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Resolving Conflicts

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INTRODUCING CONFLICT RESOLUTION



AGENDA

- Starter
- What Is Conflict?
- Conflict in the News
- Freeze Frame
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will define “conflict” and identify the stages of conflict.

Students will identify conflict triggers.

Students will analyze the role of emotions in conflict.

Students will set goals for reducing conflict in their own lives.

Materials Needed

- One copy of a current news article describing a conflict for each student (Part II)
- One copy of “The Stages of Conflict” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Vocabulary of Feelings” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Read the following scenario to students:

Tatiana and Desmond are the top students in their grade. They have competed against each other for the highest grades in every subject, and they both want to be the school dux. They try to outdo each other. They try to impress their teachers. One day before an exam, Tatiana and Desmond engage in a full-blown shouting match.

Tell students that, at times, conflict can actually produce positive results. Ask students what positive outcomes might result from this situation. (Students might respond: Tatiana and Desmond might learn how to solve their problem, work together to help each other do better, and begin to recognize their similarities rather than their differences.)

Tell students that in the next few lessons they will practice resolving conflicts in a way that can produce positive results.

Part I What Is Conflict? (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students define “conflict” and identify their own conflict triggers.

1. Students create a conflict web.

Ask students what they think of when they hear the word “conflict.” Encourage them to consider situations that create conflict, how they feel when they are involved in conflict, the results of conflict, and so on. Write student responses where everyone can see, grouping similar responses to create a web or a cluster.

2. Students define “conflict.”

When students have exhausted their ideas, ask them to review the web or cluster on the board and suggest a definition for “conflict.” Write student responses.

A dictionary definition might read “mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or demands.” Have students review their definition and add to it or change it as needed. Lead students to recognize the important idea that conflict refers primarily to the mental struggle between two people. Point out that a physical struggle, according to this definition, is most likely the result of a mental struggle that escalates out of control.

3. Students consider the relationship between stress and conflict.

Ask students to explain the meaning of the saying, “That was the straw that broke the camel’s back.” Lead students to recognize that when people are feeling burdened, a small incident might “break” them.

Explain to students that stress is like a burden and can be the catalyst that turns a small conflict into an out-of-control situation. Ask students to recall the sources of stress that they discussed in “Lesson 4: Improving Well-Being” of the Confidence Building module. (Students should mention problems at school, problems on the job, and pressure from friends or family.) Tell students that many sources of stress are common to conflict situations.

Point out to students that the relationship between conflict and stress is reciprocal—conflict is stressful and stress can provoke conflict. When we feel stressed, we are more likely to let conflict escalate. Review with students the stress management, breathing, exercise, and relaxation techniques they discussed in “Lesson 4: Improving Well-Being” of the Confidence Building module. Tell students that using these strategies to reduce stress can help them more effectively manage conflict.

4. Students identify recurring situations of conflict in their lives.

Tell students that conflict is a natural part of life that we can learn from and, in turn, try to make into a positive experience. One strategy for managing conflict is to be ready for it.

Ask students to consider the situations in their lives that involve conflict. Instruct students to write down recurring conflict situations and to pay close attention to the factors that trigger conflict in their lives.

Tell students to write down several specific conflict situations that they want to manage more effectively. Explain that they will keep this list and refer to it at the end of each lesson in this module.

Part II Conflict in the News *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students identify the stages of conflict.

1. Students review a conflict in the news.

Tell students that one place where we can almost always find recurring examples of conflict is in the news. Distribute copies of a current news article that describes a conflict. Read the article aloud for your students or give them time to read it independently.

Where all students can see, create an outline of the story. Elicit from students a step-by-step description of what happened. If details are missing, have students make inferences as to what probably took place.

2. Students identify the stages of conflict in the news story.

Distribute “The Stages of Conflict” activity sheet to students. Instruct them to compare the stages of conflict on the activity sheet with the outline they created for the news article. Point out that these stages do not always happen in the same order and that the evolution of a conflict can be recursive (for example, the parties involved can return to dialogue several times). Have students label each event from the news article with the corresponding stage of conflict. Explain that one event might represent more than one stage of conflict.

Tell students that at each stage of conflict, there is the potential for the situation to be resolved. Say, “Controlling emotions at each stage is essential to ensuring that the conflict does not get out of control.”

Part III Freeze Frame (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students demonstrate the effects of emotion in conflicts and set personal conflict resolution goals.

1. Students develop conflict-situation role plays.

Brainstorm with students examples of conflict situations that they have encountered. Write the situations in a place where everyone can see. Encourage students to describe the situations using the stages of conflict from Part II.

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Tell students that each group is going to prepare and perform a role play of a conflict situation. Assign each group a scenario from the class suggestions or use one of the following:

- A student is watching television with a family member. The family member wants to watch a different show.
- Two friends go out to eat. When the bill comes, one of the friends says that he doesn’t have enough money and asks to borrow some. This has happened many times before.
- A younger sibling wants to join in an older sibling’s activities. The older sibling wants to be left alone.

Allow the groups several minutes to prepare their role plays.

2. Students perform the role plays.

When students are finished preparing, explain that they are going to perform the role plays. Also explain that while the groups are performing, you will tell them to freeze at certain points. When you do, the group will stop acting to participate in a class discussion.

Distribute one copy of the “Vocabulary of Feelings” activity sheet to each student. Tell them that they are going to observe the effect that emotions have in each role play and that they can refer to the activity sheet to specifically describe what they are seeing.

Ask the first group to present its role play. While the group is performing, watch for evidence of the different stages of conflict. When a stage of conflict arises, tell the group to freeze and elicit students’ observations regarding the buildup of the conflict. Have students use the “Vocabulary of Feelings” activity sheet to identify the specific emotions involved. Have the students performing identify the emotions that they are portraying and what they will do next. Discuss with the class alternative reactions to those emotions that might have better results. As the role play proceeds, discuss how the conflict is either escalating or defusing.

3. Students discuss the effects of inappropriate reactions during conflicts.

Ask students for examples of inappropriate reactions during conflicts. (Student responses might include laughing when someone gets hurt, laughing at someone who is yelling at you, showing anger when someone has given you a gift.) Elicit from students that inappropriate reactions are demonstrations of feelings that do not fit a situation. Ask students if they think that a conflict escalates or defuses when one party demonstrates an inappropriate reaction. Point out that being aware of other people’s emotions at each stage of a conflict will help to avoid demonstrating inappropriate reactions.

4. Students apply their observations from the role plays to determine real-life conflict resolution goals.

Tell students to refer to the lists that they created at the end of Part I, in which they identified recurring situations of conflict in their lives. Tell students to choose three of their recurring conflicts to focus on.

Direct students to think about these situations in light of the role plays that they just conducted. Guide them to think about the following:

- Are any of these situations similar to the situations in the role plays?
- Are the emotions discussed in the role plays related to situations in their lives?
- What alternative reactions might reduce conflict?

Guide students to set appropriate goals for reducing conflict in the areas that they have identified. Remind them that effective goals are specific, measurable, realistic, and include a deadline. Remind students that they will refer to their conflict resolution goals several more times in this module.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask the class to recall the stages of conflict. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Conflict is a mental struggle that results from opposing needs.
- One strategy for managing conflict is to know what situations trigger conflict for you.
- Controlling emotions is essential to defusing conflict.
- Demonstrating inappropriate reactions escalates conflict.

Student Assessment

1. What role does emotion play in conflict?
2. Describe each of the six stages of conflict in order.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Additional Activity

Have students respond to the question—what would you do if you saw a fight starting between two people you did not know?

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

The definition of “conflict” mentioned in this lesson states that it is a mental struggle between opposing sides. Have students illustrate (through movement, songs, essays, poems, images, etc.) the definition.

Have students perform or explain their illustrations.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students focus on the goals they set for conflict resolution and write about how confident they are that they can achieve their goals. Have them describe why they set these particular goals.

Using Technology

Have students read their national news network articles online eg. www.abc.net.au. Tally and graph how often stories featuring conflict appear during that week. Discuss results and why the media may choose to display these stories over ‘feel good’ stories.

Homework

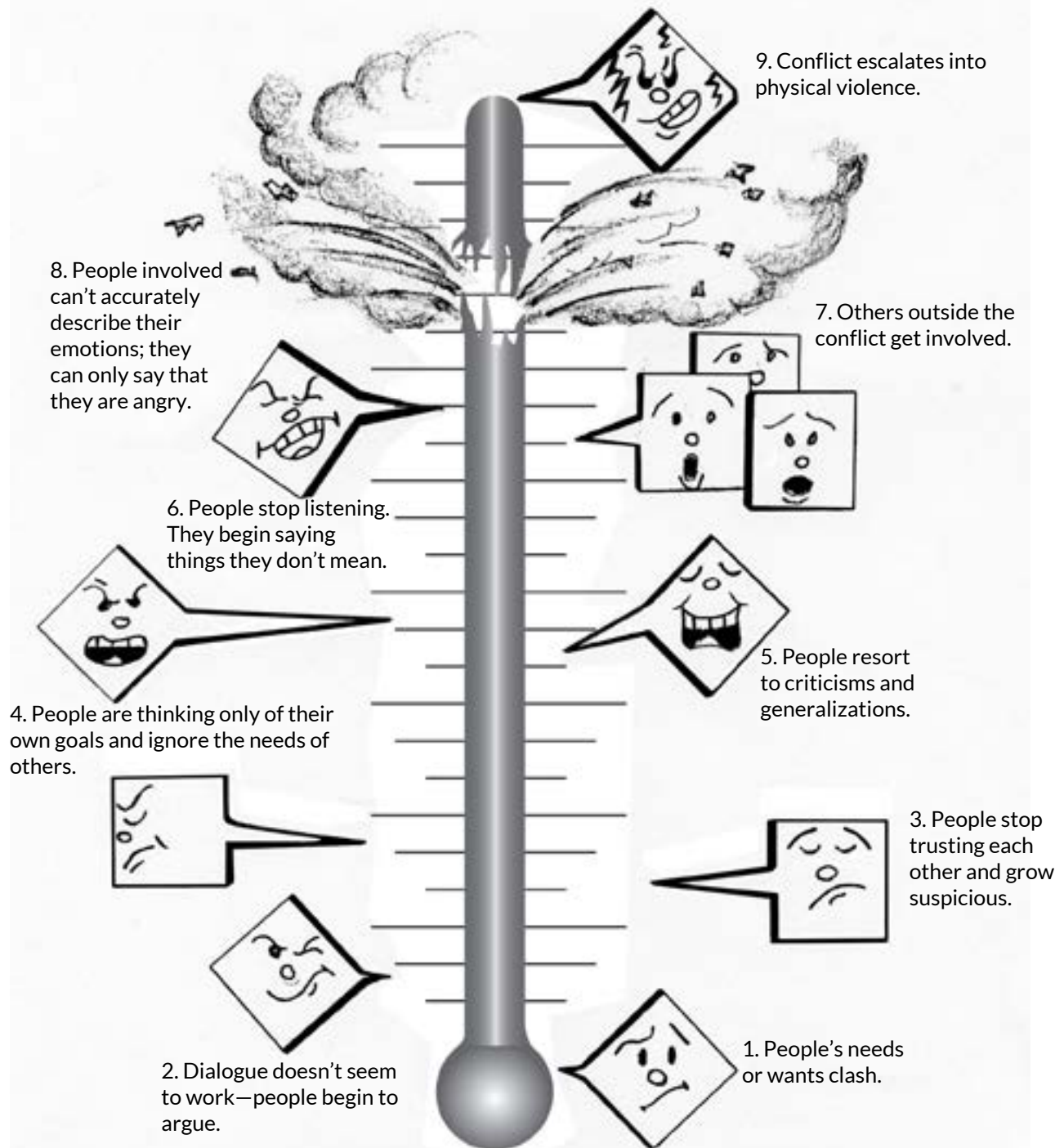
Write the following words and their definitions on the board: “confrontation,” “compromise,” “withdraw,” “settlement,” and “arbitration.”

Have students look up the definition of each word and write a few sentences describing their role in conflict.

Additional Activity

Have students play a board or card game.

THE STAGES OF CONFLICT



VOCABULARY OF FEELINGS

A

Afraid
Aggressive
Annoyed
Anxious
Apathetic
Apologetic
Apprehensive
Ashamed
Audacious

B

Bashful
Bold
Bored
Brave

C

Calm
Cautious
Cheerful
Comfortable
Competent
Confident
Confused
Curious
Cynical

D

Decisive
Depressed
Determined
Disappointed
Disapproving
Disgusted
Distressed

E

Ebullient
Ecstatic
Embarrassed
Energetic
Enraged
Enthusiastic
Envious
Excited
Exhausted

F

Friendly
Frightened
Frustrated

G

Grateful
Greedy
Guilty

H

Happy
Helpless
Hopeful
Horrorified

I

Impatient
Incompetent
Indecisive
Indifferent
Innocent
Insecure
Inspired
Insulted
Intimidated
Irritated

J

Jealous
Joyous

L

Lazy
Listless
Lonely

M

Marvelous
Mischievous
Miserable
Morose

N

Negative
Nervous

O

Oblivious
Optimistic
Overwhelmed

P

Paranoid
Peaceful
Perplexed
Petrified
Proud
Puzzled

R

Reckless
Regretful
Relaxed
Restless

S

Sad
Satisfied
Secure
Serene
Shocked
Shy
Silly
Skeptical
Sleepy
Sluggish
Smart
Stimulated
Stupefied
Subdued
Sullen
Suspicious
Surprised
Sympathetic

T

Tense
Tentative
Timid
Tranquil
Trusting

U

Uncomfortable
Undecided

W

Wary
Whimsical
Worried

Z

Zealous

UNCOVERING STEREOTYPES



AGENDA

- Starter
- Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover
- Common Ground
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will define stereotypes as misleading generalizations.

Students will discover common ground with people they assume they won't like.

Students will explain the importance of dispelling stereotypes and considering the individual.

Materials Needed

- Pictures of movie stars, with a list of movies they've been in and the roles they played (Starter)
- Five brown paper bags numbered one through five, each with a different item inside, including one with a dollar bill (Other items might include a pack of pencils, a dictionary, a piece of pound cake, cookies, rubber bands, etc.) (Part I)
- Pen and slip of paper for each student (Part II)

Starter (3 minutes)

Before class, display pictures of well-known movie stars who are currently popular. Elicit from students the titles of movies these stars were in and the roles they played. Write responses under the pictures. Ask students to describe the stars' personalities; then, ask if they personally know any of these famous people.

Explain to students that "typecasting" is assigning actors to play certain roles again and again because those are the roles in which audiences love to see them. Provide examples, such as Tom Hanks usually portraying the "good guy" in movies. Point out that once an actor begins to play similar roles in every movie, we begin to make assumptions about their real personality. Most people base their beliefs about actors on the roles they play.

Tell students that stereotypes are similar to the assumptions that people make about a star's real personality based on the roles they play in movies. Stereotypes are assumptions about people based on little information.

Part I Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that stereotypes are misleading generalizations.

1. Students recognize misleading preconceptions.

Ask for five volunteers. Have each volunteer choose one of the brown paper bags with an item inside. Tell the students that they are not to open up the bags until you tell them to do so.

Once all five students have chosen a bag, tell them that they are going to get one chance to trade their bag for another or to keep the one that they have. Allow the student who was last to choose a bag the opportunity to trade first. Continue in reverse order until each of the five volunteers has had a chance to trade.

Ask the volunteers to share their feelings about the bag that they are holding. Elicit from the rest of the class their opinions about what might be in the bags.

Ask the volunteers why they chose to trade or keep their bags. Allow them to look in their bags and again share their feelings about it.

2. Students define stereotypes as misleading generalizations.

Discuss the judgments that were made before opening the bags and the different emotions that those judgments aroused.

Ask students to identify the generalizations that drove their thinking about the contents of the bags. For example, students might say that heavy items are more valuable than light items or that items that rattle are broken.

Point out to students that, based on the real contents of the bags, some of their first reactions were unjustified. Explain to students that stereotypes are similar generalizations about people that can have the same effect, misleading us and our reactions to people.

3. Students define “stereotype.”

Ask students to define the word “stereotype.” (Students might respond: people or things conforming to a type; a generalization about a group of people.) Write student responses where everyone can see. Guide students to recognize that stereotypes are oversimplifications and ignore the fact that people are uniquely different from each other.

Ask students how they think stereotypes might play a role in some interpersonal conflicts. (Students might respond: making judgments about people based on little information increases the likelihood of having a misunderstanding; preconceptions can be misleading; if we have preconceptions, we may not hear exactly what a person is saying to us.)

Part II Common Ground (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the need to look for common ground in conflict situations and with people they assume they won't like.

1. Students create a list of rival groups from pop culture, literature, and history.

Distribute pens and slips of paper to students. Ask students to brainstorm a list of groups that they know are famous for their rivalry. Encourage students to think about groups in pop culture and groups that they've studied. Prompt students by providing at least one example that they may be familiar with, like the Montagues and the Capulets from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the Jedi and the Sith from *Star Wars*, the Allied forces and the Axis powers in World War II, the Order of the Phoenix and the Death Eaters from the *Harry Potter* series, or the Autobots and the Decepticons from *Transformers*.

Collect the lists and place the names of the rival groups inside an empty bag or container. Shake the bag or container, and then randomly pick out the names of two rival groups. Divide students into two equal groups and have them sit on opposite sides of the room, facing each other. Assign each group one of the names you drew.

Explain that the groups will be addressing each other as rivals, like the groups they have listed.

2. Students create lists of their own likes and dislikes.

Distribute one index card or piece of paper to each student in both groups. Ask students to make a list of likes and dislikes for each of the following categories: food, clothing, hobbies, places, and TV shows. (Depending on your time constraint, you may choose to add or omit categories.)

Give each group time to discuss their likes and dislikes within their group and to form a group trait based on the things they have most in common. For example, one group may identify themselves as “pizza lovers” or “star athletes.”

Remind each group to see the opposing team as the “enemy.” Ask each group to come up with one reason why they would not like each other or get along.

3. Students find common ground with an opposing group by analyzing similar likes and dislikes.

Tell students that they will take turns with students from their opposing group, reading aloud one of their likes and dislikes. Explain to students that when they hear a like or dislike they agree with, they should raise their hands. Assign one student from each group to be a record keeper. Each record keeper will keep a tally of the number of students from the opposing group who agree with a like or dislike named by the record keeper’s own group.

Have students begin reading their lists. Continue in this manner until most students have had a chance to share one of their likes or dislikes.

4. Students discuss why finding common ground is important.

Ask students to reconvene with their groups and discuss the end results of their tallies. Ask them to examine and discuss how much they have in common with their “enemy group.”

Ask students:

- In which categories did you expect to have the least in common? What about the most in common?
- Were you surprised by the total number of shared interests you had with the opposing group? Why or why not?
- How does this activity relate to the ways people form opinions about a person or group of people?

Point out to students that their “warring” groups behaved similarly to the way people act when they believe stereotypes. Explain that sometimes people claim not to like someone in a group based on false preconceptions or misguided beliefs.

Ask students to suggest some ideas on how people can look beyond superficial stereotypes and find common ground with people who appear to be very different. Lead students to understand that challenging themselves to find commonalities with each other can help them improve communication and resolve conflicts.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students how dispelling stereotypes can help reduce interpersonal conflicts. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Stereotypes are misleading generalizations that ignore the fact that every person is a unique individual and we are all humans.
- Looking for common ground with someone in a conflict situation can help us to ease tension by recognizing the other person's needs.
- Focusing on people's strengths rather than superficial, stereotyped traits creates stronger, more positive relationships and reduces conflict.

Student Assessment

1. Why can stereotypes be harmful?
2. What stereotype has been used to describe you or one of your friends? How is this stereotype simplistic or inaccurate?
3. How can you see past stereotypes and find common ground with someone who is different from you?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“What we see depends mainly on what we’re looking for.”

Have students discuss the danger in looking for characteristics that confirm stereotypes.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Discuss the proverb “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”

Have students write/create their own proverbs that warn of the dangers of stereotypes.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students reflect and write on a time when they witnessed or felt they had been stereotyped. Do they have any ideas how it can be changed in their community/school/city?

Using Technology

Show students commercials that play on stereotypes (e.g., women wash laundry, men play sports).

Have students identify the stereotypes.

Have students contact the companies whose products are being advertised and propose changes to the commercials.

Homework

Students respond to the question ‘Do you think difference and diversity are important in a community?’ Explain why or why not?

Additional Activity

Have students read and discuss an article from their local paper or news source and discuss the overt and covert stereotypes throughout the literature.

MANAGING ANGER IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS



AGENDA

- Starter
- What Makes You Angry?
- I Said...I Meant
- Alternate Ending
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify situations that make them angry and consider ways to reduce or control anger.

Students will identify the real meaning behind words exchanged in conflict situations.

Students will analyze a clip depicting a conflict that turns to anger and violence.

Materials Needed

- Masking tape and a small rubber ball or golf ball (Starter)
- One copy of the “I Said...I Meant” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- A movie or news clip depicting a conflict that turns to violence or anger (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Before class, use masking tape to make a circle about 50cm in diameter on the floor of the classroom. Begin class by showing students the small ball and telling them that their challenge is to roll the ball from about 2-3 metres away and aim for the center of the circle. Explain that they will have two chances, but if the ball stops short on the first try, they will forfeit the second try.

Have students take turns rolling the ball into the circle. When students are finished trying, elicit the observation that most students rolled the ball past the circle. Ask students why they think this happened. Lead them to recognize that when they were afraid of falling short, they tended to overcompensate.

Say, "The ball is like our emotions in situations with conflict; we often overcompensate because we are afraid of losing. Once we let our emotions reach this level, it's hard to stop and back away. One possible effect of this is excessive anger."

Explain to students that today they will discuss ways to keep anger in check during a conflict situation.

Part I What Makes You Angry? (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify situations that make them angry and consider ways to reduce or control anger.

1. Students identify situations that evoke emotions of anger.

Ask students, "What makes you feel angry?" Encourage students to list as many specific situations as possible. Write student responses where everyone can see.

Then ask students, "How do you know when you are angry?" (Students might respond: I just feel mad, my tone of voice gets sharper, my voice increases in volume, my muscles become tense, my heart starts racing, I start to sweat.) Explain to students that these are physiological indications that a person is experiencing anger. Many people have those responses.

2. Students identify ways to reduce or control anger.

Ask students, "If so many different situations have the potential to evoke anger in us, how can we become better able to manage our anger and function more effectively?" Lead students to recognize that there are specific techniques that we can use to control our anger.

Elicit from students actions they can take to limit their anger. Write their suggestions in a place where everyone can see. (Students might respond: controlled breathing, counting to 10, taking a walk, talking with someone, listening to relaxing music, exercising, etc.)

When students have exhausted their ideas, have them select five techniques from the list that they think might work well for them. Have them write those techniques on a piece of paper. Tell students to hold on to their lists for use at the end of the lesson.

Part II I Said...I Meant (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the underlying meaning behind words exchanged in conflict situations.

1. Students read a conflict scenario.

Distribute copies of the “I Said...I Meant” activity sheet to each student. Have students fold the activity sheet in half on the dotted line, so that the bottom half is not visible while students are reading the top half.

Ask two volunteers to read the dialogue between Brenda and Maria, supplying appropriate tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions.

When the volunteers are finished, ask students to explain what happened in this scenario and identify the problem that was causing the conflict. (Students might respond: Brenda wanted to do a favor for Maria. Maria is angry at Brenda for leaving the baby at home to get milk.)

Ask the class to describe the tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions of the two volunteers and elicit comments about how their nonverbal messages reflected their feelings.

2. Students consider the unspoken thoughts and emotions behind the conflict.

Tell students to unfold the activity sheet to expose the dialogue that includes the characters’ real thoughts and feelings in italics. Ask two volunteers to read the italicized parts of the dialogue, using nonverbal messages that reflect what they are saying.

Ask the class to comment on how the volunteers’ nonverbal communication differed from the first reading and what that might say about the characters’ emotions. (Student responses should include emotions other than anger, such as amazement, frustration, and anxiety.)

3. Students recognize that controlling anger allows people to communicate more effectively.

Ask students why the characters in the scenario didn’t just say what they meant. Lead them to understand that sometimes our anger leads us to speak without thinking. Point out to students how differently this conflict might have ended if the two people had communicated what they really meant.

Remind students of “the straw that broke the camel’s back” and the role of stress in conflict situations. Guide students to the realization that, in conflict situations, there are often hidden emotions and events that contribute to the intensity of the conflict. Suggest that students be aware of the underlying feelings that contribute to conflict situations. Tell students that being aware of the emotions that are involved in a conflict will help them to communicate more accurately.

Part III Alternate Ending (25 minutes)

Purpose: Students analyze a video clip depicting a conflict that turns to anger or violence.

1. Students view a clip of a conflict that results in anger or violence.

Tell students that they are going to watch a short clip showing a conflict that results in anger or violence. Provide students with any necessary background information for the scene they are going to watch.

Instruct students to look for the following as they watch the clip:

- What is the conflict?
- What are the needs or wants of the opposing parties?
- What did they say about the issue or the conflict?
- What do you think they meant?

2. Students rewrite the scene to reduce the anger presented.

When students have finished viewing the clip, discuss their responses to the above questions. Then, instruct them to refer to their lists of anger management techniques from Part I to suggest actions that might have reduced the characters’ anger and avoided the violence portrayed in the video.

Allow students about 10 minutes to write an outline for what might have occurred if anger management techniques had been used.

3. Students discuss the role of anger in the media and in real life.

Ask students to share their outlines. After students have shared their writing, ask the class how the clip would be different if the conflict had been resolved as they proposed. (Students might respond: it would be boring, no one would go see it, there would be no action, etc.)

Point out that reducing conflict might not make for a good movie. Lead students to recognize that while conflict and anger make for interesting fiction, they can be destructive if not managed properly in real life.

4. Students revisit their conflict resolution goals.

Have students revisit the goals for conflict resolution that they established in lesson 1 of this module. Have them identify situations in which miscommunication contributes to conflict. Guide them to consider how anger management could reduce the intensity and impact of their conflict situations.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to name three anger management techniques that can be used to reduce anger in conflict situations. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Sometimes our anger leads us to say and do things that we don't mean.
- Using anger management techniques to control our anger can help us improve how we communicate.

Student Assessment

1. List three positive methods for relieving anger.
2. Describe a conflict you have been in from the other person's point of view.
3. List three examples of violence you have recently seen in the media. How can seeing this violence affect viewers?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Anger is a momentary madness, so control your passion or it will control you.”

Have students discuss the meaning of this quote and how it feels to be controlled by anger.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have students create a checklist of actions to take when they feel themselves becoming angry.

Ask students to share the checklist they have written with the class. Allow students to offer suggestions to each other.

Homework

Have students write about the amount of impact the movie industry has on people. Have them discuss whether we are reflections of what is in the movies or if the movies are a reflection of real life. They should also discuss if the movies accurately reflect how people handle anger.

Discuss this topic as a whole class.

Using Technology

Have students create a film to help younger children control their anger in conflict situations and to help them choose words that accurately reflect what they are feeling. Remind students to use language at the appropriate readability level of the intended audience.

Students can share the film with a local primary school.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students track their emotions including anger, anxiety, satisfaction, pride, loneliness, sadness, happiness, fear, peace, stress, and excitement. Students to transfer their data to a graph visualize how their week has been and associate a term to the week. Eg. My emotions this week were like a rollercoaster, flat as a desert plain, spikes like the mountain ranges, stable like a horse canter.

Additional Activity

Have students create their own positive affirmations to recite.

I SAID...I MEANT

Brenda and Maria are yelling at each other...

BRENDA: "I went to the store because I had to buy milk for Shante."

MARIA: "I can't believe you did that! You're so stupid, leaving my baby sister by herself!"

BRENDA: "...but I asked Jeremy to watch her while I was out."

MARIA: "I don't even know why I trusted you to watch her anyway!"

BRENDA: "Fine! Take care of your own baby sister!"

.....

They meant...

BRENDA: "I went to the store because I had to buy milk for Shante."
I was worried because there wasn't any milk in the house for the baby.

MARIA: "I can't believe you did that! You're so stupid, leaving my baby sister by herself!"
It's so dangerous to leave a baby alone! I'm terrified that something could have happened to her!

BRENDA: "...but I asked Jeremy to watch her while I was out."
I'm stupid? What kind of sister takes care of her baby sister but doesn't have milk in the house?

MARIA: "I don't even know why I trusted you to watch her anyway!"
I had doubts about leaving Shante with her anyway. I remember the time she let her cry in the crib. I never said anything, but I was really annoyed.

BRENDA: "Fine! Take care of your own baby sister!"
And I was only doing her a favor! Forget it. I'll never help her out again.

CREATING A WIN-WIN SITUATION



AGENDA

- Starter
- Who Wins the Dollar?
- Win-Win, My Needs/Your Needs
- Someone in the Middle
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the characteristics of win-win solutions.

Students will practice the techniques of win-win negotiation in a conflict and apply those techniques to their personal conflict resolution goals.

Students will identify the role of a mediator in conflict resolution and practice mediating conflict.

Materials Needed

- Several wadded-up pieces of paper and a wastebasket (Starter)
- Two dollars (Part I)
- One copy of the “Win-Win, My Needs/Your Needs” activity sheet for each student (Part II)

Starter (3 minutes)

Divide the class into two teams. Tell students that each of them will get one chance to shoot a paper ball into the wastebasket. Have each team choose a team name. Write the names on the board with a line under each.

As students take turns shooting, record one point for each shot made and one point for each shot missed. The class is likely to complain that it doesn't matter if they miss the shot or not. Urge them to continue playing until most students have a chance to shoot.

Ask students to share their feelings regarding the competition and how it felt to not have any incentives to win. Guide them to realize that while it might have been disappointing to know that there would be no winning team, it was also reassuring to know that there would be no loser.

Point out to students that our culture generally encourages competition and that the desire to win is ingrained in us. Tell students to keep the urge to win in mind while they discuss a type of conflict resolution in which no one loses.

Part I Who Wins the Dollar? (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the characteristics of win-win solutions.

1. Students bid on a dollar in order to define “win-lose” and “lose-lose.”

Ask for two volunteers. Hold up a dollar and explain that you are going to hold an auction. Explain to students that at an auction people take turns stating a price that they are willing to pay for something until one of them is not willing to bid any higher for the item. A competitive energy develops whereby each party wants to take the item home.

Start the bidding for the dollar at five cents and let the volunteers continue bidding until one of them gives up or they have surpassed the value of one dollar in bids. In a place where everyone can see, write the names of the two students and a record of what they each bid.

Ask students who won. Lead students to define “win-lose” as a scenario in which one student won the dollar and the other gave up. Define “lose-lose” as a scenario in which one student won the dollar but paid more than a dollar for it, and the other student withdrew from the bidding.

2. Students bid on a dollar to create a win-win situation.

Explain to students that you are now going to auction another dollar to two different students who think that they can create a situation in which both parties win. Select two volunteers and allow them to come up with a strategy for bidding.

Allow the students to bid and again analyze the outcome. If the class does not come to the solution on its own, explain that there is a way in which both students could make money. The volunteers should agree to stop the bidding at 10 cents and split the remaining 90 cents. Point out to students that in this situation, neither person gets all of what they wanted (i.e., the entire dollar), but by compromising and working together, both can make money.

3. Students identify the characteristics of win-win solutions.

Ask the class to use the situation it just experienced to define the characteristics of win-win solutions to conflict. Lead students to recognize the following key points about win-win situations:

- Both parties compromise.
- Both parties may not get all of what they want, but the results are positive for each.
- Both parties leave the situation feeling as if they have accomplished something.
- Both parties work together and consider each other's needs.

Tell students to recall the discussion from the starter about the competitive instinct and ask them to suggest how that instinct might affect their efforts toward creating a win-win situation. Elicit from students the understanding that in order to create situations in which both parties win, competition must be set aside.

Part II Win-Win, My Needs/Your Needs (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students practice the techniques of win-win negotiation in a conflict and apply those techniques to their own personal conflict resolution goals.

1. Students identify a conflict situation.

Tell students that they are going to practice creating win-win solutions to conflicts. Have them brainstorm specific conflict situations and write their suggestions where everyone can see.

Explain that the best situation to analyze will be one in which they can clearly imagine how both sides feel and why they feel that way. Then have them vote to select one situation to analyze and write the votes next to each situation. Keep this list for use in Part III.

Tell students that they are now going to analyze the specific situation they have selected.

2. Students consider the goals and needs of both participants in a conflict.

Distribute copies of the “Win-Win, My Needs/Your Needs” activity sheet to each student.

Review the guidelines for creating win-win situations with students. Ask them to suggest the purpose of each guideline and the ways in which each might help to defuse a conflict. Tell them to apply these guidelines to the specific conflict the class selected.

Refer students to the bottom of the page. Discuss possible responses to each question with the class. Encourage students to create as complete a picture of the conflict as possible.

3. Students consider their own personal goals for conflict resolution.

Tell students that the guidelines are an outline of the mental process that they can follow to create win-win solutions for conflicts in which they are involved.

Have students review their personal goals for conflict resolution. Instruct students to consider those situations in light of the guidelines and questions on the activity sheet and to analyze the needs and goals of the different people involved in each conflict. Have them write down their thoughts with an eye toward creating win-win situations to resolve those conflicts.

Remind students to hold on to their goals for use in the next lesson.

Part III Someone in the Middle (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the role of a mediator in conflict resolution and practice mediating conflict.

1. Students define “mediator.”

Ask students if they know what a mediator is. Elicit a definition from the class and write it in a place where everyone can see.

Ensure that the class understands the following important points:

- Mediators establish reconciliation between two parties.
- Mediators are not directly involved in the conflict.
- Mediators remain impartial.

Say, “Sometimes a conflict is too big for us to handle on our own. A mediator can be helpful in those situations.”

2. Students identify guidelines for mediation.

Explain to students that some of the most difficult conflicts that police face are domestic disputes. Explain that the police need to help the couple defuse anger and avoid violence, but that they must let the couple resolve the situation on their own. Lead students to understand that mediators do not solve problems; they merely bring two parties together and assist them in communicating.

Share with students the following mediation guidelines based on those that police officers use when responding to domestic disputes:

- Bring the disputants together. Don't give preference to one side over the other. Establish rapport with both sides.
- Keep the parties facing you, not squared off against one another.
- Encourage both parties to listen to each other.
- Encourage both parties to avoid exaggerations and instead use specific examples and I-statements.
- Don't make judgments.
- Maintain calm control.
- Avoid suggesting a solution; let the disputants come up with solutions on their own.

3. Students write and perform dialogues.

Divide students into groups of three. Tell each group to choose a conflict to mediate from those the class listed in Part II.

Instruct students to use the guidelines for mediation to write scripts for the selected conflict situations. Tell them to create roles for the disputants and for a mediator in the form of a dialogue. Remind students that they may want to refer to their "Win-Win, My Needs/Your Needs" activity sheets in order to help determine what the disputants might say to each other.

Have the groups take turns performing their dialogues for the class. Encourage the class to critique the dialogues using the mediation guidelines as criteria and discussion points.

Say, "Remember that if it seems impossible to come up with a win-win solution, a mediator might be able to provide the guidance you need."

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to recall the guidelines for mediation. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- A win-win situation is one in which the needs of both parties are at least partially met.
- A mediator can help two opposing parties find common ground and resolve their dispute.

Student Assessment

1. Identify a win-win outcome and list an example.
2. What is mediation and when is it necessary?
3. List four mediation strategies.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Dialogue is the most effective way of resolving conflict.”

Have students create posters displaying and illustrating this quote.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have small groups of students create a guide to finding win-win situations. Each student should contribute to the guide. Each guide should include instructions, diagrams, narratives, stories of conflict, and so on.

Have students display the guides.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about an occasion in which they helped two people solve a dispute.

Have students discuss the difficulty of the task, how they felt after the conflict was over, what they would do again, and what they would do differently.

Using Technology

Have students create a crossword or word search using terms from this module.

Homework

Have students create lists of jobs that involve conflict resolution or mediation skills.

Have each student choose one job that they find interesting and write a profile of that job.

Additional Activity

Have students read “Part Ten: Talking with the Enemy” from *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela.

Have students research and write a few paragraphs about the negotiations to end apartheid in South Africa.

WIN-WIN, MY NEEDS/YOUR NEEDS

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING WIN-WIN SITUATIONS

- ☐ Choose neutral territory for a meeting.
- ☐ Don't lie or exaggerate; build trust from the start.
- ☐ Use good nonverbal communication: make eye contact, use a nonthreatening posture, and stay focused.
- ☐ Try to find common ground.
- ☐ Be open-minded about other suggestions.
- ☐ Focus on the things that are most important to you and try to determine the things that are most important to the other person.
- ☐ Stay in the present; avoid bringing up past arguments.
- ☐ Set a time frame that both of you agree on.
- ☐ Commit to a solution and don't go back.

MY NEEDS/YOUR NEEDS

What is the problem? _____

What do both sides stand to lose? _____

What does person A want? Why? _____

What does person B want? Why? _____

What does person A need? _____

What does person B need? _____

Other factors for person A?*

Other factors for person B?*

**Other factors that motivate people may include a need to be in control, a need for money, and a need to feel recognized or loved.*

RESOLVING CONFLICT



AGENDA

- Starter
- Paper Tiger
- Resolution
- Conflict Resolution Games
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the importance of being assertive when addressing conflicts.

Students will identify the steps to conflict resolution.

Students will apply the steps to conflict resolution to recurring conflicts in their own lives.

Materials Needed

- Comics pages, one set for each group of four students (Starter)
- Several pieces of paper cut into long four-inch-wide strips (Part II)
- One or two board games, such as Sorry, Chutes and Ladders, Life, etc. (Part III)
- Art materials, including one piece of butchers paper or cardboard for each group of three students; markers; glue; construction paper; and found objects such as buttons, fasteners, bottle tops, etc. (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of four and give each group a set of comic strips. Tell students to find one comic strip that is built around a conflict. Have them cut it out, paste it on a larger piece of paper, and answer the following questions:

- Who are the parties in the conflict?
- What is the nature of the conflict?
- What emotions are depicted in the comic strip?
- Does the comic strip show a win-lose, lose-lose, or win-win situation?
- Could this conflict be resolved as a win-win situation for the parties involved?

Have each group present its comic strip to the class and discuss the above issues. Some groups may wish to discuss what is inherently funny about the comic they selected. Remind students that conflict is a part of our everyday lives and that sometimes it helps to find humor in difficult situations, even ones involving interpersonal conflict.

Part I Paper Tiger (5 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the importance of being assertive and facing conflict head-on.

1. Students analyze a quote.

Write the following Zen proverb on the board: “You must turn and face the tiger to learn that it is made of paper.”

Ask students what they think the proverb means. Lead students to understand that the “tigers” in the quote are the conflicts and challenges that present themselves to us. Elicit from students the understanding that the quote is about having the courage to face our challenges directly. Tell students that when we face our conflicts and address them, we often find that they are not as overwhelming as we had thought. Sometimes our biggest obstacles are in our own minds (“made of paper”) and the challenge can be handled head-on.

2. Students recognize the importance of being assertive when addressing conflict.

Ask students to recall what they learned about being assertive in “Lesson 5: Learning to Be Assertive” of Module Three: *Setting and Achieving Goals*. Ask students to describe what they think happens to passive people and aggressive people in conflict situations. (Students might respond: Passive people often find themselves on the losing end of a win-lose situation. Aggressive people might let their anger get out of control or resort to violence).

Tell students that “turning to face the paper tiger” means addressing your conflicts in an assertive manner with the goal of a win-win resolution.

Part II Resolution (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify and order the steps to resolving conflicts and apply the process to the conflicts in their own lives.

1. Students identify the steps to conflict resolution.

Explain to students that they are going to recall and list the steps to conflict resolution, based on what they have learned in the past four lessons. Then, they will prioritize the steps.

As students recall the steps, write their responses in a place where everyone can see. Discuss each of their ideas, defining the steps to ensure that they don't overlap. (See the list below for likely student responses.)

2. Students order the steps to conflict resolution.

Ask volunteers to each write one of the steps on a strip of paper and post it with the other steps in no particular order in the front of the room. Discuss the best order for the steps and arrange the strips in the order decided.

Student responses are likely to include the following steps in a similar order:

1. Identify the source of the conflict.
2. Identify the needs and wants of the two parties.
3. Say what you mean: communicate responsibly, using I-statements and avoiding generalizations, name-calling, and stereotypes.
4. Use anger management techniques to control emotions.
5. Look for common ground with the other person.
6. Consider all available resolutions.
7. Work toward a win-win situation and find a solution that is acceptable to both parties.
8. If no acceptable resolution can be found, bring in a mediator.

3. Students revisit their conflict resolution goals.

Ask students to look at the conflict resolution goals that they have developed throughout this module. Instruct students to use the steps to resolution to devise a plan for assertively addressing the conflicts that they are dealing with in their own lives.

Encourage students to work independently to create a plan that they can monitor and that will help them assess their progress. Circulate as students work, offering feedback or advice as needed.

Part III Conflict Resolution Games (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students create games to demonstrate the steps to conflict resolution.

1. Students identify the characteristics of a board game.

Say, “Now that you know how to resolve conflict effectively, you can practice and share your expertise with others.”

Divide students into groups of three or four. (You may want to consider letting them choose their own groups for this activity.) Tell students that they are going to create games that demonstrate the steps to conflict resolution.

In order to help students identify the characteristics of a board game, show them one or two examples. Help students plan their own games by holding up one of the games and asking questions such as the following:

- What is the goal of this game?
- What is the broad concept of this game?
- How is the board designed?
- How do you advance to the next square, level and so on?
- How are obstacles presented?
- How do players win and lose this game?

Give groups time to explore a variety of games and suggest that they answer similar questions in order to understand the strategies of published board games.

2. Students create conflict-resolution board games.

Provide the groups with butchers paper or cardboard and art materials. Remind them that their games are to demonstrate exemplary ways to resolve conflicts. To do so, they will have to structure the game around conflicts that occur in daily life. Encourage them to be creative in the design of their games.

Allow students about 25 minutes to design their games. You may want to set aside an additional class period to allow students to exchange and play each others' games.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to share their action steps for resolving conflict. Ask the class to comment on what in this module they think has helped them most with their goals for conflict resolution. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- It is important to be assertive when addressing the conflicts that we face.
- The steps to conflict resolution can serve as guidelines for our own conflict resolution goals.

Student Assessment

1. Describe a conflict you have seen in a movie or on TV. Analyze this conflict according to the steps of conflict resolution.
2. Describe a conflict that you have been in and then rewrite it, undoing the crucial moment that led to the conflict.
3. List three conflict resolution strategies that can help you.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“The great tragedies of history occur not when right confronts wrong, but when two rights confront each other.”

Have students discuss the meaning of this quote and how it relates to conflict between two people.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have groups of students create “living statues” of conflict and then of resolution by posing in a scene. Ask each group to explain its formation and how it would resolve the conflict shown in its first statue.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about the challenges they face when trying to be assertive in conflict situations. As a class, compile one list of the challenges that students face and allow them to offer suggestions on how to overcome these challenges.

Using Technology

Students watch an episode of their favourite TV show. Have students identify the way conflict was resolved. Was anyone demonstrating assertive behaviour.

Homework

Have students reflect on their achievement with regard to their conflict resolution goals.
Have each student create a certificate of achievement for someone else in class.

Additional Activity

Have students read excerpts from *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela.

Discuss how Mandela confronted his own conflicts while acting as a mediator to others.