



# Conflict Resolution for Seniors

## How to effectively manage difficult conversations

### Instructions:

This worksheet is designed to help you resolve conflict through use of effective communication. Use it to guide your actions in a way that produces a peaceful solution in time of disagreement.

### First, let's take a look at the conflict you are facing using the Stop-Think-Act model:

**1. Stop!** Breathe. Calm Down. Now, you are ready to accurately look at the problem at hand.

**2. Think!** Ask yourself:

- What exactly is the *problem*? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is this *really* a problem? Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- It is *my* problem? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does it need *immediate* attention? \_\_\_\_\_
- What do I want? What is my *goal*? \_\_\_\_\_
- What might I be *assuming*? \_\_\_\_\_
- What might be another person's *point-of-view*? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are my *options*? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the potential *consequences* of each option? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is my *best choice* here? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it My  
problem?

### 3. Act!

- Take action and responsibility for that action
- Evaluate your action and the outcome. What can I learn from this?
- Does the problem still exist? If no, learn from your experience. If yes, start again

**Next, if you have determined that there is indeed a conflict that needs to be resolved, here's some additional CLUES on how to resolve it...**

**C - communicate promptly, assertively, respectfully.** Initiate a private conversation and share your perspective & goal. Remember, talk to people, not about people.

**L – listen to the other person's point of view.** Allow them to speak without interruption, hidden agenda or judgment. Then, reflect what you hear to clarify what they are saying.

**U – understand their perspective.** Practice empathy; “Help me understand your point-of-view.” Also, discuss one issue at a time, get the facts, and clarify assumptions.

**E - explore options & solutions.** Brainstorm to generate options. Choose a solution that works for you both and act on it.

**S - So, how did it go?** Evaluate how it went. Then move one or plan next steps. What did you learn?

**Now, if you are still stuck wondering what to say in the face of conflict, try this...**

- **Starting the conversation:** “I want to talk to you about something and I'd appreciate it if you would first listen to what I have to say and then I will do the same for you...OK?”
- **State the problem:** I “I've noticed...or, I feel \_\_\_\_\_, Because \_\_\_\_\_, and What I want is \_\_\_\_\_”
- **Gaining understanding:** “Help me understand (your view point, what's going on, what that's like for you)...”
- **Reflecting/Paraphrasing:** “What I hear you saying is...Is that correct?”
- **Move towards action:** “Given what we just talked about, what are some possible solutions that could work for us both?”

**Finally, here are some Conflict Resolution Dos & Don'ts**

**DO:**

- Communicate face-to-face
- Manage your own emotions
- Use language that is understood
- Recognize and embrace differences
- Understand interests and perspectives of self and others
- Act sooner rather than later
- Focus on the present situation/problem
- Actively listen and pay attention
- Be present, clear, and direct
- Be honest, genuine, and respectful
- Assert yourself
- Be aware of body language
- Convey the value of your relationship
- Watch your tone of voice
- Make sure to provide ample personal space

**DON'T:**

- Wait or avoid the issue
- Assume
- Get defensive
- Interrupt
- Ignore feedback
- Argue feelings, judge or criticize
- Use put-downs or sarcasm
- Rely solely on verbals or nonverbal
- Discuss the problem with others not associated with the issue
- Stop communicating