

Relationship Conflict Resolution

Focus on the problem, not the person.

When a disagreement turns to personal insults, raised voices, or mocking tones, the conversation is no longer productive. Be careful to focus on the problem without placing blame on your partner. If a disagreement becomes personal, you should pause the conversation.

Use reflective listening.

Oftentimes during arguments we focus on getting our own point across rather than listening to our partner. Before responding to your partner, restate what they have said to you in your own words. Continue this process until your partner agrees that you understand. Next, share your side. Your partner should reflect back your ideas in their own words until they too understand. Using this technique will help both individuals feel listened to and understood, even if you disagree.

Use "I" statements.

When sharing a concern, begin your sentence with "I". For example: "I feel hurt when you don't tell me you'll be late". With this sentence format we show that we are taking responsibility for our own emotion rather than blaming our partner. The alternative sentence—"You never tell me when you're going to be late"—will often cause a partner to become defensive.

Know when to take a time-out.

When you and your partner are becoming argumentative, insulting, or aggressive, it's a good idea to take a time-out. Have a plan in place so you or your partner can call for a break when needed. Spend some time doing something alone that you find relaxing. When you've both calmed down, you and your partner can return to solving the problem. Be sure that you do return—it isn't a good idea to leave these issues unaddressed.

Work toward a resolution.

Disagreement is a normal part of a relationship. If it becomes clear that you and your partner will not agree, focus on a resolution instead. Try to find a compromise that benefits both individuals. Ask yourself if this disagreement really matters to your relationship, and let yourself move on if not.

"I" Statement Practice

An effective "I" statement follows this format:

"I feel [emotion word] when [explanation]. Practice writing your own below.

BLAMING	"I" STATEMENT
"You always leave your things everywhere! It's so messy.	I feel overwhelmed when the house is cluttered and I have to move things around to get to what I need.
You never listen to me! I might as well talk to a wall.	"I feel _____ when _____ _____ _____"
You always have to have the last word! It's so annoying.	"I feel _____ when _____ _____ _____"

Tips for Writing Effective "I" Statements:

Start with "I feel..." and then use an emotion word, such as "frustrated," "disappointed," or "unsure."

Be mindful of your tone of voice. Even if your words are carefully chosen, a blaming tone can still come across. Use a neutral and calm tone.

In your explanation, describe the situation and how it affects you without blaming the other person. Avoid using accusatory language.

Detective

CHECKING FACTS

Step 1: What was the bad feeling? _____

Step 2: What are 3 things I saw around me (ex. food on the table, tv on)?

1.

2.

3.

Step 3. What were other people doing?

Step 4. Did my brain think there was a BIG problem? Yes No

Step 5. In my head, what was the DANGER? _____

Step 6. Did that come true? Yes No

Step 7. If not, what did actually happen? _____

Step 8. What was something in the room that could have helped me calm down?

Step 9. What is a calm thought about this problem I can say next time?

Step 10. Now, what is my Mood 0-10 (0=awful 10=great): _____

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Use this worksheet to help you resolve conflict with a peer!



What's the Problem?



_____ 's side

How Did you feel?

_____ 's side

How Did you feel?

what are some ways to resolve this issue?

Choose the best solution!

Apologize for anything hurtful you said or did during the conflict!

Relationship Green Flags

qualities of a healthy relationship

Every relationship is unique. For example, the way one couple expresses appreciation may be very different from how another couple does so. However, healthy relationships tend to be alike in many ways. These relationship green flags are associated with physical and mental wellness.

Appreciation

You respect and value your partner, and express gratitude often.

Balance

You find happiness in time spent together *and* apart. Some needs are met outside the relationship (through friendships, hobbies, etc.).

Commitment

You are invested in your partner and the relationship. You give the relationship adequate time and energy.

Commonality

You share important goals, beliefs, and values with your partner.

Conflict Resolution

You take responsibility for your actions, and work as a team to solve problems.

Effective Communication

You communicate your own needs and wishes, while respecting those of your partner.

Empathy

You take your partner's perspective and understand their feelings, even if you do not always agree.

Honesty

Your actions align with your words. The thoughts and feelings you express are genuine.

Independence

You have your own interests and goals separate from those of your partner.

Intimacy

You feel close and connected with your partner physically and emotionally.

Safety

You respect your partner's boundaries. You feel safe physically, intellectually (expressing thoughts), and emotionally (expressing feelings).

Self-Confidence

You feel comfortable being yourself in the relationship.

Non Verbal Messages

When you are trying to resolve conflict, your body language and gestures (non verbal messages) will convey both positive and negative messages. For each of the non verbal message below, determine if it's positive or negative (using a checkmark or an x in the box) toward resolving conflict and indicate why.



- Tapping fingers or feet.
- Rolling of eyeballs
- Watching the clock
- Avoiding eye contact and looking elsewhere
- Looking down
- Rubbing forehead
- Smiling meaningfully
- Smiling sarcastically
- Frowning
- Yawning
- Putting head down on hands
- Wringing hands
- Arms folded intently
- Leaning back
- Covering ears

Relationship Conflict Resolution



Relationship Conflict Resolution DBT Relationship Effectiveness

Sometimes we can struggle with creating effective, long lasting relationships. Often the source of the problem is in the way we behave and interact with others. When we are not mindful of things like our body language, tone, and approach toward people we can come off differently than we intend to. When reacting with others, especially when first meeting people and building strong relationships, remember to **GIVE**:

Gentle. Sometimes we get defensive, and we can come off as harsh or unfriendly. People are much more likely to respond to kindness and patience. How can you be sure to control be respectful and kind to others?

Interest. Showing you are interested and engaged in what others are saying goes a long way in relationships. It is important to really listen to others in a conversation and show you are listening. How can you show you are interested in what others are saying (Ex. Eye contact, not interrupting, being patient before responding, etc.)?

Validate. It is important in a relationship for each member to feel validated. Listening is important, but it is also important to understand, reflect, and empathize. What can you do to validate the feelings of your company's feelings and thoughts?

Easymanner. Sometimes intensity can intimidate people. Things like tense body language (furrowed brow, arms crossed, fidgeting, etc.) can cause people to get the wrong idea of your demeanor or intentions. What can you do to come off as friendly and approachable (tone, smiles, body language, approach, etc.)?

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Sibling Conflict Plan

Use this worksheet to come up with a plan for the next time your sibling bothers you, bullies you, or tries to make you upset. Having a plan of action can help you be prepared to respond to their behavior in a positive way!

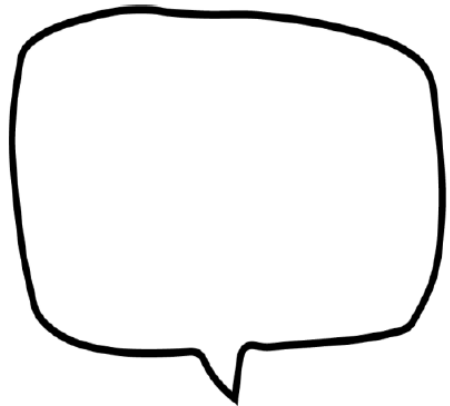
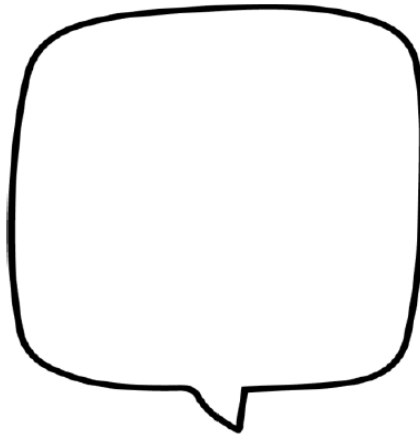
If Sibling Name starts to Sibling Behaviors ,

Things I can do...

I can _____ .

Things I can say...

I can say...



Places I can go...

I can go _____ .

Adults I can talk to...

I can talk to _____ .

I need to remember not to _____

because _____ .



Fair Fighting Rules

Before you begin, ask yourself why you feel upset.

Are you angry because your partner left the mustard on the counter? Or are you angry because you feel like you're doing an uneven share of the housework, and this is just one more piece of evidence? Take time to think about your own feelings before starting an argument.

Discuss one topic at a time.

Don't let "You left dishes in the sink" turn into "You watch too much TV." Discussions that get off-topic are more likely to get heated, and less likely to solve the original problem. Choose one topic and stick to it.

No degrading language.

Discuss the issue, not the person. No put-downs, swearing, or name-calling. Degrading language is an attempt to express negative feelings while making sure your partner feels just as bad. Doing so leads to more character attacks while the original issue is forgotten.

Express your feelings with words.

"I feel hurt when you ignore my phone calls." "I feel scared when you yell." Structure your sentences as "I" statements ("I feel *emotion* when *event*") to express how you feel while taking responsibility for your emotions. However, starting with "I" does not give a license to ignore the other fair fighting rules.

Take turns speaking.

Give your full attention while your partner speaks. Avoid making corrections or thinking about what you want to say. Your only job is to understand their point of view, even if you disagree. If you find it difficult to not interrupt, try setting a timer allowing 1-2 minutes for each person to speak without interruption.

No stonewalling.

Sometimes, the easiest way to respond to an argument is to retreat into your shell and refuse to speak. This is called stonewalling. You might feel better temporarily, but the original issue will remain unresolved and your partner will feel more upset. If you absolutely cannot go on, tell your partner you need to take a time-out. Agree to resume the discussion later.

No yelling.

Yelling does not help anyone see your point of view. Instead, it sends the message that only your words matter. Even if yelling intimidates your partner into giving up, the underlying problem only grows worse.

Take a time-out if things get too heated.

In a perfect world, we would all follow these rules 100% of the time... but it just doesn't work like that. If an argument starts to become personal or heated, take a time-out. Agree on a time to come back and discuss the problem after everyone has cooled down.

Attempt to come to a compromise or an understanding.

There isn't always a perfect answer to an argument. Life is too messy for that. Do your best to come to a compromise (this means some give and take from both sides). If you can't come to a compromise, simply taking the time to understand your partner's perspective can help soothe negative feelings.