

Conflict, the matter of solution?

Summary

Conflicts are part of our everyday lives. It is not always easy to handle them, as they often open up the field of our repressed feelings and emotions, which the individual solves in a way that is not always constructive. Neither for him, nor for others. Learning to recognize conflict and the steps of conflict resolution is a skill that can be learned. Planned exercise enables the internalization of skills and thus the strengthening of the individual and society in general.

Module	Group size	Group age	Duration
• Prevention	• small • medium	• 16 - 19 • 20 - 24	• 30 min • 45 min • 1 hour

Purpose

- To explore the concept
- To identify different stages of conflicts
- To learn how conflicts are rising, developing, accelerating
- To know better the methods of intervention

Description

1. Brainstorm with the class what is conflict and write the answers on the board.
2. Ask the participants on which level conflicts may arise. Write some levels of conflict on the board: individual level (intra-personal conflicts) between individuals (interpersonal) between family members between groups, within groups, between nations
3. Divide the group into small groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a newspaper and ask them to find a story in it related to a conflict. Participants will be asked to analyze their selected story regarding the content of conflict, as well as in which level it arises.
4. After each group selects and discusses their story, each group will specify a representative to report to the others: what is the conflict about, why they chose this specific conflict and on which level it arises.
5. Go back to the list of levels of conflict on the board. Were all the levels of conflict covered by the stories that were analyzed? If not, elicit examples of this type of conflict. Ask the following questions:

“What are the differences between the different types of conflict?”

“Are there any similarities between the different types of conflict?”

“Think about the causes of these conflicts on different levels. Are there similarities or differences there?”

6. Lead a discussion on the process of conflict: Ask how does a conflict develop? Remember a conflict you have experienced, what often happens between two people first? (What is a first sign that indicates two people are experiencing some sort of conflict?) Facilitator prompts participants to reflect, about what happens next? Facilitator brainstorms with the group what these stages might be.

7. Review the Stages of Conflict listed below. Compare with the participants' brainstorming in step 1. Point out similarities. Have a different student read each stage. Clarify if necessary.

Stages of Conflict:

Stage 1 - Discomforts

Perhaps nothing is yet said. Things don't feel right. It may be difficult to identify what the problem is. Do you feel uncomfortable about a situation, but not quite sure why?

Stage 2 - Incidents

Here a short, sharp exchange occurs without any lasting internal reaction. Has something occurred between you and someone else that has left you upset, irritated or with a result you didn't want?

Stage 3 - Misunderstandings

Here motives and facts are often confused or misperceived. Do your thoughts keep returning frequently to the problem?

Stage 4 - Tension

Here relationships are weighed down by negative attitudes and fixed opinions. Has the way you feel about and regard the other person significantly changed for the worse? Is the relationship a source of constant worry and concern?

Stage 5 - Crisis

Behaviour is affected, normal functioning becomes difficult, extreme gestures are contemplated or executed. Are you dealing with a major event like a possible rupture in a relationship, leaving job, violence?

Feedback

Conflicts may appear on different levels. They can arise in personal level with our sisters and brothers, spouses, friends, parents, etc, and they can also arise between nations. Individual level conflicts may also be called intra-personal conflicts, conflicts between individuals can be called interpersonal conflicts, and conflicts between groups, within groups, or between nations. These are all levels of conflicts.

Conflicts may not always happen by guns, they can happen in our own selves, when two different and opposing visions, thoughts clash, and similarly can also happen between two friends who are jealous of each other. In whatever the level of conflict is, there are different stages that most conflicts go through from a feeling of discomfort to a full crisis. If we can identify the process during the first stages of conflict, it becomes easier to stop a probable crisis.

Materials needed

Flip-chart, pens

Methodology

Group dynamic activity

Discussion

Advice for Trainer

Preliminary preparation is requested.

Source / Literature

Women without borders. (2006). Young Women Fit for Politics. Retrieved from www.women.without.borders.org



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