



This issue builds resilience in...

Conflict resolution

Relationships

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Setting relationships up to succeed...

“How many times do I have to ask you to empty the dishwasher? Every single day? Is it too much trouble for you to put things away as well? Why do I always have to be the one to ask? Can’t you show some initiative, you’re a...”, said one partner to another in a heated moment of conflict. Is this uncommon? No, it’s often how conflict is done but invariably it leads to people feeling disconnected and discontented. Can conflict be better?

Yes, it can...

Here are five key tips to help you have constructive conflict, deepen connection through collaborative negotiation and build trust levels in your family. Experiment with these strategies for positive conflict.

1. **Avoid asking “Why...”**. People tend to respond defensively when asked *“Why did you...?”* and are less likely to listen or connect. Instead, ask other questions like, *“what, when, who, where, how and tell me...”*. These questions are more likely to give useful information from which you can start to find a solution.
2. **Stick to one question at a time**. No-one likes to feel interrogated. By focusing on one key point of difference and exploring only that in a conflict situation, you’ll get to a solution much quicker and without getting people off-side.
3. **Be willing to listen with an open mind**. No-one wants to share if they know the other person is waiting for an opportunity to criticise.
4. **Remember other people may have a completely different perspective**. Allow an opportunity for everyone to share their

perspective on a situation before ‘standing your ground’. Assumptions are often incorrect, lead to messy conflicts and decrease chances of collaboration and connection.

5. **Set people up to succeed**. Hold a positive expectation for people to live into. We all want approval and if given the chance, we’ll do our best to earn it. So, once you’ve negotiated, collaborated and come to an agreement that is clear and specific, trust the other person to fulfil it and be accountable for the results. Review what happens and **adjust the process** if needed, while avoiding blaming, shaming or finger pointing and saying, *“I told you so...”*. Conflict can strengthen relationships.

- ✓ How conflict is managed can either earn or burn trust, connection and contentment.
- ✓ Avoid asking *“Why?”*, too many questions or wanting to shame or blame someone.
- ✓ Trust people to follow through on an agreement and review and adjust as needed.

“Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him and to let him know that you trust him.” Booker T Washington