” (40 minutes) – Page 68

Journal Assignment: Which values and beliefs did you feel the strongest about? Why?

**Week #4, Friday Class: Resolving Conflicts of Values and Beliefs**

“How to Resolve Conflicts Involving Values & Beliefs” (15 minutes) – Page 72

“The Values Tango” (30 minutes) – Page 67

Journal Assignment: Identify your current or past conflicts that involve conflicts of values and beliefs.

**Week #5, Monday Class: Practice & Review of Skills**

Go over all the skills that you have taught and have students practice them in pairs.

Journal Assignment: Which of the skills have been the hardest for you to learn to use? Why?

**Week #5, Tuesday Class: Handling Anger**

“Recognizing Anger Cues” (40 minutes) – Page 34

Journal Assignment: What do you feel in your body when you are angry, and how do you usually express your anger?

**Week #5, Wednesday Class: Under the Anger**

“Under the Anger” (40 minutes) – Page 36

Journal Assignment: Think about a time you got angry. Write down all the things you said to yourself about the person or situation. What were your feelings and needs?

**Week #5, Thursday Class: Healing Circle**

“Healing Circle” (45 minutes)

– Page 80

Journal Assignment: Imagine and write about how the criminal justice system would change if there were Healing Circles instead of courts.

**Week #6, Friday Class: The Council Circle**

“Council Circle” (45 minutes)

– Page 62

Journal Assignment: What did you like most about the Council Circle? What would you want to change about it?

**Week #6, Monday Class: How To Avoid Rescuing**

“How To Avoid Rescuing” (40 minutes)

– Page 89

Journal Assignment: Have you ever been “rescued”? How did it feel?

**Week #6, Tuesday Class: Peer Mediation Skills**

“What is the Role of the Peer Mediator?” (40 minutes)

– Page 104

Journal Assignment: What benefits can you see from having a peer mediator rather than an adult?

**Week #6, Wednesday Class: Let’s Mediate**

“Let’s Mediate” (40 minutes)

– Page 73

Journal Assignment: What was the hardest part about the role-play you did? What would you improve about it?

**Week #6, Thursday Class: Peer Mediation Practice**

“Conflict Resolution Process Practice” (40 minutes)

– Page 76

Journal Assignment: What were the most important things you learned in this class? What would you like to have spent more time on in class?

**Week #6, Friday Class: Evaluation and Closure**

Have students read from their journals about what they got out of the class.

## String Toss

**Type of Activity:** Communication Skills

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To have students become acquainted with each other.

**Materials Needed:** A large ball of sting

### Procedures:

1. Have students stand in a circle.
2. This activity will help students get to know each other. Each person will have the opportunity to throw the ball of string to another person in the circle. As you say your name and throw the ball, tell the group one thing you like to do. Be sure to throw the ball, to someone who has not been introduced. As you throw the ball, hold on to your end of the string. The workshop leader begins, "My name is and I like to \_\_\_\_\_." Continue until everyone has been introduced.
3. Discuss:
  - a. What have we formed?
  - b. How is communication like a web?
  - c. What happens when I pull on my end of the string?
  - d. If someone comes into a room angry, how might this affect the other people?
4. Unwind the web by reversing the procedure.
5. The last person who received the string ball begins. As the ball is passed to the other person say his/her name and what the person likes to do.
6. Continue until the ball is rewound.

**Expected Outcomes:** To understand how students feel when they come to mediation.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## **Conflict Resolution Class Ground Rules**

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-12

**Duration:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** (1) To help students develop an understanding about what the peaceful resolution of conflicts looks like, (2) To help students understand how ground rules can help set the stage for peaceful resolution of conflicts.

### **Procedures:**

1. Read the following suggested “Conflict Resolution Ground Rules” to the students and ask them what questions they might have about these ground rules. It is good to give an example of each one as you present it.
  - One person speaks at a time
  - Treat each other with respect
  - Separate the person from the behavior
  - Attack the problem, not the person
  - Express your feelings about the conflict in a non-blaming way
  - Be sure you listen carefully to what the other person is saying and if you are not sure, repeat it back to them and ask if this is correct
  - Keep what is shared in class confidential. You can tell others what you said or did in class but do not repeat what others said or did in class.
  - Be willing to share your own feelings and ideas. Be specific when you talk – say “I,” not “you.”
2. Ask the students “How would you like to handle it if someone accidentally breaks one of these rules?” Ask the students if they have any other ideas on how to create a peaceful classroom.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to use these ground rules to create a peaceful classroom environment conducive to learning about conflict resolution.

**Outcomes:** The teacher will see concrete evidence of students making use of these ground rules.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs



## The Conflict Matrix

**Kind of activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** (1) To help students examine their experiences and attitudes about conflicts, (2) To help students develop a working definition of conflict, and (3) To help students see how extensive conflict really is and how important it is to resolve conflicts without using violence.

### Procedures:

1. Write the word "Conflict" in the center of the board. Ask students to call out what feelings, situations and experiences they associate with conflict. Try to group them together as categories of conflict like "family conflict," "school conflict," "national and world conflict."
2. Ask them to form small groups (4-6 students) with the task of placing all that has been written on the board into a category. They can create other categories if they need to. Give them 10-15 minutes to do this. Have them write their ideas on a large flip chart paper and have a member of each group report on what they found.
3. Conduct a discussion around the following questions:
  - Which category is the largest? Smallest? Most important?
  - Do you know of any place in the world where there is no conflict?
  - Do you seem to have a more negative than positive view of conflict?
4. Brainstorm ideas about how to define conflict and come up with a consensus definition of conflict. I would include: a disagreement between two or more people or ideas; can take place within each of us as well; is neither good or bad; it is a normal part of life; it can be resolved in violent or non-violent ways.
5. Ask students: "How is conflict different from violence? How would you define violence?" Definitions might include: a word, sign or act that hurts the feelings, possessions or body of another person or persons; harassment in a repeated violent act that is unwanted by the other person.
6. Debrief: "What did you learn about conflict from today's class?"

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will have a clearer understanding of what conflict means.

**Evaluation:** Teachers will see evidence of a clear understanding of conflict.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs.

(Adapted from a similar activity in *Productive Conflict Resolution*, page 11).

## Conflict and Conflict Resolution Styles

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objectives:** 1. Students will be able to define the word conflict.  
2. Students will be able to recognize different conflict resolution styles.

**Materials Needed:** Seven or eight index cards with Denial, Confrontation or Problem-solving written on them.  
Chalk and chalkboard.  
Signs with each style that can be pointed to.

**Procedure:**

1. Ask students to define the word conflict. Discuss the following definition:  
*“A conflict is what happens when one or more people can’t agree on something. Most of us are involved in conflicts every day. I might have a conflict with myself about whether or not to watch TV tonight. You and your best friend might have a conflict about what to do after school, or perhaps two kickball teams might have a conflict about the rules of their game. Conflicts happen because we all think and sometimes have different opinions about things. This is part of what makes us human.”*
2. Ask the students if they can think of any conflict that they have seen or been involved in recently. Ask them if they would like to briefly describe some of these conflicts.
3. Tell students that there are three basic ways to approach a conflict. They are DENIAL, CONFRONTATION, and CONFLICT RESOLUTION.
  - a. Write these three words on the chalkboard.
  - b. Pass out vocabulary sheet.
    - Denial: You pretend there is no problem.
    - Confrontation : You fight with the other person.
    - Conflict Resolution: You talk together about the conflict and together find a way to resolve it that is good for both of you.
4. Explain to students that they will now see a role-play of one story with three different endings.
5. Role-play “One Story with Three Different Endings,” using the first ending.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to identify the different styles of conflict.

**Evaluation:** More students will be aware of handling conflict in a positive conflict resolution style.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## ONE STORY WITH THREE DIFFERENT ENDINGS

**Narrator:** Omar and Lou are playing basketball, taking turns shooting at the basket. Peter comes over and asks if he can play, too.

### *Ending #1:*

Peter: "Can I play, too?"  
Omar: "Sure."

(Peter, Lou and Omar act out the story as the narrator speaks.)

**Narrator:** Lou doesn't want Peter to play with them. Instead of saying anything, he just shrugs his shoulders and plays half-heartedly. Whenever it is Peter's turn, Lou throws the ball at him much too hard, and two or three times he shoves Peter out of the way when it isn't necessary.

Peter: "What's bugging you, Lou?"  
Lou (sighing): "Nothing."

### *Ending #2:*

Peter: "Can I play, too?"  
Omar: "Sure."  
Lou: "Forget it."  
Peter (to Lou): "How come I can't play?"  
Lou: "I don't like to play with you. You cheat and you always hog the ball so no one else can have a turn."  
Peter: "You're a liar. You just don't want me to play because I can run faster than you, and I'm a better basketball player."  
Lou: "You'd better get out of here before I kick your butt!"  
Peter: "You just try it, punk!"

(Lou and Peter move toward each other and begin to push or fight.)

### *Ending #3:*

Peter: "Can I play, too?"  
Omar: "Sure."  
Lou: "Forget it!"  
Omar: "Why don't you want him to play with us?"  
Lou: "Because he always hogs the ball, and I don't get enough turns."  
Peter: "You guys have been playing all recess, and I want to play, too."  
Omar: "Well, I don't mind if Peter plays with us and he can have half of my turns. That way, Lou, you don't have to wait any longer for turns."  
Lou: "Well, I guess I don't mind if we all stand around and take turns, because it will probably be easier than just you two taking turns."

## Observing Conflicts

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objectives:** 1. Help students learn to identify conflict issues.  
2. Help students to differentiate between three types of conflict resolution styles.

**Materials Needed:** Conflict Observation Forms (See next page)

**Procedure:**

1. Hand out the Conflict Observation Forms.
2. Explain to the students:
3. You have a homework assignment that will be due at the next meeting.
4. The directions for this assignment are:
  - a. You are to watch three conflicts at lunch or in the hallway.
  - b. After each conflict, record on your observation form:
    - what the conflict was about.
    - how the conflict ended.
    - which resolution style was used.
  - c. Try to be as accurate as you can.
  - d. Be a silent observer. Report what you see and hear without getting involved.
  - e. Bring your completed observation form with you to the next training session.
  - f. Briefly review the form and explain how to use it.
  - g. Briefly review the meanings of the words Denial, Confrontation, and Problem-Solving
  - h. Remind students to bring completed observation sheets to the next meeting.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to observe a conflict and decide what resolution style was used.

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to identify conflict resolution styles.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Conflict Observation Form

**CONFLICT OBSERVATION FORM**

	<i>Conflict 1</i>	<i>Conflict 2</i>	<i>Conflict 3</i>
<p><i>What was the conflict about?</i></p> <p><b>EXAMPLES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Argument</li><li>- Fight</li><li>- Name calling</li><li>- Line order</li><li>- Violating school rules</li><li>- Other</li></ul>			
<p><i>How did the conflict end?</i></p> <p><b>EXAMPLES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An agreement</li><li>- Yelling</li><li>- Teacher stopped it</li><li>- Sent to principal</li></ul>			
<p><i>What type of resolution was it?</i></p> <p><b>EXAMPLES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Denial</li><li>- Confrontation</li><li>- Conflict Resolution</li></ul>			

## That's Not Fair

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials Needed:** "That's Not Fair" Handout

**Objectives:** (1) Students will learn to develop criteria for deciding what is fair and will apply it to a hypothetical school related problem, (2) Students will develop and apply a fair resolution to a hypothetical class conflict, (3) Students will develop an overall definition of fairness

### Procedures:

1. Conduct a class discussion around the following questions:
  - Has anyone ever received a punishment that he/she didn't think was fair? Ask for examples.
  - How did you feel? (Write the feelings on the board)
  - Has anyone ever done something they knew was against the rules and didn't get caught? Ask for examples. How did you feel? (Write the feelings on the board)
2. Ask students how they think a fair punishment should be determined. Write suggestions on the board under the heading "How do we create fair rules?"
3. Hand out a copy of "It Isn't Fair." Read the scenario aloud. Have students work in pairs to answer the questions on the Handout. If you have a "live" example of a conflict related to fairness that the class is involved in, use that one instead of the one in the Handout. You may have to adapt the questions to fit that scenario.
4. Conduct a large group discussion in which pairs explain their answers. Develop a list of criteria for determining the fairness of a rule or law. What consensus can be reached on resolving the conflict in the scenario that is fair to everybody?
5. Finally, ask the students the following questions:
  - Did anyone change his/her mind about what they believe fairness is or how rules about fairness should be applied?
  - Does this lesson raise any questions in your mind about the fairness of any current rules that govern your life at school or elsewhere?
  - Did the lesson raise any other questions for you? If so, what?

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to use the criteria developed by the class to apply to other conflicts that are discussed in class.

**Evaluation:** The teacher can keep track of the times when students were able to resolve conflicts around fairness using the criteria that were established.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs. (Adapted from a similar exercise in *Productive Conflict Resolution*, pp 69-71.)

## **That's Not Fair**

Mr. Roberts has decided to punish the students in his conflict resolution class for repeatedly forgetting to turn in their Journals on Thursday as required. He had offered an incentive to get the class to comply with this assignment. He told them that if everyone turned in their Journals on Thursday, he would hold a pizza party for the class on Friday.

On Thursday, it turned out that three students "forgot" to bring their Journals to class and left them at home. Mr. Roberts then told the class on Thursday that since three students had not turned in their Journals, there would not be a pizza party on Friday.

Almost immediately one of the students said, "That's not fair to punish the whole class because three students forgot to bring their Journals today. Why can't they just turn them in tomorrow and we can still have our class party."

Mr. Roberts replied, "It is important to learn that when a rule or agreement is made there are consequences for breaking the rule or agreement. I hope that this is an important lesson for all of you. Granted, you all get the same consequences, but that is what sometimes happens in society when rules are broken. It may mean that there are consequences that the whole community or group has to accept."

What was the rule/agreement that was broken?

What was the purpose of the rule/agreement?

What consequences are fair in this situation?

Who should receive the penalty in this situation?

Who should decide what the penalty should be?

## Conflict Resolution Styles

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Materials needed:** None

**Objectives:** To identify some ways that people attempt to resolve conflicts.

**Procedure:**

1. Ask the students what they think is the most common way that people attempt to resolve conflicts. Write their answers on the board. The most common answer is “by avoiding the conflict.”
2. The next question is “Why do people try to avoid conflicts?” Put the students' answers on the board.
3. The common conflict resolution styles besides avoidance include the following:
  - *The “Fighter”* get angry easily; blames the conflict on others and tries to force his/her preferred resolution the other person.
  - *The “Pretender”* refuses to deal with any conflicts; may hide feelings and needs; pretends there isn't any conflict and avoids situations and people that are connected to the conflict.
  - *The “Sheep”* follows others blindly; agrees with any solution; is usually afraid of any conflict or controversy; has low self-esteem.
  - *The “Big Mouth”* talks behind other people's back, doesn't deal with the conflict directly with those involved; gossips and complains instead.
  - *The “Joker”* is always making jokes to distract people from addressing the conflict; usually is unwilling to be serious about anything; may use sarcasm to cover up fear of conflicts.
  - *The “Manipulator”* never takes responsibility for his/her part of creating the conflict and instead manipulates others to agree with him/her; tries to outsmart others instead of being honest; is also scared of conflicts.
4. Compare these common conflict resolution styles to what the students said. If you have time, you can ask them how they would deal with people who use each style.

**Expected Outcomes:** Student will have a better understanding of the common conflict resolution styles they will encounter and have some ideas on what to do if they encounter them.

**Evaluation:** In the role-plays in class you should be able to see the students adapting their approach to accommodate the style of those involved in a conflict situation.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs.

## VOCABULARY

**Conflict** - A problem between two or more people. There are three styles of conflict. The styles are:

1. **Denial** - You pretend there is no problem.
2. **Confrontation** - You fight with the other person.
3. **Conflict Resolution** - You talk together about the conflict and together find a way to resolve it that is good for both of you.

**Solution** - A way to solve a problem

**Resolution** - A way to solve a conflict

**Disputant** - Someone who is having a conflict or argument (from the word "dispute")

**Conflict Mediator** - A specially trained student who can help other students talk about their conflicts and find a good way to resolve them.

## The Conflict Continuum

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 20-30 minutes

**Objectives:** (1) to help students learn to identify the level of severity of conflict situations and (2) to sensitize students to the possible effects of conflict situations and (3) to show students that not all conflicts involve violence.

**Materials:** Make five 8 1/2 x 11 signs that you can tape up for students to see, the signs read:

“Very Violent,”

“Mildly Violent,”

“Neutral,”

“Mildly Conflictual”

“Very Conflictual”

**Procedures:**

1. Move the desks aside leaving a long open space down the center of the room where students will position themselves on this continuum for each statement that is read.
2. Post signs on the wall at intervals the length of the classroom to represent positions on the continuum.
3. Read the “Conflict Continuum” statements and then ask the students to stand near to the point on the continuum that best represents what the statement means to them. After reading each statement ask them to reposition themselves on the continuum.
4. After you read four or five statements ask them to talk to other students who are positioned at the same place. Ask them to compare the reasons that they are standing at the same place with others there to see if they are the same.

**Outcomes:** Students will better understand the difference between violence conflict and non-violent conflict.

**Evaluation:** Students see their conflicts as non-violent and find peaceful ways to resolve them.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs. Adapted from a similar activity in Productive Conflict Resolution created by the Colorado School Mediation Project, page 103-107.

## The Conflict Continuum

**Directions:** Read each statement and then ask the students to stand on the continuum each believes best represents the kind of conflicts the statement is referring to.

- A child is killed accidentally in a war.
- A father steals food from a local grocery store to feed his family.
- A company cuts down trees in a rainforest and destroys the natives' land.
- Someone makes a mistake on a test and says to him/herself, "I'm so stupid. I will never pass this course."
- A girl accidentally trips over someone's leg that happened to be stretched out.
- The coach says to one of his players, "You throw like a girl."
- You are grounded for fighting with your sister.
- A girl says, "I really hate her," about another girl in her class.
- Every day a boy teases a girl about her clothing.
- You come to class late for the third time this year and the teacher sends you to the office.
- A small child is crying in a store and her Mother says to her, "Stop crying or I will give you something to cry about."
- A group of African-American students are watched closely by store employees at the mall.
- Someone is shot in a drive-by shooting in your neighborhood.
- A guy accidentally hits another student with a wad of paper at lunch.
- A soldier is wounded in battle during a war.
- A group of girls exclude a new student from their lunch table.
- The teacher calls on you and you don't know the answer to the question he asked.
- A father says to his son, "You are retarded."

## Positive Sharing

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-12

**Duration:** 20-25 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** (1) To give students practice in talking about themselves in positive ways, (2) To give students practice in listening to each other's positive talk, and (3) to give students an opportunity to discuss feelings associated with positive self-talk.

### Procedures:

1. Tell your students that you are going to ask them to think of five things that they like about themselves. Tell them this may be hard because we are not taught to think about the things we like about ourselves.
2. Give your students a personal example or two to model for them what you are wanting them to do. You might also suggest examples that might apply to them.
3. Ask them to write down in their journal five things they like about themselves titled, "What I like about myself."
4. Ask them to count off by "2s" so everybody is either a "1" or a "2." Ask the "1s" to pair up with a "2." Each person will have two minutes to share with his/her partner five positive things about him/her. The only rule is that they may not say anything negative or bad about themselves or put a limitation on the positive things they say. For example, they can't say they are helpful to their parents around the house, except when they forget to take out the garbage.
5. Those who are the "1s" go first as the speaker and the "2s" are the listeners. Listeners will have to repeat back what the speaker said about him/herself after he/she is finished talking. For example, you might say, "You are a loyal friend and you are kind to your sister," if that is what you heard. After this is complete, they switch roles so the "2s" are the speakers and the "1s" are the listeners.
6. Explain to the listeners that they need to do the following:
  - Do not interrupt the speaker and if there is a silence, let the speaker think
  - Remind the speaker if he/she says something negative.
  - Use good body language to indicate interest, such as maintaining eye contact, nodding your head, etc.
7. Debrief this activity by asking the students the following questions:
  - How did you feel when you were sharing positive things about yourself?
  - What was it like for the listener? Was it hard to listen?
  - What do you think is the benefit of doing this activity?

**Expected Outcomes:** Students should have more permission to express positive things about themselves in class

**Evaluation:** The teacher can keep track of the number of positive self-statements he/she hears in class prior to and after doing this activity.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs

## Put-Downs and Conflicts

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-12

**Duration:** 20-25 minutes

**Materials Needed:** A piece of Flip Chart paper with a big red heart drawn on it.

**Objectives:** (1) To illustrate the negative affect of put-downs on the recipient's feeling and behavior, (2) To show how put-downs can contribute to conflicts

**Procedures:**

1. Hold up the Flip Chart paper with the heart on it and ask students to give you examples of put-downs that have been said to them or to others. Each time an example of a put-down is offered by the students, start to crumple the heart. By the time you have gotten many examples, the heart should be crumpled up into a ball in the palm of your hand. Tell students that this is the heart of someone who is hurting.
2. Ask them to tell you what they think a person with a crumpled heart is feeling and how they think they would likely behave? Write what they say on the board.
3. Then ask them, "What could be done to help someone who has a crumpled heart like this one?"
4. They will likely say that you need to say and do positive things to help this person open up his/her heart. Ask them to give you examples some of the things they could say or do and as they share them begin to open up the flip chart paper until it is opened fully again.
5. Ask them to notice that even though the heart is now open again, there are still wrinkles on it. The wrinkles represent the hurts they may still feel and it may take some time to smooth out the wrinkles in their heart. Caution them to be careful about what they say or do that might cause wrinkles in someone's heart.
6. Ask them how they think put-downs can cause conflicts. Write their replies on the board. Point out that a way to prevent conflicts is to reduce the put-downs that are used

**Expected Outcomes:** Students should use fewer put-downs in their interactions with each other.

**Evaluation:** You can pick a day prior to doing this exercise and without saying anything, record the number and kind of put-downs you observe. Then after doing this activity, pick one day to observe how many put-downs you observe.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs

## **The Cafeteria Conflict–Role Play**

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Role Play Instructions

**Objectives:** To get students to think about what circumstances have to be considered when enforcing rules and handling conflicts about school rules.

**Procedure:** Ask some students to role-play the following situation:

### ***The Cafeteria Conflict: Student B***

**Directions:** Act out the conflict by having some class members form a line and one person play Student A, who cuts in front of others in the line every day.

**Situation:** Student B has a conflict: Your classmate keeps cutting into the lunch line and you think that this breaks a rule in the cafeteria.

**Your Position:** Every day in the lunch line, Student A cuts in front. The lines are really long, and the rule is no cutting in line. You told a lunchroom supervisor last week, but nothing has changed. You are upset that the person is still cutting in.

**Background:** You think Student A is a bully, but you are not afraid to speak up because a rule was broken.

### ***The Cafeteria Conflict: Student A***

**Directions:** The person who is playing Student B complains about Student A cutting in line to the Cafeteria Supervisor, who is busy and doesn't seem to do anything about the situation.

**Situation:** Student A has a conflict because one of your classmates objects to you cutting into the lunch line.

**Your Position:** You sometimes have stomach problems, so it takes more time for you to eat. Every day you have a friend who saves a place in line for you. Student B keeps telling everyone that you cut in line, but you know it is necessary for you to have more time to eat.

**Background:** You think Student B has a big mouth and is always minding everyone else's business. Your mother thinks you might have an ulcer and has made a doctor's appointment to check it out.

**Information Class Discussion:** Ask the class members how they think this conflict might be resolved.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will think deeper about the school rules and how conflicts

over rule violations should be handled.

**Evaluation:** Teachers observe students being more thoughtful about school rules and how to handle conflicts involving them.

**Submitted by:** Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## Conflict Clues/The Hassle Line

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Levels:** 6 - 8

**Time for the Activity:** 20-25 minutes

**Objectives (s) of Activity:** To have participants respond to conflict from both points of view: The Giver and the Getter

**Materials Needed:** None

### Procedures:

1. Put students in two lines facing each other in pairs an arms distance apart. One line is the "Givers" and the other will act out the situation simultaneously.
2. The hassle Line will not be longer than six pairs.
3. Rules: No touching the other person.
4. When you hear "freeze," stop and hold your body exactly the way it is.
5. Role Play: Line one is the Givers and line two is the Getters.
6. Here is the situation: You are having lunch in the cafeteria with your classmates. Everyone is talking and laughing. You are trying to open a ketchup packet. Suddenly it opens and squirts all over the Getter's new sweater.
7. When I say "Start," react the way you would if this happened to you.
8. Call "Freeze" after one minute.
9. Now hold your position. Don't move.
10. Observe the position of the Givers and Getters.

**Expected Outcomes:** To better understand conflicts from both points of view.

**Evaluation:** Number of students will observe certain types of body language. Evaluate what does this body language mean? Finger pointing? Hands on hips? Hand clenched? Eyes narrowed? Eyebrows raised?

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## My Basic Human Rights\*

**Type of Activity:** Classroom or counseling group

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Duration:** 25-30 minutes

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To help students identify their basic human rights and to learn effective ways to assert those rights.

**Materials Needed:** A copy of “My Basic Human Rights” and “Know Your Rights.”  
(next page)

### Procedures:

1. Distribute a copy of “My Basic Human Rights” to each student. Read and discuss the rights, one by one.
2. Give a personal example of a time you chose to assert your basic human rights. Ask the students to refer to their copy and identify the basic human right(s) you were asserting in the situation. Then encourage the students to generate examples of similar situations in their own life, and ask the class members to identify the right(s) being asserted. Give them a copy of “Know Your Rights.” Give them a few minutes to fill out the sheet and then to go over their answers as a class.
3. Ask students to think of current situations where they would like to assert their rights, but find it difficult to do so. Ask them to think about the reasons why it is hard to stand up for their rights. Write their ideas on the chalkboard and discuss what they could do to overcome these barriers.
4. Some possible reasons why your students might find it difficult to assert their basic human rights:
  - a. Friends might resent you're telling them things they don't want to hear.
  - b. Standing up for your rights in a public place draws attention to you.
  - c. Standing up to sexual harassment might make members of the opposite sex dislike you.
  - d. A little voice tells you that you deserved the treatment you got.
  - e. Standing up for your rights takes energy and you may not get what you want.
  - f. Some people don't think that young people should have the same rights as adults and will criticize you for asserting your rights.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will assert their basic human rights more often and more effectively.

**Evaluation:** Design a survey with all twelve basic human rights asking students how often they have asserted themselves in each “rights” areas in the past 30 days. Compare pre-test and post-test results.

**Submitted by:** Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS; \*Adapted from an exercise by Arnold Goldstein from “The Prepare Curriculum”(1999) pp 295-298.

## MY BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

I have:

1. The right to act in ways that promote my dignity and self-respect as long as the rights of others are not violated.
2. The right to be treated with respect.
3. The right to say “no” and have my wishes respected.
4. The right to experience and express my feelings in age-appropriate ways.
5. The right to take time to slow down and think about what I want.
6. The right to ask for what I want.
7. The right to change my mind.
8. The right to refuse help and assistance.
9. The right to ask for information.
10. The right to make mistakes.
11. The right to feel good about myself.
12. The right to do less than I am humanly capable of doing, if I choose to.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Which “right” is being exercised in each of the following situations? Using the Sheet “My Basic Human Rights” as a guide put the (1-12) next to each item below.

- \_\_\_ Telling your teacher that you need clearer directions on an assignment.
- \_\_\_ Telling your boyfriend/girlfriend that you are annoyed by his/her constant company.
- \_\_\_ Asking your parent for more allowance.
- \_\_\_ Asking someone to go with you.
- \_\_\_ Saying you’d rather not participate in an activity with your friends.
- \_\_\_ Telling someone who is pressuring you that you aren’t ready for a decision.
- \_\_\_ Objecting to someone’s labeling or stereotyping you by disability, race or gender.
- \_\_\_ Not staying up till 2:00 a.m. in order to get an A on a test.
- \_\_\_ Saying that you don’t want to go to the game after all.
- \_\_\_ Reporting an incident in which you were sexually harassed.
- \_\_\_ Refusing to make a decision until more facts are available.

\_\_\_ Acknowledging that you screwed up without feeling guilty.

\_\_\_ Enthusiastically describing an accomplishment to someone.

### **Observation or Evaluation? (or, Fact or Opinion?)**

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Time of the Activity:** 40 minutes

**Objective:** To distinguish between observations (neutral) and evaluations

**Materials Needed:** for each pair of students, a set of 50 statement-strips (see next page), tape, 3 pieces of paper (1 white, 1 colored, 1 gray)

**Procedure:**

1. Discuss the difference between observations/facts (“what a video camera can record”) and evaluations/opinions (which can cause conflicts).
2. Group students into pairs, give each pair a set of statement-strips, tape, and 3 papers. Have them write “Observations” on the gray paper, “Evaluations” on the colored paper, and “?” on the white paper (for the ones they feel unsure about).
3. Partners read each statement-strip aloud, discuss what it is, then tape it onto the appropriate paper.
4. When ready, join the large group; discuss any statements put in the “Unsure” category. Discuss how the “Evaluations” could cause a fight or hurt feelings.
5. Variation: Give out just one sentence-strip to each student. Have one student read an Evaluation statement and ask a student who has a matching Observation statement to read his/her sentence. Continue until all sentences have been read.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to begin substituting observations instead of evaluations.

**Evaluation:** Teachers observe whether students are using more observations in communicating with one another.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart and Victoria Kindle Hodson, p. 118ff.

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication.

## Statement-Strips for Observation or Evaluation

She gave me her cupcake.

I got a bruise on my arm the last time we played together.

He invited me to play with them.

They are sticking out their tongues.

She burped.

You finished 10 math problems.

He read two books this week.

She put mustard on her peanut butter sandwich.

You sat on my glasses and cracked them.

You bumped into me.

He pushed me.

She said I couldn't play with them.

You ate the last two pieces of candy.

He told the teacher that I was talking.

I spent two hours doing homework.

There's paint on the floor.

I saw you take her pencil and then I heard you tell the teacher you didn't do it.

He was asking me questions while I was trying to write.

They said no one else could be in their club.

I saw him take the cookies.

She is generous.

You play too rough.

He is really friendly.

They're acting dumb.

She is rude.

You worked so hard.

He is really smart.

That's gross.

You stupid idiot!

You're so clumsy.

He's a bully.

She's mean.

You're a greedy pig.

He's a tattletale.

We have too much homework.

You always make a mess.

You're a liar.

He's always distracting me.

They think they're so cool.

He's a thief.

He said he didn't want to climb the tree.

She told me I had to use blue paint instead of green.

He fell down when he was playing.

She walked away when we said we didn't want to play dodge ball.

They kept talking when the teacher asked to be quiet.

There are crossed out words on your paper.

I heard you say "Huh?" when the teacher asked you a question.

I don't like your idea.

He cut in front of the others in the lunch line.

What a wimp! He's a baby.

She's so bossy!

He should take better care of himself.

She always wants things her way.

They should listen to the them teacher.

Your paper is messy.

You are clueless.

That's a dumb idea.

He only cares about himself.

## Understanding Feelings

**Type of Activity:** Classroom or counseling group

**Grade Level:** K-12

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To get students to better understand their own feelings and the feelings of others.

**Materials Needed:** Drawing materials and paper.

### Procedures:

1. Start this activity by getting the students to think about feelings. The following questions might help stimulate discussion: (Get several examples of each.)
  - Remember a time when you felt really happy. Tell the class about it. (Parties, Christmas, birthdays, etc.)
  - Remember a time when you were very frightened or afraid. Tell the class what happened.
  - Do you remember any situations where you felt angry or frustrated? Tell the class about one of those times.
  - Do you think people have choices about what they feel or do you think that things that happen to them cause their feelings?
  - Why do people feel differently in the same situations? (Some may love parties, others are shy in groups, some love roller coasters and others hate them.)
2. Pass out drawing materials and paper.
3. Ask the students to draw a picture of a situation that might make someone feel one of the following feelings:
  - Jealousy
  - Sadness
  - Fear
  - Excitement
  - Happiness
  - Anger
4. Ask the students to share their picture with the class. Search for common threads as well as common situations where there are very different feelings expressed.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be more readily able to identify their feelings and use feelings language to talk about them

**Evaluation:** Look for changes in the way students describe situations they encounter. More references to their feelings should be present.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## Feelings Triangle

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objective:** To understand that people react with different feelings to the same situation

**Materials Needed:** Three large signs, marked Angry, Scared, Sad

### Procedure:

1. The three signs are placed in a triangle around the room so there is an area for Angry, an area for Scared, and an area for Sad.
2. Introduce the idea that when our needs don't get met, we often feel one of these emotions.
3. Read a statement from the list below and ask the students to move to the area that best represents how they might feel in response to the situation. If they have a mix of feelings, they would go to an area in between two of the signs.
4. After reading several statements, discuss:
  - What did you notice about this game?
  - What feelings did you have watching people move to different corners of the room?
  - How was it for you to let others know how you feel in these situations?
  - What needs of your's wouldn't be met if these situations happened?

**Expected Outcome:** Greater feeling literacy.

**Evaluation:** Teachers observe students expressing their feelings more freely and accurately.

### Statements (Adapt to suit your class):

- A classmate calls you "stupid" in front of others.
- You see a bigger child push a smaller child.
- You hear someone put another student down.
- You make several mistakes on your math assignment.
- Someone you want to play with says she doesn't want to play with you.
- You accidentally rip your new shirt.
- Your best friend tells you he doesn't want to be friends anymore.
- You're late to school for the second day in a row.
- Your friend said she would call you and she doesn't
- Your mom said she would pick you up at 3:30, it's already 4:00 and she hasn't come.
- 

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart and Victoria Kindle Hodson,

p. 128-9.

**Submitted by: Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication**

## Recognizing Anger Cues

**Type of Activity:** Classroom or counseling group

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To promote awareness of situational cognitive and physical cues that may lead to an angry response. To help sensitize students to their own typical patterns of angry responses.

**Materials Needed:** A copy of “Why Did I Get Angry?”

### Procedures:

1. Briefly outline the goals of the activity.
2. Tell students that anger doesn't just happen. There is usually a “trigger event” that precedes the angry response.
3. Ask them fill out the Anger Situations Survey and think about what could be a “trigger” for them in those situations.
4. Tell the students that the cues can be either situational (actual situations), cognitive (thinking about situations), or physical (body sensations). Ask students to brainstorm a list of situations, thoughts or body sensations that precede an angry response. Ex: Someone makes an obscene gesture at you (situational). You see someone who has hassled you coming down the hall (situational). Your face gets hot and you clench your fists (body). Remember how someone spread a nasty rumor about you (cognitive).
5. Ask students to share which anger cues they notice in themselves and how they generally respond when they feel themselves getting angry. The following questions may be helpful: What do you do when you get angry? Which cues have you noticed before? Do you think you will notice more of them now that you have talked about them? How do you think being aware of these cues will help you in the future?.
6. Brainstorm ways to avoid making an angry response. Ex: Ignore the situation or person. Leave the situation or do not respond to the person at all. Think about what an angry response might cost you and decide if it is worth it. Take five deep breaths or silently count to 10. Tell yourself to relax or that you are in control of your emotions.

**Expected Outcomes:** More awareness of the cues that precede angry responses.

**Evaluation:** Re-administer the “ Did I Get Angry?” survey.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

### WHY DID I GET ANGRY?

Directions: Place a number (1-10) to indicated the number of times you got angry in the past 30 days next to the people/situations involved.

**Situations**

**People**

	Mom	Dad	Sister	Brother	Friend	Teacher	Other	Other
<b>Not getting what I want</b>								
<b>Unfair treatment</b>								
<b>Loss of friendship, opportunity, belongings</b>								
<b>Fights</b>								
<b>Disrespect</b>								
<b>Dishonesty</b>								
<b>Other</b>								
<b>Totals</b>								

## Under the Anger

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objective:** Helping students manage anger by identifying the thoughts and needs that trigger it

**Materials Needed:** Handouts

**Procedure:**

1. Ask students to think about a time when they felt angry, and list the situations on the board in a few words, e.g., "He pushed me," "Teacher gave me an F on my paper." After writing 5-6 situations on the board, return to the first situation and ask the person whose it was: "When this happened, what thoughts did you have?" (e.g., "He shouldn't have done it," "It wasn't fair," etc.) Write the thoughts next to the situation. Do the same for each one.
2. Discuss with students what they notice about the kinds of thinking that accompany anger. Look for "should," "shouldn't have," "unfair," etc. Point out that this type of thinking, (blaming and judging right/wrong, fair/unfair, good/bad), not what the person did or didn't do, is the *cause* of anger. Underneath the angry thoughts are often feelings such as fear or hurt. There are also needs which are not getting met in the situation. Do angry words make it more, or less likely, that our needs will get met? What do these words do to our relationships with other people?
3. Distribute handout (see next page). Ask students to identify the thoughts, feelings, and needs underneath the anger in each situation. Discuss. Note the difference when no angry thoughts are present.

**Expected Outcome:** Students have greater understanding of the role of thoughts in provoking anger, and greater awareness of feelings and needs underlying it; they become less prone to angry responses.

**Evaluation:** Teacher observes whether there are fewer angry outbursts and more ability to communicate feelings and needs.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Sura Hart & Victoria Kindle Hodson, pp. 159-161

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

## Situations That Can Trigger Anger

*I didn't get to go skating on the class field trip.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*My friend's parents wouldn't let me stay over.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*Someone said I cheated in a game.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*Someone called me "stupid" in front of my friends.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*Someone said my new shirt was "ugly."*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*I dropped the ball so my team lost the championship game.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*Some kids on the playground said I couldn't play with them.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*I didn't get invited to a cool birthday party.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

*My parents yelled at me rather than talking to me.*

Thought:

Feeling:

Need:

### **Introduction to Listening/Why is listening important?**

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** To motivate students to be good listeners.

#### **Procedures:**

1. Ask students: Why is listening important?
2. Answers might include:
  - a. to get information (someone tells you where the pencil sharpener is)
  - b. to learn (how to do something like be a Conflict Mediator)
  - c. to understand what someone needs (such as taking care of a younger child)
  - d. to know how someone feels (your mother has a headache and wants quiet)
  - e. enjoyment (music, television, movies)
  - e. to find out what you need (be sure to bring back a permission slip)
  - f. to share and be close to someone you like (problems, joys, etc.)
  - g. to defend yourself against blame or danger (did you tip over the trash can?)
  - h. to hear a honking horn when you cross the street

**Expected Outcome:** Students will understand the characteristics of good listeners.

**Evaluation:** Number of students will become better listeners.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs

School District #11

## Nonverbal Communication Presentation

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Material Needed:** Feeling cards (3 x 5 cards, each with one feeling: surprised, ashamed, disgusted, scared, excited, bored, sad, angry)

**Objective:** To increase students' awareness of nonverbal communication and how it is related to Active Listening.

### Procedure:

1. Explain to the children that part of communication is sending and receiving words and another part is developing the ability to understand feelings that are being conveyed nonverbally.
2. Ask the children if they can think of any ways in which they communicate nonverbally.
3. If children offer suggestions, ask them to act them out so that the other children can see.
4. Tell the children that now we will play a game in which I will give different "feeling cards" to different children. Each child with a card will come to the middle of the circle and act out (nonverbally) the feeling on their card. Then the other children can try to figure out what the emotion is that they are acting out.
5. Ask if there are any volunteers. Give these children the cards and proceed with the game.
6. Process with a few quick questions.
  - a. Is it hard for you to guess what people are feeling when they communicate nonverbally?
  - b. Sometimes, do people say one thing and communicate something different nonverbally? If so, what do you think they are really feeling?
  - c. How do you think being aware of nonverbal communication will help you as a Conflict Mediator?
  - d. Use this question and the responses as a transition to the next activity.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will become more aware of nonverbal communication and how it relates to active listening.

**Evaluation:** Number of students will be able to identify other students' non-verbal messages and relate this to communication styles.

**Submitted By:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## **Discussion: Effective and Ineffective Listening**

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** To identify effective and ineffective listening behaviors.

### **Procedures:**

1. With a partner, demonstrate poor listening. As your partner speaks:
  - a. look away
  - b. look bored
  - c. interrupt
  - d. look at your watch
  - e. laugh in an inappropriate place
2. Ask students:
  - a. When Trainer B didn't listen to Trainer A, how do you think Trainer A felt?
  - b. How did Trainer A react when s/he thought Trainer B wasn't listening?
  - c. What did Trainer B do that showed s/he wasn't listening?
3. Ask students to list non-listening behaviors and write them on the board.
4. Next, as your partner speaks, demonstrate Active Listening by:
  - a. keeping eye contact
  - b. facing partner
  - c. nodding
  - d. smiling
  - e. not interrupting
5. Ask students:
  - a. When Trainer B did listen to Trainer A, how do you think Trainer A felt?
  - b. How did Trainer A react when s/he thought Trainer B was listening?
6. Ask students to list listening behaviors and write them on the board.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will identify good and poor listening skills.

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to practice and use active listening skills.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs  
School District #11

## Comparative Listening Game

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Blackboard, chalk

**Objectives:** To help students understand the effects of good and poor listening skills

### Procedures:

1. Tell students that they are now going to have a chance to find out how it feels to have someone listen to them carelessly and with active listening.
2. Divide the class into groups of six students and assign each group a location.
3. Assign a facilitator to each group of six students.
4. Once students and facilitators have assembled in assigned groups, facilitators will give further instructions.
5. Students in each group are divided into pairs.
6. Students in each pair decide who is Person A and who is Person B.
7. Instruct all A's to tell their partners a story for two minutes about the best thing that ever happened to them.
8. Secretly instruct all B's to listen to their partners, using all the poor listening actions they can remember, e.g. looking away, interrupting, playing with something.
9. Give pairs of students the signal to begin. Ask them to stop at the end of two minutes.
10. Instruct A's to continue talking for another two minutes.
11. Secretly instruct B's to listen this time using all the good listening techniques they can remember, e.g. making eye contact, nodding, smiling.
12. Give pairs of students the signal to begin. Ask them to stop at the end of two minutes.
13. Announce that the exercise will be done again with one difference: now B's will talk and A's will listen.
14. Instruct B's to tell a story for two minutes about the best thing that ever happened to them.
15. Secretly instruct all A's to listen to their partners, using all the poor listening actions they can remember, e.g. looking away, interrupting, playing with something.
16. Give pairs of students the signal to begin. Ask them to stop at the end of two minutes.

17. Instruct B's to continue telling their story for another two minutes.
18. Secretly instruct A's to listen this time using all the good listening techniques they can remember, e.g. making eye contact, nodding, smiling.
19. Give pairs of students the signal to begin. Ask them to stop at the end of two minutes.
20. Reconvene pairs and small groups as a large group for discussion.
21. Discussion:
  - a. When your partner didn't pay attention to you, how did you feel about him/her?
  - b. How did you feel about yourself?
  - c. When your partner listened carefully, how did you feel about him/her?
  - d. How did you feel about yourself?
  - e. How do you think a person feels when you really listen to him/her?
  - f. How does a person act when you really listen to him/her?
  - g. How does a person act when you don't pay attention to him/her?
  - h. How can you show someone that you are listening carefully?
  - i. How will listening carefully help you in your job as a Conflict Mediator?
  - j. Why do you think good listening is important for Conflict Mediators?  
Answers should include the following:
    - builds trust
    - diffuses anger
    - understand the problem
    - discover speaker's feelings

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to differentiate between effective and ineffective listening skills.

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to build trust, diffuse anger, understand the problem, and discover the speaker's feelings in a conflict situation.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## Active Listening

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 25 minutes

**Materials:** Butcher paper with Active Listening Rules

**Objective:** To learn basic techniques of Active Listening

### Introduction:

1. The good listening behaviors we just talked about are part of a special way to listen to other people called ACTIVE LISTENING. Active Listening helps us to hear better what someone has to say and how he or she feels. It helps us understand better and remember what is important. Active Listening also helps the speaker feel good because s/he really knows that someone is listening and understands.
2. There are some helpful hints or rules to tell us what to do to be active listeners. Look at the handout marked ACTIVE LISTENING STEPS. Here are the ACTIVE LISTENING RULES: (read from the butcher paper and give an example of each item.) In the last lesson we talked about Active Listening Rule #2: showing understanding by nonverbal behavior. Now we're going to work on Active Listening Rule #3: restating the person's most important thoughts and feelings.
3. From now on, when we practice being Conflict Mediators each day, remember to practice Active Listening Rules. It is very important. To be a good Conflict Mediator, you must hear and understand the students who want your help.

### Procedure:

1. Explain to students that often times even when a person is listening, s/he might incorrectly hear or misinterpret what has been said. To avoid this type of misunderstanding, it is helpful to check back with the person, summarizing or paraphrasing the main points of their statement. Emphasize that it is not necessary to repeat back every word the person said, but to make sure you have gotten the main points.
2. Announce to students that we will now practice this skill by playing a "Listening Triads" game. In this game, everyone has a chance to speak, but before each one does, s/he must repeat or summarize what the other speaker has just said to his/her satisfaction. We will break into groups of three. While two discuss one of the following topics, the third student acts as referee. The referee's job is to make sure that before someone speaks they have summarized what the other person just said.
3. Demonstrate briefly. While "A" and "B" converse, "C" observes and referees.
4. Rotate roles in the triads, with each segment timed at two minutes.

**Sample Topics:**

1. Your class has been given \$1,000. How do you want to spend it?
2. If you could be someone famous, who would you be and why?
3. If you could have one wish, what would you wish for and why?

**Discussion in large group:**

1. Did you think your partner really heard and understood you? Why?
2. How did you feel about yourself?
3. How did you feel about your partner?
4. Is it easier or harder to talk to someone who practices Active Listening? Why?

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to display Active Listening Skills.

**Evaluation:** Number of students will begin using Active Listening Skills in daily situations.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

**ACTIVE LISTENING STEPS**

1. Put yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how he or she feels.
2. Show understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behaviors:
  - tone of voice
  - facial expressions
  - gestures
  - eye contact
  - posture
3. Restate (paraphrase) the person's most important thoughts and feelings.
5. Do not interrupt, offer advice or give suggestions.

6. Do not bring up similar feelings and problems from your own experience.

5. Remain neutral. Don't take sides.

## Giving and Receiving Empathy

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objective:** To give and receive empathy. (Similar to active listening.)

**Materials Needed:** Chart or sign on the board: "Are you feeling.... because you're needing ...?"

Slips of paper with brief "scripts" written on them, enough for each student

**Procedure:**

1. Teacher finds a volunteer to demonstrate with; student reads a script and teacher responds with empathy as in the Demonstration example below. Maintain eye contact. Emphasize that it's not important that the listener guess the feeling or need correctly, but that s/he be interested and present.
2. Group students into pairs facing each other.
3. Have each student take a slip of paper with the first line of a script written on it.
4. Student "A" reads her or his script and student "B" responds with "Are you feeling.... because you're needing....?"
5. Student "A" now ad-libs a response, continuing with the same emotion and student "B" gives another empathic response; continue with one more statement and response.
6. Switch, now student "B" reads the script and student "A" responds with empathy for three rounds.
7. Student "A" now shares something scary, frustrating, painful, or joyful from his/her own experience and receives empathy from student "B"; then they switch.
8. Ask for feedback from all the pairs. What was hard about this? What worked or didn't work?

**Variation:** Each group can have three people, with one being the observer of the process. Rotate so that each person gets a chance to be a speaker, a responder, and an observer.

**Demonstration example:**

A says: People are so rude. At the end of class, they push their way to the door.

B says: Are you irritated and want more consideration for everyone in the class?

A says: Yeah, I got knocked down a couple of times, too.

B says: So, it's scary? You want to be safe at school?

A says: Yeah, they just don't care about anyone but themselves.

B says: Do you feel angry, sad, scared or hurt when you think people don't care? Which of these feelings do you feel?

A says: I guess I feel angry at them.

B says: Would you like them act more caring about others?

A says: Yeah.

**Expected Outcome:** Students gain practice giving and receiving empathy.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe whether students spontaneously are more empathic with each other.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart and Victoria Kindle Hodson, p. 151-153

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

**Sample scripts:**

My pet dog died yesterday.

My parents are gonna be mad at me when they see my report card.

The teachers here are so mean.

Joanne said I could have one of her kittens.

I hate it when the boys fight.

It's my turn to play!

We have too much homework.

I can't wait until spring vacation!

My mom had a baby girl, now I'm a big sister (brother).

Tom never sits with me in the lunchroom.

The other kids all get to play baseball, but I have to practice the piano.

I am just lousy at math.

My teacher says she likes my artwork.

My little brother is such a pest!

It isn't fair that we have to eat lunch at 11:00 when I'm not even hungry yet.

Next weekend I'm going to go fishing with my Dad!

## Collage of Needs

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objective:** To help students identify needs and link them to emotions.

**Materials Needed:** Large selection of magazines, scissors, glue/glue sticks, markers, large newsprint paper.

**Procedure:**

1. Review Needs list (poster)
2. Discuss how people react emotionally when their needs are met, and how they react when their needs are not met.
3. Work in pairs or small groups to find and cut out magazine pictures that show a person getting needs met, also find pictures showing needs not being met (person shows disappointment, sadness, fear, anger)
4. Each group divides their paper in half, labeling one side "Needs Met" and the other side "Needs Not Met."
5. Students paste their pictures in appropriate sides of the chart and write the need(s) underneath each picture. (It is okay to guess, or even make up a story.) (Optional: On the "Needs Not Met" side, have students draw a balloon and write in it what the character depicted might be saying about their feelings and needs. Example: "I'm sad, I need affection." "I'm frustrated, I need cooperation.")
6. When all groups finish their collages, ask them to share their images with the whole class.
7. Discuss: What were the most common themes? How do we know, or guess, what needs are being met or unmet?
8. Display the collages on classroom walls as reminders of needs.

**Expected Outcome:** Students have improved understanding and fluency about needs.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe whether students mention their own needs more frequently after doing this activity.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart & Victoria Kindle Hodson, p.135

**Submitted by: Cathy Holt**, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication.

## NEEDS INVENTORY

The following list is not complete, but it is a starting point.

### CONNECTION

Acceptance  
Affection  
Appreciation  
Belonging  
Cooperation  
Communication  
Closeness  
Community  
Companionship  
Compassion  
Consideration  
Consistency  
Empathy  
Inclusion  
Intimacy  
Love  
Mutuality  
Nurturing  
Respect  
Safety  
Security  
Self-respect  
Stability  
Support  
To know & be known  
To see & be seen  
To understand & be understood  
Trust  
Warmth

### HONESTY

Authenticity  
Integrity  
Presence

### PLAY

Fun  
Humor  
Joy

### PEACE

Beauty  
Communion  
Ease  
Equality  
Harmony  
Inspiration  
Order  
Quiet

### PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Air  
Food  
Movement/Exercise  
Rest/Sleep  
Safety  
Protection  
Shelter  
Touch  
Water

### MEANING

Awareness  
Celebration of life  
Challenge  
Clarity  
Competence  
Consciousness  
Contribution  
Creativity  
Discovery  
Efficacy  
Effectiveness  
Growth  
Learning  
Mourning  
Participation  
Purpose  
Self-expression  
Stimulation  
Understanding

### AUTONOMY

Choice  
Freedom  
Independence  
Space  
Spontaneity

Source: *Non-Violent Communication, A Language of Compassion* by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

## Chain of Belonging

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** ongoing project, can be added to daily for a week

**Objective:** To understand many ways to meet our need for belonging.

**Materials Needed:** Large poster of Needs; many strips of diversely colored paper (1"x8.5"), tape (or stapler, or glue); "Talking stick" (or stone, etc.).

**Procedure:**

1. Refer to the Needs poster and review the need for belonging.
2. Seat students in a circle and pass the "Talking stick" (or stone), asking each student to state one way that people can meet their need for belonging. (Sharing in a circle is one way.)
3. You might offer suggestions or post questions such as: Think of a friend and what you do together. Describe a group to which you belong. How do you help someone else meet their need for belonging? What has someone done for you that helped you feel included?
4. Ask each student to write on a strip of colored paper, one way to meet the need for belonging, leaving a margin on each end so the strips can be joined in a chain.
5. At the end of the day, allow time for reflection on what students did that day that helped them meet their need for belonging.
6. Spend a few minutes each day for a week doing this activity. At the end of the week, have students assemble the chain (using tape, stapler or glue) and put it up in the classroom. Allow time for everyone to read the statements on the chain.
7. Celebrate how everyone's contribution added to the chain.

**Expected Outcome:** Students learn many options to meet their need for belonging.

**Evaluation:** Teacher observes whether students adopt new ways to meet their need to belong.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart and Victoria Kindle Hodson, pp. 140-141.

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

## Laying Your Cards on the Table

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 30 minutes and then periodical use

**Objective:** Learn vocabulary of feelings and needs; identify and express feelings and needs

**Materials Needed:** colored index cards; wall charts of feelings and needs.

**Procedure:**

1. Distribute 10 cards of one color and 10 of another color to each student. For example, blue cards could be for feelings and green cards could be for needs.
2. Ask students to write, in large letters, one feeling on each blue card and one need on each green card. Remind students to include both the positive and negative feelings they typically experience in a school day. (Optional: students can illustrate their cards with crayons or markers, perhaps drawing a frowning face to express anger, etc.)
3. Throughout the day, the teacher may ask students to “lay your cards on the table” to find out how the students are feeling, and what needs are or are not being met by whatever is happening.
4. On subsequent days, offer additional cards for the students to add to their decks.
5. When students first arrive at school, ask them to select feelings and needs cards and place them on their desks so others can understand what's going on with them.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will feel more comfortable sharing feelings and needs, and will be more likely to communicate with those rather than with complaints, criticisms, put-downs, etc.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe whether reticent students are better able to communicate feelings and needs.

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Sura Hart & Victoria Kindle Hodson, p.169

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

## FEELINGS LIST

### Feelings experienced when needs are fulfilled:

happy	amused	touched
joyful	grateful	wonderful
satisfied	confident	enthusiastic
peaceful	calm	hopeful
content	inspired	relieved
excited	loving	refreshed
elated	delighted	thrilled
secure	moved	fascinated

### Feelings experienced when needs are not fulfilled:

afraid	exhausted	sad
angry	fidgety	shocked
annoyed	frightened	startled
anxious	frustrated	surprised
apathetic	furious	suspicious
ashamed	guilty	tense
bored	hopeless	terrified
concerned	hurt	tired
confused	impatient	troubled
depressed	insecure	uncomfortable
discouraged	jealous	uneasy
disappointed	lonely	unhappy
disgusted	miserable	upset
disturbed	nervous	
embarrassed	overwhelmed	
envious	restless	

## **Methods of Getting Your Needs Met**

**1. What are the most direct ways you use to get your needs met?**

**2. What are the most indirect ways you use to get your needs met?**

**3. What are the most direct ways that my friends use to get their needs met?**

**4. What are the most indirect ways my friends use to get their needs met?**

## Making Clear Requests

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objective:** Help clarify the key aspects in making a clear, effective request.

**Procedure:**

Present the following:

- a) A request is asking for what we **do** want (it is positive) instead of what we **don't** want.  
Example: "Please listen to me when I'm talking to you." (Not, "Stop that talking!")  
Story: A woman wanted her husband to spend more time at home, so she asked him to stop spending so much time at the office. So, he joined a bowling league, and she was furious!
- b) A request asks for a present action.  
Example: "Would you be willing to take the old papers and trash out of our locker today?" (Not, "Will you keep our locker neat from now on?")
- c) A request is stated in action language (what we want people to **do**, not what we want them to **be**.)  
Example: "Would you be willing to share that bottle of Elmer's glue?"  
(Not, "Would you be more generous?")
- d) A request is specific and concrete, not general.  
Example: "Would you be willing to talk to me in a softer tone of voice?"  
(Not, "Would you act more respectful?")
- e) A complaint is not a request. "It's too hot in here" is different from "May I open a window?"

**Activity:** Read students the following list of requests. Ask them to point out any requests that are negative, future oriented, "be" instead of "do", complaints, or too general. Then ask them to restate the request.

1. Those kids are too noisy.
2. Would you please stop teasing me?
3. Would you help me?
4. Please be thoughtful of other people.
5. Would you please open the door for me?
6. Would you be willing to stop tapping your foot?
7. Would you let me use your little mirror for a minute?
8. Please be more considerate of my feelings.
9. Can you tell me how you feel about what I just said?

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be more specific, positive, etc. in making requests

**Evaluation:** Teacher observations

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

## I-Messages

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Butcher paper with the I-Message Formula on it. Pencils.  
One copy of "Design an I-Message . . ." for each group.

**Objective:** Participants will learn to express wants and needs in an assertive, non-threatening manner.

### Procedure:

1. *Introduction-* In this activity, you are going to learn how to talk to people when you are mad at them or frustrated with them and you really want them to hear what you are saying.

First, we will read two skits about the same story. You will see two different ways a person can talk about a problem. Listen carefully for the kinds of words the actors' use and how they express their feelings towards each other.

2. *Skit #1: A You-Message Skit*

Marie: Anita, you're a lousy friend. You're always spreading gossip. You just can't keep things to yourself. I told you that Darlene and I had an argument. Now it's all over school that we're going to have a fight. We spent half the morning straightening things out, then your gossiping messed things up all over again. You're a blabbermouth! I'll never tell you anything again.

Anita: Why don't you just shut up! Who cares what you think anyway? I was just getting you some back up. You don't appreciate anything. You're not worth having for a friend.

3. *Process questions of Skit #1*

- a. How do you think Marie felt about Anita in this skit?
- b. How do you think Anita felt about Marie?
- c. Do you think that Anita is going to stop spreading rumors about Marie?
- d. Why or why not?

4. *Skit #2: An I-Message Skit*

Marie: I was really angry when I heard that you told people I was going to fight Darlene after school. We had already made up, and she got angry all over again. I was also hurt that what I told you in confidence as a friend, you told to other people. I want to be your friend, but I don't think I can trust you right now, and it's hard for me to spend time with you.

Anita: I'm sorry, Marie. I feel really bad about messing things up because I really like you, and I was only trying to help. I don't want to lose you as a friend, and I promise I won't do anything like that again. If you ever tell me anything in confidence, I will keep it to myself.

5. *Process questions of Skit #2*

- a. How do you think Marie felt about Anita this time?
- b. How do you think Anita felt about Marie this time?
- c. Do you think Anita will tell more rumors about Marie? Why or why not?
- d. *Ask students to compare the two skits.*
- e. What were some of the comments made in the first skit?
- f. What were some of the nonverbal behaviors used in the first skit?
- g. What were some of the comments made in the second skit?
- h. What were some of the nonverbal behaviors used in the second skit?
- i. What was different about the way Marie communicated in the two skits?
- j. Which one was more effective?
- k. Help students identify the first skit as containing You-Messages, and the second skit as containing I-Messages.

6. *Describe the effects of You-Messages and how they differ from I-Messages.*

**You-Messages:** When you send a You-Message, the listener feels judged or blamed. S/he believes you think s/he is a bad person. When a You-Message is sent, the listener does not think about making a decision to change, but instead thinks about defending him/herself. This serves no useful purpose for speaker or listener. It makes anger grow instead of shrink.

**I-Messages:** With an I-Message, the speaker expresses his/her own wants, needs, or concerns to the listener. When the listener hears an I-Message, s/he knows that s/he has not done what the speaker wanted or expected and may feel badly about it, but that is quite different than believing the speaker thinks s/he is a terrible or incapable person. I-Messages are a clear and non-threatening way of telling people what you want and how you feel. They give the listener the option of deciding whether or not to do what you want him/her to do with a clear head. Basically, a You-Message blames or criticizes the listener. It suggests that s/he is at fault. On the other hand, an I-Message clearly states what the sender is feeling. It is specific and requires a nonjudgmental attitude towards the situation. It is more likely to lead to a positive change in the listener's behavior.

6. *How to construct an I-Message*

- a. Display the I-Message formula on butcher paper; go over the steps.
  - I feel (state the feeling)
  - When you (state the behavior)
  - Because (state the consequence)
- b. Example: I feel frustrated when you don't listen because what I'm saying is important and I want you to hear it.
- c. How you construct an I-Message will depend on the situation. Sometimes you will change the order in which you give the parts of the message and sometimes you will only say two of the three parts. The important thing to remember is that the I-Message should focus on **you**, not on the listener. It should state **your** feelings and what **you** want rather than placing the blame on the listener.

7. *Group Exercise*

- a. Provide the group with some situations that can be responded to with I-

Messages.

- b. Ask group to think of effective I-Messages for each of the situations. Encourage the group to use the I-Message Formula.
- c. Practice Situations:
  - You lent a comic book to Bobbie. When he returns it, six of the pages have been ripped out.
  - Your brother leaves a kitchen mess. When your mother gets home from work, she gets mad at you because she thinks you did it.

8. *Small Group Exercise:*

- a. Ask students to count off by fours and then split them into small groups, each with an adult leader. You should stay free so that you can oversee the activity
- b. Give each group a list of the four situations. (See page 58.)
- c. Ask them to design I-Messages for each of the situations. They will have five minutes and should do as many as they can in that amount of time.
- d. After five minutes, reconvene as a large group.
- e. Discuss the I-Messages which the groups have designed, as well as the following discussion questions:
  - Was it difficult for your group to make these I-Messages?
  - Why was it difficult (or easy)?
  - If these stories were really happening to you, do you think that giving an I-Message would work?

9. *Conclusions:* With practice, I-Messages are easy to use. Once you get in the habit of using them, you will be surprised at how much more willing people will be to do what you want them to do. I-Messages are especially helpful for people who refrain from asking for what they want for fear that whomever they ask will get angry. Often, conflicts escalate because one or both parties have stored up anger to the exploding point before confronting one another. If, when the conflict was small and simple, they had talked together with I-Messages, the conflict could have been resolved quickly and easily.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to use assertive techniques to express their needs and wants.

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to use I-Messages effectively.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

**DESIGN AN I-MESSAGE FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:**

1. You lent your new bike to a friend. When s/he returns it, it has a flat tire.

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

2. You're standing in the water fountain line. All of a sudden two students push right in front of you.

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

3. When you walk past Willie at recess, he calls you a name under his breath.

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

4. When you get home from school, you go to the kitchen to get a piece of pie. It turns out that your sister just ate the last two pieces.

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

## How to Recognize Conflicts of Wants and Needs

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-12

**Duration:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Objectives:** To help students identify how a conflict tangibly affects their needs and wants so they can choose the best method for resolving their conflicts.

### **Procedures:**

1. Talk about why it is important to be able to identify what needs are being tangibly affected by a conflict situation you are in. You have to be able to identify the needs that are being affected in order to be able to resolve a conflict of wants and needs.
2. Using the list of possible conflicts below, read each one and ask students what needs were tangibly affected by the conflict. Write their responses on the board.
3. Point out if they cannot identify a need that is being tangibly affected, then the conflict is more about values and beliefs.
3. Discuss how to use this as part of resolving a conflict of wants and needs. (Refer to the activity that follows showing the steps to use in resolving a conflict of wants and needs.)

### **Conflict Situations:**

- Omar and Lou are playing basketball, taking turns shooting at the basket. You come over and ask if you can play, too. They say you can't play because you aren't good enough. (*Your need to belong, to be liked, to have fun with your peers.*)
- A classmate of yours keeps cutting into the lunch line and you think that this breaks a rule in the cafeteria. (*Because you are given a limited time to eat lunch having someone jump in line in front of you means it will take you longer.*)
- She said I couldn't play with them. (*You need to be liked and you need to be included.*)
- My classmate told the teacher that I was talking. (*You have a need to follow the teacher's rules and not to get in trouble as a result of someone lying about your actions.*)
- "He's always distracting me. He was asking me questions while I am trying to write my homework." (*You need to get your homework finished and he is preventing you from meeting that need.*)
- Some class members keep talking when the teacher asked them to be quiet. (*This may not have a tangible effect on you and probably you should not get involved and let the teacher handle it.*)
- "People are so rude. At the end of class, they push their way to the door." (*Unless you are one of the people who has been pushed or treated rudely, it may not tangibly affect you.*)
- "My pet dog died yesterday." (*This has a serious effect on your emotional state and you may need some support to deal with the loss.*)

- “Tom never sits with me in the lunchroom.” *(You may want Tom to like you and are afraid that he doesn’t like you.)*
- You say to your friends, “It isn’t fair that we have to eat lunch at 11:00 when I’m not even hungry yet.” *(Your need is to be able to eat closer to the time that you are hungry.)*
- A classmate calls you “stupid” in front of others. *(This may hurt your feelings and affects your need to be treated with respect.)*
- Your mom said she would pick you up at 3:30, it’s already 4:00 and she hasn’t come.” *(This is a broken agreement and your need may be to have agreements kept or renegotiated.)*
- Yesterday you opened your locker and your lunch money and your math book with your completed homework were missing. *(You need to find your lunch money or you may not be able to eat lunch and you need to find your homework because it may affect your grade and you may have to do it over.)*
- Jimmy sits two tables away from you in the lunchroom. He keeps making faces and whispering to friends about you. *(You need to be treated with respect by Jimmy.)*
- Seth and you were playing around in the locker room yesterday, but Seth got mad and started fighting with you. *(You need to prevent a fight so you don’t get into trouble or get hurt.)*
- You are a new student in school. For the past month, John has been saying junk about you and giving you dirty looks. Yesterday, he bumped into you in the hall and wanted to fight. *(You need to be treated with respect and not be harassed in this way.)*

**Expected Outcome:** Students will be able to identify the needs that are being tangibly affected by a conflict situation.

**Evaluation:** The teacher is able to see a marked improvement in students’ ability to identify how their needs and wants are tangibly affected in a conflict situation.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs.

## SKILL PRACTICE EXERCISE: THE EIGHT-STEP METHOD FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS OF WANTS AND NEEDS\*

**Directions:** Below you will find an eight-step process for resolving conflicts of wants and needs. If you have identified a current conflict of wants and needs, use it to practice the skills described in this chapter. This worksheet can also be used to resolve an actual conflict of want and needs.

1. Choose a partner with whom to role-play a current conflict of wants and needs that you are experiencing. This experience will give you a chance to rehearse before you actually approach the person with whom you are in conflict.
2. Use a current conflict that is not resolved. Don't pick the biggest conflict you've ever had in your life, but choose one that seems to have some tangible effects on you. The purpose of this role-play is to prepare you to approach the other person in order to resolve the conflict. So, don't pick a conflict where you're sure the person wouldn't sit down with you to resolve it, or one where you're afraid the conflict would be likely to escalate. It does not matter if the other person does not have the same level of skills that you have.
3. Briefly describe your conflict to your role-play partner so that they can get into the role.
4. Follow the step-by-step process described below (starting with Step 1) to role-play a resolution to your conflict. In role-playing the conflict, you may develop some new skills and insights that are useful when you work directly with this person to resolve the conflict.
5. After the role-playing session, talk about the realness of the role-play. Discuss what new insights you gained by doing the rehearsal. Plan a strategy with your partner for dealing with the actual person involved in the conflict.

**Alternate Step:** You may want to include a third person as a mediator to help you follow the worksheet correctly. The mediator's task is to help you stay on track with the steps.

6. Reverse roles. The person with the conflict now becomes the partner and the partner now works on his or her own conflict.
7. Make plans to apply your learning in a real conflict situation by preparing for an anticipated conflict of wants and needs or by confronting someone with whom you have a current conflict of wants and needs.

**Step 1: Describe your observation of the problem or behavior. Take a deep breath. Avoid speaking in a loud, angry voice.** Begin with an objective observation (something a video camera could record). For example, you might begin with, "When I heard you say you didn't want me on your team..."

**Step 2: Share the way you feel toward the person or problem.** Use "I" statements. Keep your focus internally. Remember that a judgment is not a feeling. Continuing with the above example, you might say, "I felt angry" or "I felt upset." (Avoid "I feel like you are being

unfair,” etc. That is not a feeling but a thought.)

**Step 3: Share what need you have that is not being met in this situation.** You may want to refer to the list of needs; there may be more than one need. For example, “I need to be included, I need to be treated with respect.”

**Step 4: Make a request from the other person.** Formulate this request ahead of time in your mind so that you can speak precisely. Remember, a request is not a demand! You are asking for a specific action or behavior, not for a different attitude. The more specific you can be, the more likely the other person will be willing and able to cooperate with you. You might say, “Would you be willing to let me be on your team?” or “Would you be willing to tell me why you didn't want me on your team?” Sometimes you might even ask, “Would you tell me how you feel about what I just said?” Remember that the other person has a choice to say no at any time. Be prepared to enter into a negotiation process, if necessary, to get your need met by having a series of options or solutions that might be acceptable.

**Step 5: Use reflective listening.** At this point, the other person will likely give you an explanation for their behavior. Repeat back what you hear them say so that they feel heard and understood before you go onto the next step. Avoid getting bogged down here by defending yourself, blaming them, complaining about them or escalating by bringing in other issues. Focus on your feelings of compassion and caring for the other person as you reflect back what you think they are feeling. You can say to them, “You look like you are feeling confused. Are you needing more time to think things over?” Once you have reflected back their feelings and needs once, they may bring up new information and you can again reflect back what you heard. After they pause, you may want to share some more feelings and needs of your own, or make a different request.

**Step 7: Negotiate if there are differences between what you want and what the other person is willing to give or do.** If the other person refuses to cooperate with your request, ask: “Would you be willing to talk about this at a later time?”

**Step 8: If you are unable to negotiate the differences, consider a mediator.** For the moment, you may have to agree to disagree and invite the other person to join you in exploring the conflict with the help of a mediator. You might say, “I see that we just don't agree on this issue. Would you be willing to meet with a mediator?”

\* Adapted from *Conflict Resolution: The Partnership Way* (2019) by **Barry K. Weinhold** pp. 74-75.

## Council Circle

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes or longer

**Objective:** To give everyone in the class an opportunity to express and be heard; to give feedback to the teacher.

**Materials Needed:** Object to pass such as a “Talking Stick” or stone, to identify the speaker.

**Procedure:**

1. Chairs are arranged into a circle so everyone can see and hear everyone else. The teacher is part of the circle.
2. Each person has a chance to hold the talking stick or stone and to speak while others listen without interrupting.
3. Guidelines for the speaker are to speak briefly and from the heart.
4. Listeners are to listen with respect, and not respond until it is their turn to hold the talking object.
5. Each person may be asked to “check in”, sharing their feelings and needs about a particular situation or event.
6. A Council Circle can be held to share responses to a situation at school, a world event, or even a subject the class is studying.

**Expected Outcome:** All students have an opportunity to participate and be heard and defuse conflicts defused

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe whether shy students are participating more

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart & Victoria Kindle Hodson, p. 172

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

## Would You Rather Be Right or Happy?

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 25 minutes

**Materials Needed:** The essay, "Is It Always Right To Be Right?" which is on the next page.

**Objectives:** (1) To teach students to understand how and why people defend their "so called" values and beliefs even when it means losing lives, possessions, etc., (2) To help students explore new ways to perceive conflicts of values and beliefs.

### **Procedures:**

1. Read the essay by Warren Schmidt titled, "Is It Always Right to Be Right?"
2. Ask students the following questions:
  - What are some examples of people or groups who insisted they were right even though it was not getting them what they wanted in some way?
  - Why do you think people defend their values and beliefs so strongly?
  - How do people form these strong values and beliefs?
  - What does it take for people to change their values and beliefs?
3. Break into small groups with the task of coming up with a list of peaceful ways to resolve conflicts of values and beliefs.
4. Have each group report back its ideas and write them on the board. See if the class can agree on the best possible ways to resolve conflicts of values & beliefs.
5. Post the best ideas on a poster in the classroom.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will come up with good ways to resolve conflicts of values and beliefs. They will be able to utilize these in resolving their conflicts of values and beliefs

**Evaluation:** The teacher will be able to observe students utilizing the methods they created to resolve their conflicts of values and beliefs.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs



## **IS IT ALWAYS RIGHT TO BE RIGHT?**

There once was a land where people were always right. They knew it... and they were proud of it. It was a land where people were proud to say, "I am right and you are wrong." For these were words of conviction, of strength and of courage. No one was ever heard to say, "I may be wrong" or "You may be right" for these were words of weakness, uncertainty and cowardice.

When differences arose among the people of this land, they sought not to re-examine and explore, but only to justify and persuade. When differences arose between the old and the young, the older would say, "We have worked hard to build this great and prosperous land. We have produced cars and highways that permit us to move quickly from place to place. We fly planes that surpass the speed of sound and we have built computers that solve problems in milliseconds. We have even touched the moon. We expect those who inherit this good land to appreciate what we have accomplished and to build on the heritage we have given to them."

**THESE OLDER PEOPLE WERE RIGHT, OF COURSE...AND THEY KNEW IT AND WERE PROUD OF IT.**

But the younger people of that land would respond, "We see around us a land that has been befouled and exploited. People starve where food is plentiful. Laws and practices prevent some from having an equal chance to develop and to influence. Noble and moral words are matched by selfish and sordid deeds. Leaders urge us to fight wars to preserve peace--and the fighting does not end. The whole scene is phony and polluted and inhuman and out of control. We want no part of this money-mad Establishment.

**THESE YOUNGER PEOPLE WERE RIGHT, OF COURSE AND THEY KNEW IT AND WERE PROUD OF IT... and the gap between the generations grew wider.**

When differences arose between people different races, those from the majority race would say, "We have made considerable progress - but social progress does not come swiftly. Those whom we seek to help and lift and only hurt their own cause when they push and intrude and pressure us. Let them show some patience - and let them use more fully the opportunities we have already supplied. Then we will feel like doing even more for them."

**THESE PEOPLE OF THE MAJORITY WERE RIGHT, OF COURSE...AND THEY KNEW IT AND WERE PROUD OF IT**

But those from the minority group would reply, "We have been pushed around too long and we are angry. We have been confined to a ghetto. Our children's education has been stunted in second-rate school. We have seen jobs go to the less qualified, while our people are rejected or shunted into menial tasks. We see a thousand subtle signs that brand us and our children as second-class citizens in this land. We will tolerate lofty promises and meager deeds no longer."

**THESE PEOPLE OF THE MINORITY WERE RIGHT, OF COURSE AND THEY KNEW IT AND WERE PROUD OF IT...and the gap between the races grew wider.**

And so it went in this land...group after group defined "right," took their stand and upheld their position against those who opposed them. It happened between those who taught in the school and those who provided the funds. It happened between those who gave priority to a strong defense and those who gave priority to better cities. It happened between those who pleaded for peace at any price and those who argued for national honor at any cost.

**AND EVERYONE WAS RIGHT, OF COURSE...AND THEY KNEW IT AND WERE PROUD OF IT ...and the gap between the groups grew wider.**

Until the day came when the rigidity of rightness caused all activity to come to a halt. Each group stood in its solitary rightness, glaring with proud eyes at those too blind to see their truth, determined to maintain their position at all costs (for this is the responsibility of being right). No one traveled across the giant gaps, no one talked to those on the other side, and no one listened. The quality of life declined and grew grimmer. People became angrier and more afraid. Violence increased...

One day a strange new sound was heard in the land. Someone said, "I may be wrong...you may be right." The people were shocked that anyone could be so weak and confused. But the voice persisted and some began to listen. It now seemed safe to listen to opposing or even "wrong" views. As they listened, they discovered common beliefs that they had not known before. They even began to see signs of humanity and noble purpose in those whom they once only knew as adversaries. Here and there people expressed their common desires in deeds and bright examples of joint action were seen in the land. With each new effort, people's faith in one another grew. So did their faith in the future and in their ability to shape their own destiny. They stated these beliefs in a Declaration of Interdependence that read in part..."All people are endowed with certain inalienable rights, but each must assume certain inevitable responsibilities. For the happiness and fulfillment of all depends on the commitment of each to accept equality and uniqueness: Rights and Responsibilities."

In this land people had learned to see how two "rights" could make a costly wrong. They learned that less courage is required to point a finger of blame than to extend the hand of partnership; that less wisdom is needed to defend a narrow right than to seek a broader understanding. Most important of all, the people of this land learned that the quest for truth is never over...that the challenges are always the same: to stop the fighting long enough to listen, to learn from those who differ, to try new approaches, to seek and test new relationships. It is a task that never ends.

By Warren H. Schmidt  
UCLA Graduate School of Business Administration

## The Values Tango

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-12

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objectives:** (1) To teach students skills they need to resolve conflicts of values and beliefs.

**Materials Needed:** None

**Procedure:**

1. Following the Values Continuum, have one student from each of the “polarized” positions face each other in the center of the room standing a comfortable distance apart.
2. You will guide them using the Activity “Resolving Conflicts of Values and Beliefs.”
3. Each time they feel the other person reflected back accurately what they said, they can stay or take a step forward. If they do not think the other person accurately reflected back what they had said, they can take a step backward.
4. This movement indicates how the conflict resolution is progressing. Backward movement indicates no understanding or empathy while forward movement indicates more understanding and empathy.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will learn to use the dialogue skills taught in this practice to resolve their conflicts of values and beliefs.

**Evaluation:** Teachers will observe students using this skill with each other.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado springs.

## The Values Continuum

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Duration:** 30-40 minutes

**Grade:** 4-12

**Objectives:** (1) To get students to think about where they stand on various value statements.

**Materials Needed:** Make five 8 1/2 x 11" signs to tape on the wall along a continuum that say: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "No opinion," "Disagree," "Strongly Disagree."

**Procedures:**

1. Move the desks aside leaving a long open space down the center of the room where students will position themselves on this continuum for each statement that is read.
2. Post signs on the wall at intervals the length of the classroom to represent positions on the continuum.
3. Read the "Values Continuum" statements and then ask the students to stand near to the point on the continuum that best represents what the statement means to them. After reading each statement ask them to reposition themselves on the continuum.
4. After you read four or five statements ask them to talk to other students who are positioned at the same place. Ask them to compare the reasons that they are standing at the same place with others there to see if they are the same.

**Outcomes:** Students will identify where they stand on a number of values issues and begin to better understand their own values and beliefs.

**Evaluation:** Teachers will observe that students have learned a deeper understanding of their own values.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs.

## The Values Continuum

**Directions:** Read each statement and then ask the students to stand on the continuum that they believe best represents what they believe about the statement.

- It is a woman's right to choose whether or not to have an abortion.
- It is wrong to copy answers from someone else during an exam.
- Prayer should be allowed in schools.
- The death penalty should be used to punish all murderers.
- The federal government intrudes too much into the private lives of its citizens.
- Homosexuals should not be allowed to marry.
- People have the right to choose to die.
- Parents should have the right to spank their children to get them to behave.
- Parents should be allowed to send their children to the schools of their choice.
- Global warming is a real threat.
- Illegal immigrants should be sent back to where they came from.
- Schools should honor their artists and musicians as much as they do their athletes.
- Schools should have their students wear uniforms.
- Add others that are relevant:

## How To Prepare Yourself For A Conflict Resolution Session

**Kind of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Materials Needed:** “How To Prepare For A Conflict” on the next page and one of the Peer Mediation Role Plays beginning on page 79 of this Manual.

**Objectives:** (1) To provide students with a set of steps to follow to prepare themselves for a conflict resolution session.

**Procedure:**

1. Hand out the work sheet “How To Prepare For A Conflict” and go over it with your students answering any questions they may have.
2. Present them with a role-play situation where they can practice using the steps.
3. Ask them to think of a current unresolved conflict and have them fill in the blanks on the work sheet.
4. Debrief this activity with your students by asking them the following questions:
  - Which step in the preparation process was the hardest for you to do? Why?
  - Which step was the easiest for you to do? Why?
  - Can you see how to use this work sheet with an actual conflict? How?

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to use this work sheet to better prepare themselves for an actual conflict resolution session.

**Evaluation:** The teacher notices how much students use this work sheet to prepare themselves for a conflict resolution session.

**Submitted by:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs

### How To Prepare For A Conflict

**Step 1: Focus on Your Inner Experience of the Conflict**

- a. Using a current conflict (or a role played one), fill in the blanks below to help you better prepare yourself for entering a conflict resolution session.
- b. I know that I am having a conflict because \_\_\_\_\_.  
(tight stomach, mind goes blank, sweaty palms, heart is pounding, rapid breathing)
- c. Where I feel this conflict in my body is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(the place in your body where I feel the conflict)
- c. When I think about the conflict I feel \_\_\_\_\_.  
(fear, anger, sadness, shame, guilt, hurt)
- d. What about the conflict evokes these feelings? \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. I can remember feeling this way before when \_\_\_\_\_.

(describe the earlier conflict and what happened)

### **Step 2: Get Centered**

This involves taking a deep breath and allowing yourself to relax. Think of something pleasant and do the breathing until you feel calm and relaxed.

### **Step 3: Determine The Type of Conflict**

- a. Conflicts of wants and needs are those where the conflict is interfering with you getting a need or want met. Usually what the other person is doing has a direct effect on your ability to get a need or want met.
- b. Conflicts of values and beliefs are those where what the other person is saying or doing may upset you because you don't believe the same things, but it does not interfere with your meeting any of your needs or wants.
- c. The way this conflict interferes with me meeting my needs is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(If you can't identify how this conflict interferes with your meeting your needs, then it is likely a conflict of values and beliefs).

### **Step 4: Deciding Which Skills to Use**

Once you have determined which type of conflict it is, choose the appropriate skill to use to resolve it. There are two separate sets of instructions for resolving the conflict, based on the type of conflict.

### **Step 5: Establish Ground Rules for Your Conflict Resolution Session**

- a. Agree on a time to meet to work on the conflict.
- b. Ask each person to state his or her perceptions of the conflict. Get an agreement on what the conflict is before trying to resolve it.
- c. Ask each person to share a desired outcome. Ask: How would you like this conflict between us to be resolved?
- d. Take turns using the worksheets for resolving this type of conflict.
- e. Avoid complaining and ask for what you want directly from the other person involved. If the other person is complaining, ask them what they want from you.
- f. If you come to an agreement on a win-win way to resolve the conflict, agree to test the agreement and if it doesn't work also agree to get back together again.
- g. Thank each other for being willing to resolve the conflict.

## RESOLVING CONFLICTS OF VALUES AND BELIEFS\*

**Directions:** If the other student's behavior has no tangible effects on you, then it is likely a conflict of values and beliefs

- 1. Take turns listening to each other's views of the conflict using reflective listening.** Be sure to identify the feelings as well as the words. Use the rule that you cannot state your opinion or position until you have listened and reflected back what the other person said and reached an agreement on what that person actually said. ("You seem to be saying that you think I am being unfair to you and you also seem a little angry and scared to me. Do I understand what you are saying and feeling?")
- 2. Take turns finding the sources of the value or belief conflict.** Each student talks about personal experiences that may have led him/her to form this value or belief ("What experiences have you had in your life have contributed to you feeling this way on this issue?") Again, listen and reflect back the feelings & content for each other before going on.
- 3. Take turns finding the sources of the feelings.** Focus on the feelings and reflect back what you hear from the other student. ("What other times in your life have you felt this way?")
- 4. Determine any shifts in awareness.** Take turns restating any new perceptions.

(“Based on your thoughts about the sources of your values or beliefs and your feelings on this subject, do you have any new perceptions of your value or belief?”)

5. **Now explore areas of agreement and disagreement.** (“I think we can now agree that what we identified what we agree on. It seems that we still disagree on some points. Do you agree with what I am saying?”)

6. **Make plans to handle any areas of disagreement.** (“I think we understand better why we each feel the way we do about this issue and can respect our differences of opinion. If it interferes in any way with us being friends, will you agree to talk with me about it?”)

\* Adapted from *Conflict Resolution: The Partnership Way* (2019) by Barry K. Weinhold, p. 59.

## Let's Mediate

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40-50 minutes

**Objective:** to learn how to mediate conflicts; for use as part of mediation training for selected group

**Materials Needed:** "Conflict" scripts for each player, charts displaying Feelings and Needs.

**Procedure:**

1. Three students at a time perform (other students watch and comment at the end). There is a mediator, and two people in a "conflict."
2. Mediator looks at the first student and says "Facts please" (or "Observations please.")
3. That student states the facts of the situation. If s/he starts to mix in opinions or evaluations or judgments, the mediator will "translate" these into feelings and needs.
4. Next the mediator says to the same student, "Feelings, please," and the student expresses the feelings that were stimulated by what happened.
5. The mediator says to that student, "Needs, please," and the student expresses the unmet needs that gave rise to his/her feelings.
6. Mediator turns to the second student and says, "What facts did you hear?" Student responds.
7. The mediator turns to the first student and asks, "Is that what you meant to say?" The student responds with a yes or no. If no, the mediator asks the second student to state the facts again. This process is repeated until the first student's message has been heard to his/her satisfaction.
8. Mediator asks the second student, "What feelings and needs did you hear?" Student responds.
9. Mediator asks the first student, "Was that accurate?" and the student responds. Again, the process is repeated until the first student's feelings and needs have been reflected accurately.
10. Next the mediator asks the second student for the facts, feelings, and needs, and the first student reflects (steps 2-9).
11. Mediator then asks if either person can think of a solution that would meet both of their needs; if one is agreed upon, the mediator congratulates them both.
12. If a mutually agreeable solution is not reached in the allotted time, schedule another time to continue the process.
13. Repeat this process with a new mediator, inviting two students who have a real conflict to take part. If no one volunteers with a real life issue, use a second "conflict" script.
14. Class discusses what happened. How might they have responded? Could a resolution have been arrived at more quickly?

**Expected Outcome:** Teachers observe students being able to mediate conflicts?

**Evaluation:** Teacher assesses readiness of peer mediators to handle high conflict situations

**Adapted from:** *The Compassionate Classroom* by Surya Hart & Victoria Kindle Hodson, pp. 166-167.

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

### **Sample Conflict Scripts:**

John is angry because Steve said, “We don't want wimps like John on our team.” John is also feeling hurt and wants to be included in sports. Steve is concerned about winning and is worried that having John on the team will ruin their chances, because John is short, doesn't run fast, and doesn't have much experience.

Susan heard from Jenny that Lisa was talking about her behind her back and saying she had ugly hair. She feels angry and humiliated because her mother cuts her hair. Lisa says she was just playing and didn't mean anything by it. Jenny is loyal to Susan.

Jerry is gay. Andy teased him, saying “Hey fag, you want a date with Julie? She likes you.” Jerry said “Why don't you mind your own business? I don't bother anybody.” Andy responded, “This school doesn't need swishy fags like you. I know some guys who'd like to beat you up.” Now Jerry is afraid and angry.

Sam is known as the “Teacher's Pet” because Ms. Smith often asks him to pass out papers and other things in the classroom. One day after school, Roger and Jim follow him saying, “Sammy, teacher's pet. Look at him, his pants are wet,” and laughing. Sam is scared and fights back the tears as he rushes home.

Joanne said to Mary, “You're not invited to my party because I don't like you. In fact, nobody in this class likes you because you have an attitude. You think you're so much better than everybody else just because your Dad is a teacher in this school.” Mary is crushed and bewildered. Joanne had Mary's Dad as a teacher the previous year and got 2 D's on her report card.

## Conflict Mediation Process Practice

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 25 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Conflict Mediation Process on butcher paper. Individual copies of the Conflict Mediation process. List of typical school conflicts for role-plays

### Procedures:

1. Announce that students will be divided into small groups to practice being Conflict Mediators. (About 4 or 5 students will be in each group, depending on the number of students being trained and the number of trainers.)
2. In each group students will quickly decide which two will be Conflict Mediators and which two will be disputants. Additional students will act as observers.
3. Review the steps for the large group, using a list posted on the wall.
4. Explain to students that after they have completed all steps and resolved a conflict, you would like them to discuss the practice—what worked well and what can be improved.
5. Next, students reverse roles, i.e., a student who was a disputant the first time will be a Conflict Manager and vice versa. Students will continue practicing until they are called back to the large group. Total practice time will be 20 minutes.
6. Hand out the list of typical school conflicts generated during the orientation. Students will choose a conflict to role-play from that list.
  - a. Students count off by 4's (or 5's).
  - b. Assign a coach to each group.
  - c. Describe where each group will work.
  - d. Ask students and coaches to go to their assigned places and begin the practices.
7. Note: Ask coaches to stay with their work group and pay close attention to the students throughout the activity. Have them read The School Mediation Process handout (see next page).
8. Ask students and coaches to go to their assigned places and begin the practices.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to role-play situational conflicts using the mediation process.

**Evaluation:** Students will master the mediation steps.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## THE MEDIATION PROCESS

### 1. Mediator Monologue:

- a. Explain the mediation process.
- b. Explain the mediator's role.
- c. Explain confidentiality.
- d. Explain the ground rules:
  - Agree to try to solve the problem.
  - No name calling/put-downs
  - Do not interrupt.
  - Tell the truth.
- e. Ask each disputant if they want to try mediation to help solve their problem.

### 2. Opening Statements:

- a. Ask Disputant #1 what happened and how they feel.
- b. Ask Disputant #2 what happened and how they feel.
- c. Use Active Listening

### 3. Reframe the Problem: Summarize the Problem in Neutral Terms

### 4. Explore Interests:

- a. Ask Disputant #1 what will make them feel better, happy, and/or is important for them in a solution.
- b. Ask Disputant #2 what will make them feel better, happy, and/or is important for them in a solution.

### 5. Invent Options:

- a. Ask Disputant #1 for possible solutions.
- b. Ask Disputant #2 for possible solutions.

### 6. Choose the Best Solution:

- a. Help Disputants pick what *they* agree is the best solution.
- b. If the solution is not clear to you, ask clarifying questions.

Repeat and write down the solution.

## Memo To: Mediation Coaches

### Re: School Mediation Simulation Training

The following procedure should be followed for conducting mediation simulations:

1. Make sure your participants are in the correct group.
2. Ask for volunteers to mediate the first role-play. They can mediate solo or in teams of two depending on the trainer's instructions. Assign the disputant roles to the remaining participants. Hand out roles to each disputant. Do not let the mediators see the disputants' roles.

3. Keep participants on task during the simulation. Do not get into lengthy discussions about the roles, the mediation model, or any other topic. Participants sometimes tend to want to talk about mediation rather than experience it. They'll have plenty of time to ask questions between simulations and during the large group debriefing following the small groups.
4. Look for the following skills during the role play:
  - A. Mediator neutrality.
  - B. Mediator not imposing/suggesting solutions.
  - C. Good active listening skills.
  - D. Mediator de-escalating the conflict.
  - E. Good nonverbal communication and body language.
5. Take a minute or two to debrief each simulation before moving on to the next one. Focus on the positive but do not hesitate to point out to mediators if they appear to be less than neutral, seem to be offering solutions, or any other problems that you observe. Ask disputants how they felt, what were helpful things that the mediator did, and what were things that could have been done differently. Ask mediators what their strategy was during the mediation.

## Conflict Mediation Process Practice II

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Material Needed:** Active Listening Rules on butcher paper

**Procedure:** Announce to students:

1. We will break into small groups and practice the Conflict Management Process once again.
2. If you were a Conflict Mediator, try to play a different part today. If you were an observer last time, do something else today.
3. We will practice several times again today.
4. Each time you practice, try to remember more and more of the process without looking at your paper. Think about what comes first and what needs to come next. If you or your partner forgot something, help each other. That's teamwork.
5. Today, when you practice, use your Active Listening Rules if you are a Conflict Mediator. They are in your folder and also posted on the wall.
6. As you practice today, work on two things:
  - a. Active Listening
  - b. The steps of the Conflict Mediation Process without looking at your paper.
7. Here is what we will do for practice.
  - a. After you go to your small groups, you will practice the model twice. Each time you practice, play a different role.
  - b. Count off by 4's (5's).
  - c. Now go to the small group area that matches your number.
  - d. Please go quickly and quietly so that we can practice as much as possible.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will understand Active Listening and the Conflict Mediation Process.

**Evaluation:** Number of students will become proficient in active listening skills and the Conflict Mediation Process.

**Submitted by:** Martha Crisp, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

## Healing Circle

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Objective:** to re-integrate a problem child with his classmates after a transgression; best done after student has apologized and/or made reparations.

**Materials Needed:** Babemba Circle story below.

**Procedure:**

1. Read the Babemba Circle story to students.
2. Ask students to form a circle around the student who has done something wrong.
3. Begin with the teacher stating one or two things that she appreciates about the student.
4. Ask each student to speak only of things this student has done that they enjoyed, admired, or appreciated, describing each one in as much detail as possible.
5. At the end, the students all say, "We see the beauty in you."

**The Babemba Circle Story:**

In the Babemba tribe of South Africa, when a person acts irresponsibly or unjustly, he is placed in the center of the village, alone and unfettered. All work ceases, and every man, woman and child in the village gathers in a large circle around the accused individual. Then each person in the tribe speaks to the accused, one at a time, about all the GOOD things the person in the center has done in his lifetime. Every incident, every experience that can be recalled with any detail and accuracy is recounted. All his positive attributes, good deeds, strengths and kindnesses are recited carefully and at length. The tribal ceremony often lasts several days. At the end, the tribal circle is broken, a joyous celebration takes place, and the person is symbolically and literally welcomed back into the tribe.

**Expected Outcome:** Students will more readily accept the one who made a mis-step. The student who was out of line will be more likely to live up to the good things spoken about him.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will assess peer behavior toward the problem student, and problem student's behavior change.

**Submitted by:** Cathy Holt, Kindness Campaign staff and teacher of Non-Violent Communication

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION/  
PEER MEDIATION  
ROLE-PLAYS**

### Role-Play 1: Disputant A

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.
- Situation:** Two students are in conflict because one of them keeps cutting into the lunch line. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** Every day in the lunch line, \_\_\_\_\_ cuts in front. The lines are really long, and the rule is no cutting in line. You told a lunchroom supervisor last week, but nothing has changed. You are upset that the person is still cutting in.
- Background Information:** You think \_\_\_\_\_ is a bully, but you are not afraid to speak up because a rule was broken.
- 

### Role-Play 1: Disputant B

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.
- Situation:** Two students are in conflict because one of them keeps cutting into the lunch line. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** You sometimes have stomach problems, so it takes more time for you to eat. Every day you have a friend who saves a place in line for you. \_\_\_\_\_ keeps telling everyone that you cut in line, but you know it is necessary for you to have more time to eat.
- Background Information:** You think \_\_\_\_\_ has a big mouth and is always minding everyone else's business. Your mother thinks you might have an ulcer and has made a doctor's appointment to check it out.

### Role-Play 2: Disputant A

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.
- Situation:** Two locker partners are arguing about missing things. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** Yesterday you opened your locker and your lunch money and your math book with your completed homework were missing. You received a zero on the homework for the day, and when you asked \_\_\_\_\_ about it he/she wouldn't say anything.
- Background Information:** You are a messy person and \_\_\_\_\_ is very neat. You were friends in the past.
- 

### Role-Play 2: Disputant B

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.
- Situation:** Two locker partners are arguing about missing things. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** Last week some of your pictures inside the locker were gone, as well as your math book. The locker is always a mess, and you just take the first book you see. You admit to taking the book and the money from \_\_\_\_\_ because you were not sure whom they belonged to.
- Background Information:** You are a neat person and have given up on trying to keep the locker clean because \_\_\_\_\_ is so messy.

### Role-Play 3: Disputant A

**Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.

**Situation:** Two students had a loud disagreement in class. A teacher has requested the peer mediation.

**Your Position:** Another student in your math class is always bugging you. Today \_\_\_\_\_ looked at you, kicked your desk, and pushed your books on the floor. You are ready to fight.

**Background Information:** Math class is hard for you, and you feel that people put you down in the class.

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### Role-Play 3: Disputant B

**Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.

**Situation:** Two students had a loud disagreement in class. A teacher has requested the peer mediation.

**Your Position:** You think that \_\_\_\_\_ is always asking dumb questions that disrupt the class. The whole class has to wait around until the teacher answers him/her.

**Background Information:** You think \_\_\_\_\_ should be in another math class. You are not very patient with people you think are stupid.

### Role-Play 4: Disputant A

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.
- Situation:** Two students were ready to fight in the cafeteria. One of the students has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ sits two tables away from you in the lunchroom. \_\_\_\_\_ keeps making faces and whispering to friends about you. He/she even throws food at you when no teacher is looking. Today you got so mad you accidentally dumped a slice of pizza in \_\_\_\_\_'s lap as you walked by.
- Background Information:** You were friends with \_\_\_\_\_ in grade school, but the friendship broke off when \_\_\_\_\_ began this new school year. You are not sure why the relationship changed.
- 

### Role-Play 4: Disputant B

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.
- Situation:** Two students were ready to fight in the cafeteria. One student has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ was your friend until this year. You believe he/she acts superior to everyone else and is always putting other people down. You know it was no accident that the slice of pizza dropped in your lap. You want your pants dry cleaned at \_\_\_\_\_'s expense.
- Background Information:** You think \_\_\_\_\_ is acting this way because he/she is in all advanced classes. You still want to be friends.

### Role-Play 5: Disputant A

**Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.

**Situation:** Two students were fighting in the locker room. The principal has requested the peer mediation.

**Your Position:** You and \_\_\_\_\_ were playing around in the locker room yesterday and \_\_\_\_\_ got mad and started fighting. The PE teacher referred both of you to the principal. You still don't know why \_\_\_\_\_ got so mad.

**Background Information:** You and \_\_\_\_\_ have been good friends the last 2 years. Joking around and play fighting is how you often act towards one another.

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### Role-Play 5: Disputant B

**Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.

**Situation:** Two students were fighting in the locker room. The principal has requested the peer mediation.

**Your Position:** You have gotten very tired of the way \_\_\_\_\_ has been treating you. He/she can be such a jerk. \_\_\_\_\_ is always putting you down and using you as a play punching bag. It was time \_\_\_\_\_ got some of his/her own medicine.

**Background Information:** You feel everyone is on your case. Your grades were low this semester, you were cut from the basketball team, and your father might be taking a job in another town, so your family might have to move.

### Role-Play 6: Disputant A

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.
- Situation:** Two students are threatening each other because of a rumor about a girlfriend/boyfriend. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** You have heard from several other students that \_\_\_\_\_ was holding hands with your girlfriend/boyfriend at the mall last night. You don't like the idea of someone else messing around with your girlfriend/boyfriend.
- Background Information:** \_\_\_\_\_ and you have been friends in the past. You think \_\_\_\_\_ is a flirt and the cause of your relationship's going bad.
- 

### Role-Play 6: Disputant B

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.
- Situation:** Two students are threatening each other because of a rumor about a girlfriend/boyfriend. One of them has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** You have heard from several other students that \_\_\_\_\_ wants to fight you. You don't want to fight, and you don't want to go with \_\_\_\_\_'s girlfriend/boyfriend.
- Background Information:** You think \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't have many friends and is jealous of your popularity.

### Role-Play 7: Disputant A

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. When the mediation begins, tell your side first.
- Situation:** Two students are threatening each other and ready to fight. A teacher has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** You are a new student in school. For the past month, \_\_\_\_\_ has been saying untrue things about you and giving you dirty looks. Yesterday, \_\_\_\_\_ bumped into you in the hall and wanted to fight.
- Background Information:** You miss a lot of your old friends and want to make some new friends in this school.
- 

### Role-Play 7: Disputant B

- Directions:** Write in the other disputant's name in the blank spaces. Tell your side of the story second.
- Situation:** Two students are threatening each other and ready to fight. A teacher has requested the peer mediation.
- Your Position:** You are angry at \_\_\_\_\_ because he/she came into the school as a new student and put down all your friends. If that is going to be his/her attitude, there is going to be trouble.
- Background Information:** You are the informal leader of a large group of students. You have the influence to have the new student accepted or rejected by her/his new peers.

## How To Avoid Rescuing

**Type of Activity:** Classroom

**Grade:** 4-8

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Handouts on “How To Avoid Rescuing” and “Methods For Getting Your Needs Met”

**Objectives:** To help students learn direct methods of getting their needs met and to help them stay off the Drama Triangle.

**Procedure:**

1. Pass out the handout titled, “Methods For Getting Your Needs Met.” Give them 5 minutes to complete it.
2. Have them discuss what they wrote with a partner. Give them 5 minutes.
3. Ask them to give you examples of direct and indirect ways to get needs met and write them on the board.
4. Ask them why did they think people would use indirect ways that usually don’t work when they could use direct ways that are more likely to work (fear of rejection, embarrassment, accused of being selfish, feeling they don’t deserve to get them met, assuming people will say “no.”)
5. Talk about when people use indirect methods they often manipulate and play games. They play victim, persecutor or rescuer.
6. Draw an inverted triangle on the board and write the word “Persecutor” by the upper left corner and the word “Rescuer” on the upper right corner. On the bottom write the word “Victim.”
7. Ask the students what needs each of the people playing these roles might have. Write them on the board.
8. Give the students the handout, “How to Avoid Rescuing” and ask students to take turns reading each section until it is completely read. Go over it and give some examples.
9. Tell them that the roles can rotate so they can play all the roles or rotate them with others who are playing the game. Ask student for examples at school or home where they see the Drama Triangle operating. What keeps the game going is competition for the “victim” role, where everyone hopes to get some need met without having to ask directly.

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will be able to ask directly to get their needs met and will not have to play on the Drama Triangle.

**Evaluation:** The teacher will be able to record the number of times students ask directly to get their need met as compared to before this activity.

**Submitted By:** Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, UCCS.

## How To Avoid Rescuing

Every situation in which one person needs help from another person and that person offers to help them is potentially a situation where Rescuing can occur. The Rescuer puts him or herself in a one up position often by doing things for others that they could do for themselves or they didn't ask the Rescuer to do, and that eventually diminishes the other person. The other person becomes the Victim by passively letting the Rescuer do things for them that they could do for themselves, or didn't ask the Rescuer to do. In order to avoid Rescuing use the following guidelines:

- 1). Don't help without a verbal contract.  
(“What do you want from me?” “How can I help?”)
- 2). Don't ever believe that a person is helpless (unless they are unconscious)
- 3). Help people who are feeling helpless in finding ways to apply the power they have.  
(How about you thinking of some ways you could solve that problem and let me know when you have come up with some?)
- 4). Don't do more than 50% of the work on a problem or project; ask that people do at least 50% of the work at all times.
- 5). Don't do anything that you don't really want to do.  
(“No, I'm not willing to do that.”) THIS IS KEY!
- 6). Don't do anything that the person can do for him or herself unless they ask you and you agree. (“Yes, I'm willing to do that for you.”)
- 7) Remember that the role of Rescuer is one of power and superiority in relation to the other person (the Victim). The role of Victim is the role of powerlessness and inferiority in relation to the Rescuer. Behaving in either of these roles will mean that one or both will become a Persecutor.
- 8). Avoid acting in a one-up way toward others:
  - Don't use special jargon the other person wouldn't understand.
  - Don't talk down to others.
  - Don't shame them for having problems.
  - Don't interrupt people.
  - Don't accept one down statements, or “gee you are so wonderful” comments.
  - Maintain equality in all spheres except where you are understood to be an expert. Strive to reduce any perceived inequalities.
  - If you feel angry toward another person, ask yourself, “Did I Rescue this person in some way?”

Generally if you find yourself in the Victim role you must have Rescued someone by doing one of the following:

1. You did something for someone that you really didn't want to do.
2. You put in more than 50% of the effort in helping someone solve a problem.
3. You did something for someone that they didn't ask you to do.
4. You forgot to get a contract for your work together.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION ACTIVITY FORM**

**Name of Activity:**

**Type of Activity:**

**Grade Level:**

**Objective(s) of Activity:**

**Materials Needed:**

**Procedures:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Expected Outcomes:**

**Evaluation:**

**Submitted by:**

**PEER  
MEDIATION  
ACTIVITIES**

# AN INTRODUCTION TO PEER MEDIATION

## THE NEGOTIATION, PEER MEDIATION, AND ARBITRATION CONTINUUM

There are three main ways that people typically resolve their conflicts. If there is a perceived conflict of wants and needs between two people, they can state their needs and try to negotiate a resolution that meets both their needs. For example, John and Sam both want to use the only available computer in the library to look up information for a class assignment that is due tomorrow. Suppose that they try to resolve it, but neither has had any training in resolving conflicts of wants and needs, and they are unable to find a resolution that meets their needs. John says, "Why don't you use it after school." To which Sam says, "I can't, why don't you do that." To which John says, "No, that won't work for me either.

By now they are causing a scene and the other students who are trying to study are getting annoyed. This conflict is rapidly heading toward a "lose-lose" resolution because neither one of them is getting to use the computer. One of the students in the library is Sally, who is a trained peer mediator. She sees what is happening and offers to help the boys resolve their conflict. They agree and they all move into a small study room in the library where they can talk without disturbing the other students. Sally explains what her role is and how she could help them. She explains that they will still have to come up with a resolution that meets both their needs and if they don't she will ask the librarian to arbitrate the conflict which will take the decision out of their hands.

This is the continuum that this kind of conflict will usually move through. If the two parties cannot resolve it themselves, a neutral third party then can mediate it. If the neutral third party cannot help the parties involved to find a win-win resolution, then another person in authority usually will arbitrate the conflict and decide something that is likely not going to completely meet the needs of the two parties involved. The resulting resolution may also fail to prevent any further conflicts between them, which could take additional time for someone to resolve in the future.

Peer mediation is a stopgap measure that can keep conflicts from escalating and can free up some of the time that school personnel have to use to arbitrate conflicts. The best-case scenario is when all students in a school are given training in conflict resolution, which equips them with the tools to resolve their own conflicts without utilizing peer mediation or arbitration. However, it is good to have a peer mediation program in place to help students resolve those conflicts that they cannot resolve using win-win negotiation skills. This section of the manual will provide a brief overview of the negotiation process; the peer mediation process, including information on the role of the peer mediator; the steps in the peer mediation process; and suggested skill-building exercises you can use with students. This section is not intended to provide a complete training program in conflict resolution or in peer mediation.

The two training programs that we recommend the most to schools are the "Productive Conflict Resolution" curriculum package developed by the Colorado School Mediation Project. They have developed a very comprehensive curriculum for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. They can be reached at 3970 Broadway, Suite B3, Boulder, CO 80304. Their telephone number is (303) 444-7671 and their fax number is (303) 444-7247.

For just training in peer mediation we recommend the curriculum and training manuals in Conflict Managers Training produced by the Community Board Program. They too have separate training materials for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. They can be reached at 1540 Market Street, Suite 490. San Francisco, CA 94102. Their telephone number is (415) 552-1250 and their fax number is (415) 626-0595.

The remainder of the material in this section of Spreading Kindness Volume III is adapted from "Conflict Resolution: The Partnership Way," (2019) a book by Barry K. Weinhold and published by Cognella Academic Publishers in San Diego, CA.

## NEGOTIATION

### *Fisher and Ury and the Harvard Negotiation Project*

Fisher and Ury's best-selling book, **Getting to Yes** (1985), suggests four steps for successful negotiations.

1. Separate the people from the problem. With group negotiations, such as labor-management disputes, they believe it is important to remember that both sides have strong emotions, deeply held values, different backgrounds and disparate points of view. Some level of trust, understanding, respect and maybe even friendship must be developed before these kinds of disputes can be successfully negotiated.

2. Focus on common interests, not on positions. Any successful negotiation depends on reconciling conflicting needs, wants or interests, but not positions. People can easily get locked into a position that is based more on a fear of losing than it is on their needs, wants or interests.

3. Create options for mutual gain. Fisher and Ury believe the most successful attorneys help generate solutions that have a high probability of meeting the needs of all parties involved, not just solutions that would benefit their own clients. The more that all parties seek solutions containing mutual gain, the easier the negotiation process becomes.

4. Use objective criteria to determine a final solution. This approach prevents "positional" bargaining. Using objective criteria requires all parties to identify and apply fair standards, as determined by objective evidence. In negotiating a divorce settlement, for example, the parties might agree to use standard methods such as appraisals or "blue book" figures for determining the value of property.

Fisher and Ury's bottom line criterion: "Is this settlement satisfactory to all parties involved?" If one party feels victimized by the agreement, then there will likely be additional problems that emerge later, including attempts to sabotage the agreement.

Here is a summary of the general guidelines Fisher and Ury use in negotiation. They are listed below, with a short explanation of how they are to be used:

- Define the conflict in terms of your needs or your beliefs, instead of trying to build an "objective case" to support your needs and beliefs.
- Express your feelings in the context of your needs. Remember the normal functions of feelings, such as anger. Anger indicates you need something that you don't currently have.
- Offer solutions that would meet your needs. Then ask the other person if your solution meets his/her needs. State clearly what you want or need from the other person to resolve the conflict.
- Insist on fair and objective criteria for deciding on a solution. It must meet both your

needs. Avoid win-lose solutions. Think about what you want vs. what you need. Consider solutions carefully to see if they meet your needs before dismissing them.

- Be sure to identify and state areas of agreement and then define any areas of disagreement about what must be negotiated.
- Be “easy on the person and hard on the conflict.” Insist on finding a solution that you both can agree to. If possible, frame the conflict as being something outside of your relationship, as though you are observing it.
- Ask yourself if you fear “losing face” or feeling ashamed if you compromise on some of your points.
- Respond to objections with "and" rather than "but."
- Choose longer-range solutions that support having an ongoing relationship.
- If possible, choose solutions that resolve the conflict rather than just managing it.
- Review your solution or agreement to make sure each person understands the terms.

## PEER MEDIATION PROGRAMS

The growing problem of peer violence has been a catalyst for the expansion of conflict resolution programs in schools. Peer mediation programs are designed to teach students how to help each other resolve conflicts non-violently and effectively. Peer mediation and conflict resolution curricula are two of the more common ways schools deal with the problem of peer violence. Over 20,000 schools in the U. S. are now using one or both of these kinds of programs.

One peer mediation program for resolving conflicts involves training a group of elementary school or middle school students to serve as the school's conflict managers. Peer Mediators often wear a special sweatshirt, T-shirt, button or some kind of tag to identify them. Peer mediators facilitate everyday school conflicts by bringing together the individuals in conflict to resolve it peacefully and honorably. A conflict manager who sees a conflict starting can approach the students involved and to offer mediation services. The students in conflict are free to refuse this offer. If they do accept it, the Peer Mediator establishes ground rules that the students use in working through their conflict.

Peer Mediator training usually includes skills in conflict analysis, active listening, interest-based bargaining, and facilitation. Advanced training content includes more experiential activities, including structured experiences, role-plays and simulations. On-going in-service training is also a part of this program. Peer Mediators meet regularly with their trainers or coaches to discuss how they handled specific situations and get feedback on how they might improve their efforts.

Most schools that have adopted peer mediation programs believe they are effective. To get the most benefit from Peer Mediation programs, however, schools need to also teach all students conflict resolution skills. Many large city schools districts, including Chicago, New York and Kansas City, have mandated teaching conflict resolution in their K-12 curricula. Teachers in school districts that have not yet mandated conflict can still do much to create a peaceful classroom. At the end of this section you will find several Skill Practice Exercises: "What is the role of the Peer Mediator?" and "The Peer Mediation Process. You can use them to help teach students skills in peer mediation.

The Colorado School Mediation Project has produced some excellent peer mediation training materials. You can order a copy of their catalog by calling toll free at 1-877-853-5402.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH A TRAINER OF PEER MEDIATORS

The following is an interview with Martha Crisp, a Colorado Springs teacher and trainer of peer mediators.

**Barry:** *Martha, you have trained peer mediators at the elementary and middle school levels for some time. What is your approach?*

**Martha:** “I work in the school system using a preventive model. The purpose of peer mediation is to prevent the kids from hurting themselves and each other. I teach practical skills to students that they can use both at home and at school.”

**Barry:** *How does your program work?*

**Martha:** “When students comes into the middle school from sixth grade, our team trains everyone in a conflict resolution curriculum we developed. It teaches them the skills through what we call an “enrichment program” which is taught the last half-hour of the day. We identify the sixth graders who we feel have the best skills in resolving conflicts and train them to become peer mediators.

These students are not allowed to resolve conflicts involving guns, drugs, or knives or anything similar. The peer mediators deal with are situations where a fight erupts because one student says, “He looked at me wrong.” Peer mediations are trained to prevent escalation of a conflict. A lot of student conflicts start in the classroom or in the hallway. Peer mediators have “on call” periods where they are available should the social worker, the counselors or I need them. They also have rotating schedules where they are available in the counseling office. They may also be available at other times to students who want to sit down and work out their conflict through the mediation process.”

**Barry:** *What are peer mediators are trained to do?*

**Martha:** “Students often need a neutral party, which is the peer mediator. Students often respect their peers more than an adult who dictates, ‘You have to do this and this in order to resolve your conflict.’ We found that using two mediators with two disputants is the most effective format. They help the students brainstorm all the possible solutions. Then they examine the solutions and choose the one that seems to work the best. Our model also teaches peer mediators a lot about problem solving. They also help students in conflict identify how they contribute to the conflict. Peer mediators also often discover, ‘I am also learning more about my own conflicts while I am helping other students.’ It is amazing to see how they learn about themselves through this program. Our program also requires them to create an agreement, which they must sign and complete. If they don't, then they must go down to the office where they will have consequences, such being suspended for three to five days. These consequences are also included in the agreement.

**Barry:** *What other results have you found from your program?*

**Martha:** “Our office referrals have declined significantly because of this program. It really seems to work. There have also been fewer fights. I feel amazed when I hear students say, ‘Wow! I can really resolve this conflict without fighting!’ They feel proud they found their own solution and it makes an impression on them. Each of our grade levels now has trained peer mediators. When our students go on to high school, the teachers say that they see a difference in our students who had training in solving their own problems.

**Barry:** *What kind of training do peer mediators receive?*

**Martha:** “Middle school students can choose any enrichment class they like. They have options such as chess, drama and during enrichment period. We also require all incoming sixth graders to go through a six to eight week class in conflict resolution. Those students who demonstrate skill in conflict resolution are selected for the peer mediation-training program that continue to meet during enrichment time. They receive a lot of skill training such as role-playing typical situations they might encounter like fights and boyfriend/girlfriend conflicts. They experience many different role-plays so they can practice their mediation skills. Once they understand how peer mediation works through their role-plays, they love it and want to keep doing it.

“A successful peer mediation requires staff buy-in. The staff and administration must commit to making it a top priority. I have found it takes two or three years for it to really take hold, so it is important to persevere and make a long-term commitment. We do in-service programs with our teaching staff, our social worker and both of our counselors. They really committed to it and believe in it.”

## GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IN PEER MEDIATION

Below is a list of important guidelines to remember when doing peer mediation.

- **Be objective and neutral.** You have to represent both sides equally and fairly, even if you favor one over the other.
- **Be supportive** of both parties in finding a win-win resolution to their conflict.
- **Discourage disputants from judgments** about who is right or wrong. Don't ask questions like "Why did you do that?" Instead, ask, "What happened?"
- **Create a non-threatening environment** where people feel safe to open up. Get them to agree to resolve their conflict in a non-violent, win-win way.
- **Interfere as little as possible.** Encourage them to talk directly to each other, not to you.
- **Be sure not to take sides** if you are talking to only one of the parties involved. Do not agree with their position, only communicate understanding of their position. "I understand that you are upset with what Johnny said to you."

## STEPS IN THE MEDIATION PROCESS

**SETTING THE STAGE FOR MEDIATION:** Explain why you are there, what your expectations are and what agreements are possible.

- a. Clarify your role and explain the ground rules, including your expectation that the parties involved find a win-win resolution of the conflict.
- b. Make it clear that you will remain neutral and that you are not going to resolve the conflict for them.
- c. Explain that your role is to help them come to their own win-win resolution.
- d. Feedback to them the content and feelings you hear to help build empathy and understanding.

### PHASE 1: What is the conflict?

- a. Have each person tell how he/she sees the conflict.
- b. As they do this repeat back the important issues and feelings you hear from each person.
- c. Periodically, summarize what you think are the main points each side is saying.
- d. Make sure each person understands how the other person sees the problem.

### PHASE 2: How can the conflict be resolved?

- a. Solicit ideas from each person on how they would like the conflict resolved.
- b. Support ideas that move them toward resolution.
- c. If they get stuck, ask them to repeat what they think they heard the other person say. Help clarify their understanding.

### PHASE 3: Identify areas of movement and agreement.

- a. Ask them if they are ready to develop an agreement that resolves the conflict.
- b. Summarize the points of agreement, no matter how small. Such as, pointing out that they both got hurt or that they both want the conflict to be resolved.
- c. Help both sides identify any remaining issues that need to be negotiated.

### PHASE 4: Negotiate the agreement and make a contract to carry it out.

- a. Ask them to offer suggestions on how they would like the conflict resolved.
- b. Only offer your ideas if asked or if you believe they are stuck, and then be tentative.
- c. Encourage them to trade points on each side. "If Jack were willing to...what would you be willing to do?"
- d. Make sure each issue is discussed and agreed upon.
- e. Summarize the agreement and ask each person to commit to making it work.
- f. Write up the agreement and have each person sign it. Each person should have a copy of the agreement.

CLOSING THE MEDIATION SESSION: Discuss the future and test how solid the agreement feels to everyone.

- a. Congratulate both parties for being willing to resolve their conflict directly with each other.
- b. Ask them how they feel about your mediation and the agreement they reached. This will help test the sincerity of those involved in carrying it out.
- c. Talk about the future. Ask them what is going to be different between them now that they have resolved their conflict.

**SKILL PRACTICE EXERCISE:  
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PEER MEDIATOR?**

The following skill practice exercise is designed to help the students in this course better understand the role and functions of a Peer Mediator operating in a school.

**Directions:** Follow the steps outlined below:

1. Divide into small groups of 4-5 students and brainstorm a list of typical school conflicts where mediators could be helpful in facilitating a win-win resolution.
2. Each small group reports on what they have found and a larger list is developed containing all their ideas.
3. The class then decides which of the typical conflicts to use in their skill practice session.
4. Using the Mediation Process listed below, review the steps to make sure everyone understands it.
5. Select two small group members to role-play one of the typical conflict situations and two other members of the small group to be the Peer Mediators. Any additional small group members should serve as process observers and give feedback after each role-play.
6. While the two students role-play the school conflict, the mediators need to follow the Mediation Process and attempt to get the students to resolve their conflict.
7. Rotate the roles so that each member of the small group gets to play all the roles.
8. Discuss the results in your small group and in the large group class.

## SKILL PRACTICE EXERCISE: THE PEER MEDIATION PROCESS

**Directions:** Follow each of the steps listed below to guide you in mediating conflicts with peers.

### 1. The Mediator Monologue:

- If you see a conflict in progress ask if the parties would like some help in resolving their conflict.
- If the answer is "yes," then explain the mediation process.
- Explain the mediator's role and confidentiality.
- Ask them if they are willing to mediate their conflict.
- If the answer is "yes," explain the ground rules:
  - A. Agree to resolve the conflict himself or herself with the mediator's help.
  - B. No name calling/put-downs.
  - C. Do not interrupt and listen to each other.
  - D. Tell the truth.
  - E. Ask each student if they want to use mediation to help resolve their conflict.

### 2. Opening Statements:

- Ask student # 1 what happened and how they feel.
- Ask student # 2 what happened and how they feel.
- Use active listening to reflect back the content and feelings.

### 3. Reframe the Problem:

- Summarize the conflict in neutral terms
- Get agreement on what the conflict involves.

### 4. Explore Interests:

- Ask student # 1 what would make them feel better, happier, and/or is important for them in a solution.
- Ask student # 2 what would make them feel better, happier, and/or is important for them in a solution.

### 5. Invent Options:

- Ask student # 1 to give possible solutions they would like.
- Ask student # 2 to give possible solutions they would like.

### 6. Choose the Best Option:

- Help the students pick that they agree is the best option.
- If the option they select is not clear to you, ask clarifying questions.
- Write down the option they agreed to and have them sign it.
- Specify any consequences, if they don't keep the agreement.

## SKILL PRACTICE EXERCISE: NEGOTIATION SKILLS

**Directions:** Take a conflict involving wants and needs that you currently have. Use the eight-step model presented in the section on “Negotiation” a guide and select a partner to role-play a resolution of a conflict.

1. Find a partner who also has a conflict. Decide who is going to go first. This person explains the conflict to the other person who then role-plays the other person in the conflict.
2. The role-play starts with the first person practicing negotiation skills with the second person.
3. After completing the role-play, both of you fill out the Negotiation Skills Checklist listed below. Discuss how your performance and your reaction to each other.
4. Repeat the process, with the second person presenting a conflict and practicing negotiation skills with the first person role-playing the conflict. Again using the Negotiation Skills Checklist, evaluate your performance and discuss your interaction.

## SELF-AWARENESS ACTIVITY: NEGOTIATION SKILLS CHECKLIST

**Directions:** Using the above skill practice exercise, you and your partner need to respond to the questions below.

1. Did you achieve a win-win resolution to your conflict? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What ideas did you get to use with the actual person involved in the conflict?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Were you able to negotiate from a cooperative or confrontational stance?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Were you able to create trust between you? If so, how did you do that?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Were you able to define conflict in terms of each person's needs? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Were you able to keep the focus on areas of agreement and identify areas of disagreement to negotiate? How did you do that? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Were you able to handle objections from the other person without ignoring them or trying to discredit them? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Were you able to be soft on the person and be hard on the conflict? Were you able to be assertive about your needs while being respectful of the other person's needs?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. How realistic was the second person's role-play of the person with whom you have the conflict? In what ways? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What contributed the most to your success or failure to reach a win-win solution?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## SKILL PRACTICE EXERCISE: MEDIATION SKILLS

**Directions:** Take a current conflict of wants and needs, while using the guidelines in the section on negotiation, again attempt a role-play where you use a third party mediator to help resolve the conflict. In addition, make use of the Guidelines and Steps in the Mediation Process listed earlier in this chapter.

1. Form groups of three. One agrees to be the mediator, one presents a conflict and the other role-plays the other person in the conflict. Rotate roles so that each of you gets an opportunity to practice mediation skills.
2. After each practice round, stop to evaluate the effectiveness of the mediation skills being used. Have each person involved fill out the Mediation Skills Checklist below that follows and discuss the results.

## SELF-AWARENESS EXERCISE: MEDIATION SKILLS CHECKLIST

**Directions:** Using the skill practice exercise above, you and your partner need to answer and discuss the questions listed below.

1. Was the mediator able to stay objective and represent both sides fairly? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Was the mediator able to be supportive to both sides with taking sides? How was that done?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Was the mediator able to avoid making judgment about who was right or wrong? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Was the mediator able to create a safe non-threatening environment? How?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Was the mediator able to facilitate a win-win resolution of the conflict? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Did the mediator allow the two parties to make their own decisions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Was the mediator able to get the parties to be "soft" on each other and "hard" on the conflict?  
How was that done? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Was the mediator able to help the parties maintain respect for each other's needs? How?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Did the mediator help the parties evaluate the solidness of the resolution they arrived at?  
How? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What was the most effective thing the mediator did to facilitate the process? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Peer Mediation Skills Checklist

**Type of Activity:** Classroom, counseling or mediation session

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To give peer mediators and others a checklist to remind them of the steps in negotiating a resolution to a conflict.

**Materials Needed:** Peer Mediators Negotiation Check List (see next page)

### Procedures:

1. Give the following checklist to your peer mediators to remind them of the steps in negotiating a resolution to a conflict.
2. Go over this checklist and make sure that the peer mediators understand what each of these means.
3. Ask for examples. It is also a good idea to role-play typical conflict situations to give peer mediators practice in using this checklist.

**Expected Outcomes:** More well negotiated agreements that stick.

**Evaluation:** Develop a feedback form where the participants can rate the process and the outcome. Review those that were rated high and low to determine the accuracy of the initial prognosis by the participants.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## Peer Mediators Skills Checklist

1. **Don't bargain over positions.**
2. **Separate people from problems**
  - Pay attention to the relationship
  - Put yourself in their shoes
  - Discuss each person's perception of what happened
  - Help save face
  - Recognize emotions
  - Allow the parties to let off steam
  - Use symbolic gestures to relieve tensions
  - Actively listen to the feelings of each person
  - Speak about yourself and how you are feeling about their conflict

- Build a working relationship
  - Face the problem, not the people
- 3. Focus on interests/needs, not positions**
- Ask what happened not why or why not?
  - Recognize multiple interests and needs
  - Make your interests or needs come alive
  - Acknowledge their interests/needs as part of the problem
  - Put the problem before the answer
  - Look forward, not backward
  - Be concrete
  - Be hard on the problem, soft on the people.
- 4. Invent options for mutual gain**
- Separate inventing from deciding
  - Broaden your options/brainstorming
  - Look through the eyes of the participants
  - Invent agreements of different strengths
  - Ask for their preferences
  - Make their decision easy. Who will do what?
- 5. Use objective criteria**
- Set fair standards
  - Select fair procedures
  - Make it a joint search for objective criteria
  - Negotiate the most appropriate standards
  - Never yield to pressure, only to principle

## **Review and Preview**

**Type of Activity:** Classroom Activity

**Grade Level:** 4 - 8

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objective:** To reinforce the students' retention of information from skill practice sessions.

**Materials Needed:** Materials from the previous skill practice sessions

**Procedure:**

1. Greet students.
2. Review the important information and skills that were presented in earlier skill practice sessions. Review information on the following topics:
  - a. What students will learn in the Peer Mediator training (good skills in listening, problem-solving techniques, and the steps of the conflict resolution process).
  - b. What is a good Conflict Mediator?
  - c. Ask students to name as many steps of the process as they remember.
2. Go back over the Mediation Process handout.

**Expected Outcome:** To review and understand the conflict mediation process.

**Evaluation:** Students will display their mediation skills and retain these skills.

**Submitted by:** **Martha Crisp**, Assistant Principal, North Middle School, Colorado Springs School District #11

**FORMS FOR STARTING A  
CONFLICT MANAGER/  
PEER MEDIATION  
PROGRAM  
AT YOUR SCHOOL**

## Brainstorming Worksheet

List all the possible options.

- What could be done to resolve this dispute?
- What other possibilities can you think of?
- In the future, what could you do differently?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

## Peer Mediation Agreement

Peer mediator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the conflict: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of conflict (check one) Rumor  Threat  Name-calling

Fighting  Loss of property  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

The students whose signatures appear below met with a peer mediator and with the assistance of the mediator reached the following agreement.

Disputant \_\_\_\_\_

Agrees to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Disputant \_\_\_\_\_

Agrees to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We have made and signed this agreement because we believe it resolves the issue(s) between us.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Disputant signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Disputant signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peer mediator signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Length of mediation (minutes)



## Peer Mediator Contract

As a peer mediator, I understand my role is to help students resolve conflicts peacefully. As a peer mediator, I will do my best to respect the participants of mediation, remain neutral, and keep the mediation confidential.

As a peer mediator, I agree to the following terms.

- To complete all training sessions
- To maintain confidentiality in all mediations
- To responsibly conduct general duties of a peer mediator, including conducting mediations, completing all necessary forms, and promoting the program
- To maintain satisfactory school conduct (This includes requesting mediation before taking other action if I become involved in a conflict.)
- To maintain satisfactory grades in all classes and make up any class work missed during training or mediation sessions
- To serve as a peer mediator until the end of the year

Possible actions if these responsibilities are not met are as follows.

- First time: Warning
- Second time: Loss of peer mediator status for 1 month
- Third time: Suspension as a peer mediator

I accept these responsibilities for the school year.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent Notification and Permission Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your daughter or son has applied and been selected by a teacher committee to be trained as a peer mediator. Peer mediators are students who, with adult supervision, mediate disputes between fellow students. The students selected are known to be fair, reliable, and good communicators.

Conflicts between students are a part of daily life in schools. Conflicts that are most common include name-calling, rumors, threats, and friendships gone amiss. Mediation is a conflict resolution approach where disputants have the chance to sit face to face and talk, uninterrupted, so each side of the dispute is heard. After the problem is defined, solutions are created and then evaluated. When an agreement is reached, it is written and signed.

The trained peer mediator is the outside third person that leads this process. The mediator does not take sides and keeps all information confidential. Mediation is a skill that involves good communication, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Peer mediators will participate in \_\_\_\_\_ hours of training.

The dates for training are \_\_\_\_\_.

The training will be located at \_\_\_\_\_.

If you support your child's desire to become a peer mediator, please sign the attached form and have your son or daughter return it by \_\_\_\_\_.

If you have any questions please call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

-----

(detach and return to \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_)

I give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
to participate in training and become a peer mediator.

Parent/guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Peer Mediation Record-Keeping Form

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Mediation No.	Date	Grade	Sex	Race	Location	Requested By	Type	Time	Signed (Y/N)	Kept (Y/N)
------------------	------	-------	-----	------	----------	-----------------	------	------	-----------------	---------------

1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										

## KEY

<b>Location</b>	<b>Requested By</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Time</b> (to the nearest 5 minutes)
B = Bus	S = Student	R = Rumor	<b>Signed</b> (Was an agreement signed?)
R = Classroom	T = Teacher	T = Threat	<b>Kept</b> (Was the agreement still in force at a 1-month follow-up interview with selected disputants?)
H = Hallway	C = Counselor	N = Name-calling	
C = Cafeteria	A = Administrator	F = Fighting or hitting	
D = Outdoors	O = Other	P = Property loss or damage	
O = Other		O = Other	

## Peer Mediator Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions.

1. Why do you want to become a peer mediator?
2. What personal qualities do you have that will help you be a good mediator?
3. What type of conflicts do you think are most frequent around the school?
4. List any other school or community activities you are involved in.

If selected, I agree to attend all required training sessions, some of which may be after school. I will make up all class work missed due to training during school hours.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Reference**

I recommend \_\_\_\_\_ for peer mediation.

Reasons for the Referral: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Peer Mediation Request**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Names of students in conflict:

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Where conflict occurred (check one)

Bus    Classroom    Hallway    Cafeteria    Outdoors  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the problem:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mediation requested by (check one)

Student    Teacher    Counselor    Administrator  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person requesting mediation \_\_\_\_\_

**CONFLICT MANAGER TRAINING  
EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Did you enjoy the training?     Yes     No

2. Write 3 things you learned in training.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was your favorite part of the training?

4. What would you change to make the training better?

5. Was the training  too long  too short  ok?

6. Write any other comments or suggestions that you have.

## **Create Your Own Peer Mediation Activity**

**Name of Activity:**

**Type of Activity:**

**Grade Level:**

**Objective(s) of Activity:**

**Materials Needed:**

**Procedures:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Expected Outcomes:**

**Evaluation:**

**Submitted by:**

# **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

## **ACTIVITIES**

## INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is an innovative approach to discipline in schools. The traditional retributive justice system focuses on who committed an offense and how they should be punished for that offense. By contrast, the restorative justice approach asks:

1. How have others been harmed by this act?
2. Is there a need to repair the harm that was done?
3. Is the victim willing to face his/her offender?
4. Has the offender admitted the offense?
5. Can the relationship between the victim and the offender be restored?

The philosophy of restorative justice borrows from Mahatma Gandhi who believed that we should not focus so much on the punishment of people for their mistakes. He felt that punishment only hardens people and does not reform their mistakes. He felt it was much better to help people acknowledge their mistakes and assist them to correct them in the future. He had three main objections to punishment as a way of correcting behavior.

First, punishment carries with it the potential for abuse of power towards children by authorities. Second, feelings of intimidation or humiliation and shame are often inflicted through punishment can prevent children from learning the consequences of their action for others. Punishment teaches children to fear punishment rather than reflect on why they should not harm others. When punishment overshadows teaching children about responsibility, they focus on how the punishment affects them rather than how their behavior affects their fellow students.

Third, punishment limits children to a choice between obeying the rules or resisting them. This limits the moral development of children according to Gandhi. They are often left with only one guiding principle, "If you misbehave, an authority will take action to punish you."

There are really four different approaches to social control of hurtful behaviors:

1. The permissive approach exercises low control that fails to deal with bullies and tends to look the other way, thus supporting their hurtful behavior. ("Boys will be boys")
2. The punitive approach involves high control and low support that justifies expelling bullies and labeling them as unfit for learning. ("They are trouble-makers and deserve punishment.")
3. A third possibility is the absence of control and support. ("We are too busy to worry about them.")
4. The fourth option is the restorative one which involves high control and high support confronts and disapproves of the offense while supporting and valuing the intrinsic worth of the wrongdoer. ("We disapprove of your behavior and we know you can do better.")

The key to restorative justice is to get the offender to admit his offense, take responsibility for repairing the damage that was caused by the offense and to be willing to restore the relationship with the victim by making amends and restitution for the harm that was done. In schools this is a very practical approach to prevent repeated offenses. The offender and the victim are in close proximity to each other during the school day and the opportunities for repeated offenses are numerous.

When utilizing a restorative approach, the key is to look for possible non-punitive and restorative interventions that either supplement or augment the traditional punitive sanction such as filing criminal charges, suspension from school or expulsion. The non-punitive interventions include counseling and therapy.

The restorative justice interventions include peer mediation, victim-offender mediation and community group conferencing. In addition, under the restorative justice model it is possible to hold restorative class meetings, offender competency classes, victim impact panels, peacemaking circles and talking circles.

## WHY IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE NEEDED IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Many schools have adopted strict “zero tolerance” policies that have resulted in the suspension and expulsion of many more students than ever before. While this was once thought of as the solution, it is now being questioned as perhaps part of the problem.

The increasingly defiant and violent behavior of school students and the related punitive school climate are both products of the alienation of youth from the mainstream of life and loss of community that plagues our modern society in general. There is a tendency to place the blame on violent video games, movies, television or the Internet or changing sexual values or lower academic standards. While these are part of the problem, we often overlook the deterioration of the nuclear and extended family and the loss of community. These are the basic building blocks of human society.

The loss of relationship and community negatively impacts students who then react aggressively. This leads to more punitive measures in schools that create even more negative relationships between young people and adults. Harsh punishment tends to stigmatize offenders creating negative sub-cultures. These punitive school policies tend to unravel the positive bonds between educators and students and also alienate parents as well leaving them feeling helpless, shamed, blamed and isolated.

Clearly, punishment has not proved effective in stopping rude and aggressive behavior from becoming commonplace in our schools, where until recently such behavior was a rarity.

The prevailing assumption is that punishment holds offenders accountable for their actions. However, for a student accused of some wrongdoing, punishment is a passive experience that demands little or no accountability or participation. When the teacher or school administrator scolds, lectures and imposes the punishment, the student remains silent, takes the punishment, resents the authority figure, feels angry and resentful and perceives him/herself as a victim. The student does not have to think about the effects of his/her actions on others or take any responsibility for the wrongdoing. Do you really believe that this approach holds the student accountable?

Administering punishment in this way only alienates the student even further. We have to find a better way. We must engage the student in the process if we are going to truly hold him/her accountable. In addition, we want to rebuild positive relationships between the student and those affected by his/her behavior and we want to build supportive relationships between the offender and those who are entrusted with the task of hold him/her accountable and helping this person learn from his/her mistakes. Restorative justice practices can make true accountability possible and can help rebuild the relationships among all those involved. This also helps build a positive community in a school where everyone is in charge of making it work for the common good.

## THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONTINUUM

There is a continuum of restorative justice practices that can be employed in a school. Some are very informal that happen on a regular basis between teachers and students and administrators and students and others are very formal structured meetings and practices.

A restorative practice includes any response to wrongdoing that is supportive and limit setting. Below is an illustration of the various practices on the continuum from informal to formal.

Informal .......... formal

affective statements      small impromptu questions      small conference      victim-offender group process      mediation      community group conference

The first line of intervention is a simple affective response or question where a teacher responds to misbehavior by letting the offending student know how he or she feels about the incident or behavior. Instead of saying, “Bill, how many times do I have to tell you not to do that?” or just handing out a punishment, the teacher takes Bill aside after class and says to him, “Bill, I felt sad when I heard you make fun of Joe. I was surprised because I don’t see you as someone who would hurt someone on purpose.” You might also say to Bill, “How do you think Joe felt when you did that?” and then wait for his answer.

Surprisingly, students don’t seem to realize how their behavior is affecting others and by simply expressing our feelings to a student who has misbehaved we may help them realize more fully how they are affecting others. Most young people are fairly self-centered. They are often very surprised to find out how they have affected a teacher and begin to see teachers as fellow human beings with feelings, not just another adult who gives them a hard time.

Near the middle is the small group process, which is still short of a formal community group conference. In this instance it could involve a fight between two boys. The parents are called to pick them up and each boy is asked to call the school and request an opportunity to convince the staff and his fellow students that he deserves to be allowed to return to school. Both boys called and returned to talk to school officials. One of the boys refused to take any responsibility for the fight and maintained a defiant attitude. He was not re-admitted to school. The other boy was humble and even tearful. He listened attentively while the staff and students who had witnessed the fight told him how his behavior had affected them. He willingly took responsibility for his part in starting the fight and was open to hearing how this affected others. He was re-admitted and no further action was taken. The other boy was assigned to take an offender competency class before he could be re-admitted.

To the right of the middle of the continuum is victim-offender mediation. It is a shorter version of the formal conferencing model. This is used in student-to-student conflicts too serious for peer mediation, but which don’t warrant a full conference. A teacher, counselor, or administrator in the hallway or after school can facilitate this process.

## THE FORMAL COMMUNITY GROUP CONFERENCE

If everyone uses the informal restorative practices, then there are very few times a formal community group conference is necessary. The following questions need to be asked to determine whether or not a formal community group conference is necessary.

1) "Is the staff willing to take the time it takes to do this?" 2) "Are the parties willing to meet?" 3) "Is there admission of responsibility?" 4) "Is there harm to be repaired?" 5) "Is there enough time to do it?" and 6) "Can it be done in a timely manner?"

If the answer is "yes" to these questions, then a team of two or more trained facilitators organizes and facilitates a formal community group conference. The facilitators contact all the participants to ensure understanding of the process, to get preliminary accounts of the incident, and to screen for attitudes and misinformation that may sabotage the process. The goals of a community conference are: 1) To create an agreement that works for everyone concerned, 2) To help the students involved understand the impact of their actions, 3) To bring about a restoration of the relationships among those involved and 4) To have everyone involved learn something.

The offending student(s) must be willing to take responsibility for the offense. Participation for both victim and offender is voluntary. Parents and supporters are encouraged to participate. The process begins by having the offending student tell his/her story of the incident. Then the victims and other community members tell how the offense affected them. The participants then sign an agreement that addresses the harm and provides for some restitution or amends. If the offending student fulfills the terms of the agreement, the traditional punishment or consequences are dismissed. If the agreement is not fulfilled, the case is referred back to the school officials for the traditional punishment, such as suspension or expulsion.

## OTHER IMPORTANT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

- *Restorative class meetings.* When some wrongdoing occurs in a class, the teacher may convene an open-forum classroom discussion in order to assess the impact of the wrongdoing on other members of the class.
- *Offender competency classes.* When an offender does not take responsibility for his/her misbehavior, they may be asked to attend classes or mentoring sessions where they are taught anger management, conflict resolution and decision-making skills.
- *Victim impact panels.* Sometimes offenders are confronted by victims who testify to the harm done to them by other students in similar situations such as bullying or put-downs.
- *Peacemaking Circles.* When there is no clear victim or offender this is used to address issues between groups in the school. It is used to try to build understanding and empathy between groups.
- *Talking circles.* This process is used to discuss a broad range of issues facing students at your school. These circles are not necessarily related to some wrongdoing.

## **TYPES OF OFFENSES WHERE YOU CAN USE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

While restorative justice practices can be used effectively to deal with a variety of offenses, the following are the best fits:

- Theft
- Graffiti/Vandalism
- Bullying/Harassment
- Minor physical Assault
- Verbal Assault
- Truancy
- Unintentional Injury
- Disturbing the Peace
- Defiance of Authority

Restorative justice methods can also be utilized effectively to help reintegrate a student back into the school after a suspension or expulsion. Helping them take responsibility for why they were suspended or expelled can go a long way toward preventing a recurrence of the offense.

There are excellent resources available on restorative justice. Locally in Asheville, North Carolina, Healers of Conflicts is organizing a restorative justice initiative and forming a local coalition. They can be reached at P.O. Box 306, Asheville, NC 28802 (828) 253-3355.

The Colorado School Mediation Project in Boulder, CO has produced a video and Guidebook titled, "Making Things Right." They also have published an excellent book titled, "Healing Wounds with Words." The Colorado Forum on Community and Restorative Justice in Denver, CO has excellent training resources as well.

The University of Minnesota has a Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking that acts as a resource center of video and print materials related to restorative justice and victim-offender mediation. Their web site is [www.ssw.che.umn.edu](http://www.ssw.che.umn.edu). They conduct regular training classes in all aspects of restorative justice and help organize the Rocky Mountain Conference on Restorative Justice.

The Real Justice Forum has a web site [www.realjustice.org](http://www.realjustice.org) and organizes International Conferences on restorative justice.

Another good web site is [www.safersanerschools.org](http://www.safersanerschools.org).

The three web sites list excellent training materials that can be purchased.

## Restorative Justice Strategies for Building Trust

**Type of Activity:** Classroom, counseling, discipline

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To build trust with students who have been caught misbehaving.

**Materials Needed:** None

**Procedures:** The following are trust-building responses to use with a student who has gotten in trouble:

1. *Listening with Respect:* "Let me see if I understand what you said." "How do you see the problem?"
2. *Offer Empathy:* "Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ and needing \_\_\_\_\_?"
3. *Exploring Options:* "What ideas do you have for resolving this without going to the office?" "How would you like for me to deal with this?"
4. *Getting the Facts:* "What happened?" "Why do you think this happened?" "Why is this important?" "How do you think you could have handled it differently?"
5. *Inviting Solutions:* "How do you plan to deal with this?" "What do you think you need to do to resolve this problem?"
6. *Problem solving:* "What ideas can you come up with for solving this problem?" "How do you think you can control your anger in the future?" "What do you think we should do to resolve your conflict with \_\_\_\_\_?"
7. *Celebrating Successes:* "I appreciate the effort I see you making to correct your behavior." "What did you learn by taking this approach?"

**Expected Outcomes:** Students will begin to take more personal responsibility for solving the problem that they caused.

**Evaluation:** You might design a questionnaire to have those who go through this kind of process fill out.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## The Medicine Wheel Model

**Type of Activity:** Classroom, counseling, discipline sessions

**Duration:**

**Grade Level:** 3-8

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To help students develop a plan for learning a strong sense of belonging, generosity, mastery, and independence so they learn from their wrongdoings and be more effective school/community members.

**Materials Needed:** Develop a form to keep track of a student's behavior (Example given below).

**Procedures:**

1. Below is an example of a form to use to determine in which areas of the Medicine Wheel a student needs the most help. This form is used with the student who has gotten into trouble. The theory is that a student is getting into trouble because one or more of the four qualities of the Medicine Wheel may be weak.
2. This chart will help you pinpoint the problem and then develop a prescriptive solution that becomes a part of any agreement reached to remedy the wrongdoing. Involve the student in answering the key questions connected with each quality.

## HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED AT \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL

A plan to help \_\_\_\_\_ feel a sense of Belonging, Generosity, Mastery and Independence at \_\_\_\_\_ school. Date \_\_\_\_\_

The principle of **Belonging** provides meaningful connection. It motivates children to recognize the values of the school and to follow the rules of this school. It means that you feel a real part of this school.

Negative Behaviors	Positive Behaviors
What evidence of a lack of belonging is being observed with this student?	What behaviors would help this child feel more of a sense of belonging?
When are they occurring?	What are some other ways that we could help this child meet his/her needs?
What is the root of the student's behavior? What needs is he/she trying to meet by behaving this way?	

The principle of **Generosity** affirms that every one of us has a need and a motivation to be generous to others. Doing kind things for others is an example of generosity. Through generosity, relationships are developed and a sense of self-worth is strengthened.

Teacher giving of time.	Student giving of time.
How do you let this child know that he or she is important to you?	What opportunities can we provide for this student to contribute to this school?

The principle of **Mastery** (of a subject or a skill) is based on students working as hard as they can to realize their own potential. We are asking each student to master the behaviors that will help him/her be more successful at school.

Consequences of Negative Behaviors	Evidence of attempts to master subjects or skills
What are the indicators of a failure to master subjects or skills?	What evidence do we have of sincere attempts to master subjects or skills? What can we do to support those efforts at mastery?

The principle of **Independence** is learned through interactions with caring adults and relationships with concerned, older students. We recognize that self-discipline is essential to independence. A skill or subject learned by one's own effort gives a student a sense of accomplishment and self-worth that carries over to the next learning. After learning independence, the student can act effectively without close direction. Also, the independent person does not have to seek out negative ways to act independent.

<p>Negative ways of seeking independence</p> <p>What are the negative ways that this student has used to meet his/her need for independence?</p>	<p>Positive ways of seeking independence</p> <p>What are some positive ways that we can help this student meet his/her need for independence?</p>
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We believe that changing one's behavior is a process over time, therefore, this contract will be in effect through \_\_\_\_\_. If we see that the behaviors listed above are changing, the other sanctions will no longer be in effect. If the behaviors do not seem to be changing by \_\_\_\_\_, then the original sanctions will be carried out.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Expected Outcomes:** Evidence of increased positive behavior change by the student and a reduction of the negative behaviors.

**Evaluation:** Refer back to this form to check on changes in behavior after the specified time on the contract has been reached. You can see how much change occurred. Also pinpoint the reasons for the changes.

**Submitted by:** Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## Teaching Responsibility through Restorative Justice

**Type of Activity:** Counseling or discipline activity

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To get the offender to accept responsibility for the offense and for repairing the damage that was done to others.

**Materials Needed:** None

### Procedures:

Sit down one-on-one with the offender and ask the following questions:

1. What did you do that was wrong? Here you want to have the offender state in his own words what exactly he/she did that was wrong or that caused harm to others.
2. What harm did your behavior cause others? You are trying to build empathy and understanding of the effect of the offense on others. You may get a response like "I got in trouble," which is focusing on him/herself not on others.
3. What are you going to do to fix the problem? Here you are looking for creative ways to make amends and restitution to the victim(s) of the offense.

**Expected Outcomes:** If the answers to these questions indicate a willingness to admit the mistake and take responsibility for fixing the problem caused by the offense, then a session with the victim might be arranged, if the victim is willing. It could also involve an apology to everybody who was affected by the offense.

**Evaluation:** At the end of the activity, you can ask how the parties feel toward each other and toward the way you handled to problem. In addition, you would check to see if there were no similar acts of wrongdoing by the offender.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## Early Intervention, Prevention Strategies

**Type of Activity:** Classroom, counseling or discipline program

**Grade Level:** K-12

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To sensitize teachers, counselors and administrators to the early warning signals of students who are hurting in order to prompt early intervention.

**Materials Needed:** The Early Warning Signals List

**Procedures:**

1. Go over the following list of early warning signals and identify students that might exhibit these behavior
2. Plan a strategy on how to intervene to help prevent each of these students from getting into trouble.
3. Follow-up regularly to see if the behaviors first identified have changed

### EARLY WARNING SIGNALS OF POTENTIALLY TROUBLED STUDENTS

**Warning to teachers and parents:** It is not possible to predict with absolute certainty; which behaviors will lead to problems. Below are the common early warning signs but remember that they are only signs and should be used as a basis for further analysis to determine if an intervention is needed. The signs presented below are not all equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness. These signs include:

- **Social withdrawal.** When a child repeatedly withdraws from normal social situations, this is a sign that they are troubled about something. They could be just shy, depressed, feeling rejected, persecuted, unworthy, or lacking confidence.
- **Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.** For the most part, children who appear to be friendless are not violent. However, research also indicates that some children who are isolated are drawn to others who behave aggressively and violently.
- **Excessive feelings of rejection.** Many children, in the process of growing up, feel rejected at times by their peers. They may need support to help them find appropriate methods to express their feelings. Without support, these children may be at risk of expressing their emotional distress in negative ways, including violence. Some aggressive children also seek out others like them for support of their aggressive tendencies.
- **Being a victim of violence.** Children who are victimized by bullies are sometimes at risk of becoming violent toward themselves or others.
- **Feelings of being picked on and persecuted.** A child who feels constantly picked

on, teased, bullied, singled out for ridicule and humiliated or shamed at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If they do not get enough support to find appropriate ways to express their feelings, they may vent them in possibly violent or aggressive ways.

- **Low school interest and poor academic performance.** Poor school achievement can be caused by many factors. Look for any drastic change in performance and/or if there is a chronic academic problem that isn't getting any better. The low achiever, who may feel frustrated, unworthy, chastised or even bullied, can act out aggressively toward others.

- **Expression of violence in writings or drawings.** Children and youth often express their thought, feelings, desires and intentions in their stories, poems or drawings. It is important to look for a theme of violent expression over time in determining whether there might be a problem. A student who has a pattern of violent themes in writings and/or drawings should be referred to a counselor or school psychologist to rule out any emotional problems that could lead to violent behaviors.

- **Uncontrolled anger.** Anger is a natural emotion, but if it is frequently expressed uncontrolled in outbursts in response to minor irritants, it could indicate potential violent behavior toward self or others.

- **Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors.** Some children will shove other kids, however if constant hitting and bullying others is left unattended to, it could escalate into more serious acts of aggression.

- **History of discipline problems.** Kids who have chronic behavior and disciplinary problems either at home or at school are clearly not getting their emotional needs met. These unmet needs may cause acting out or aggressive behavior. These kids are trying to get adult to pay attention to their problems. They may violate rules and norms, defy authority, disengage from school, and engage in aggressive behaviors with other children or adults.

- **Past history of violent and aggressive behavior.** Some children display violent and aggressive behavior as early as pre-school. These are signs of attachment disorders. This behavior may be directed toward other children, be expressed in cruelty to animals, or include fire setting. This pattern generally continues unless there is some intervention. In youth, these behaviors generally become more overt in bullying others, generalized aggression, and defiance or covert behaviors such as stealing, vandalism, lying, cheating, and fire setting. The age onset is predictive of the seriousness of the acts. Children who engage in aggression or drug abuse before age 12 are more likely to continue this pattern of violence than those who begin after age 12. Review the child's history with behavioral experts and seek parents' observations and insights.

• **Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes.** All children express likes and dislikes, but when they show intense prejudice toward someone or a group of people based on racial, ethnic, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and physical appearance may be a warning sign for violence. Membership in hate groups or the willingness to victimize individuals with disabilities or health problems also should be treated as early warning signs.

• **Drug use and alcohol use.** Drug use and alcohol use reduces self-control and expose children and youth to violence either as perpetrators or victims, or both.

• **Affiliation with gangs.** Gang membership generally includes use of anti-social values and behaviors, including extortion, intimidation, and bullying others to meet their needs. Gang-related violence and turf battles are often tied to the use of drugs and can result in injury and/or death.

• **Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms.** Children and youth that possess or have easy access to firearms usually have an increased risk for violence. Children with a history of aggression, impulsiveness, or other emotional problems should not have access to firearms.

• **Serious Threats of violence.** All threats of violence should be taken seriously, even if they appear to be said in jest. Almost all violence is preceded by some written or verbal threat. This can be a cry for help and should result in some intervention by an adult to determine the underlying problem.

• **Imminent Warning Signals.** Unlike early warning signals, imminent warning signals indicate a dangerous violent situation is about to occur. They include serious physical fighting with peers or family members, severe destruction of property, severe rage for seemingly minor reasons, detailed threats of lethal violence, possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons and other self-injurious behavior or threats of suicide. If any of these signs are present, immediate intervention is necessary. Your school should have a detailed plan for how they will deal with this kind of situation.

**Expected Outcomes:** Fewer students will act of their anger in inappropriate ways.

**Evaluation:** Check referrals to the office to see if early intervention reduces them.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold. Professor Emeritus, UCCS

\*Adapted from **A Guide to Safe Schools** published by the U. S. Dept of Education

## Restorative Justice Strategies and Responses

**Type of Activity:** Classroom, counseling group or all school

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Objective(s) of Activity:** To develop effective ways to respond to discipline situations where a restorative justice approach is appropriate.

**Materials Needed:** None

### Procedures:

1. *Increase awareness of the offender's behavior on others.*
  - A. Make affective responses – “Bill, when you say those things to Sally, you hurt her feelings. It surprises me, because I don't think you want to hurt anyone on purpose.” “How do you think Sally felt when you said that?” “Ask her.”
  - B. Ask the bully some of the following questions:
    - 1) What did you do?
    - 2) Why was that a bad thing to do?
    - 3) Who did you hurt by doing that?
    - 4) What were you trying to accomplish?
    - 5) Next time you have that goal, how will you meet it without hurting somebody?
    - 6) What are you willing to do to correct the problem?
2. *Avoid shaming, scolding or lecturing*
  - A. Whenever possible, meet with the students involved privately, not in front of the class or with an audience. Remember that bullying and put-downs are often ways that students try to get attention from others.
  - B. Help the bully understand the impact his/her behavior has on others. Shaming, scolding and lecturing causes them to react defensively and not feel empathy for others.
3. *Actively involve the bully in the resolution process*
  - A. Simply punishing the bully is not enough. If they are just punished, they sit passively and act like a victim. You need to engage the bully in the resolution process, in order to truly hold him/her accountable.
  - B. Punitive school policies tend to alienate students and educators as well as parents and educators. You want them to be able to do some or all of the following:
    - Acknowledge their own actions and why they are being punished.
    - Understand the effects of their behavior on themselves.
    - Understand the effects of their behavior on others.
    - Change their behavior to stay out of trouble.
    - Find other ways to get their needs met.
    - Have empathy for those they hurt.
    - Make amends to heal the relationship with the victim.
    - Help them make developmentally appropriate responses to conflicts

- without using bullying behaviors or put-downs.
- C. The goal is to help restore a healthy relationship between the bully and the victim, whenever this is possible.
4. *Accept some ambiguity in the situation:*
- A. Often it is not clear how the incident started and whose fault it is. Sometimes you catch the one who is retaliating because of what the other person said or did. Frequently bullies are kids who have also been bullied.
  - B. Listen to both sides and if necessary, apply the strategies and principles stated above to both parties.
5. *Separate the doer from the deed.*
- A. Express that you assume that the student did not mean to hurt to another person. You may want to mention the good things the bully has done in the past and that you were surprised that he/she did something like this.
  - B. Focus on their behavior and what they did rather than what kind of person they are.
6. *See every bullying and put-down incident as an opportunity for learning.*
- A. Most of the bullying and put-down incidents you will see are examples of unskilled behaviors. Students have a lot to learn about how to get their needs met in socially appropriate ways.
  - B. Each incident represents an opportunity to teach students how to get along and get their needs met without using bullying or put-downs.
  - C. These strategies should never be used to exclude, isolate or simply punish a child. Nor should they be used to mislabel or stereotype a child as a bully

**Expected Outcomes:** A restoration of the relationship between the offender and the victim.

**Evaluation:** Check referrals to the office pre-post

**Submitted by:** Dr. Barry K. Weinhold, Professor Emeritus, UCCS

## REPORT FORM FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ACTIVITIES

**Type of Activity:**

**Grade Level:**

**Objective(s) of Activity:**

**Materials Needed:**

**Procedures:**

**Expected Outcomes:**

**Evaluation:**

**Submitted by:**

## **EVALUATION AND COMMENTS**

