

# The Five Keys to Collaborating to Resolve Conflict Constructively

## 1. When – timing is everything

Ascertain whether or not the timing is right for you to address the conflict. Then, ascertain whether or not the other person “consents” to the conflict and only then secure their agreement to the conditions that can make resolving this conflict productive. Do you both have sufficient emotional energy for resolving the conflict? Avoid a “surprise attack” on the other person – the fight that begins with mutual consent and agreed upon conditions is off to a good start!!!

## 2. Who – only those involved please!

Think of everyone involved – even if indirectly.....and if they are involved then they should be here to resolve it too!

## 3. Where – away from distractions and interruptions

Pick a place that is isolated from distractions and interruptions – like phones, e-mail and people “walking by”. Then consider if it needs to be on neutral turf – a space that belongs to neither of you.

## 4. How

Think of these as your personal rules to govern interpersonal strife...or a constructive process for handling emotionally laden disagreements. You need to follow 3 simple rules –

- ∞ treat the other person with respect
- ∞ listen until you experience the other side (their needs, concerns and feelings)
- ∞ state **your** views, needs and feelings using “I statements”

Remember to start by defining the conflict issue in clear, concise and objective terms. It is important that you have a clear and unemotional starting point.

## 5. Reflect and learn!!

Once your conflict is resolved learn your lessons from it! Here are some questions that help you to reflect and learn:

- ∞ what triggered this issue and what can I learn from this? Is there a pattern?
- ∞ How well did I use this 5 step process to collaborate and resolve the conflict?
- ∞ How useful was this process in revealing new information about myself or the other person?
- ∞ What do I want to do differently next time I am in a conflict?

*Purpose is our direction in life: passion takes us there.*

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