



6-Step Method for Creative Resolution of Conflicts

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1. Create an Effective Atmosphere

- Each participant should ask themselves two simple questions:
 1. Would you be willing to search for a solution that is better than what anyone has proposed?
 2. Would you be willing to agree that no one can make his or her point until they have restated the other person's point to his or her satisfaction?
- Assume the other person wants to resolve the issues as much as you do – THIS IS STARTING WITH HEART. THIS IS SAFETY. WHEN IT IS SAFE YOU CAN SAY ALMOST ANYTHING.
- Remain aware for verbal and non-verbal cues when safety has been violated or is in jeopardy. Monitor yourself and observe the other person for signs such as: heated emotions, prolonged silence, and/or defensiveness.
- When it is unsafe you start to go blind. There is no safety where there is no heart.
- It is vital to return safety. When you find yourself turning someone into a villain – stop and ask yourself the questions:
 - Why would a reasonable, rational, and decent person do what this person is doing?
 - If I were a reasonable, rational, and decent person, what would I do in this situation, what would I do?

- **EASE THE TENSION.** The goal is to have the parties involved in the issue responding rather than emotionally reacting to one another. This is imperative for creating an atmosphere of safety.
- **To bring your heart to the interchange, you need to:**
 - Listen without judgment, many times, allowing a person to vent an issue will reduce its intensity.
 - Remain calm; depersonalize the hostility; and do not react; resist the natural instinct to be defensive.
 - Do not try to offer solutions
 - Express understanding and concern

2. Separate the people from the problem

By focusing on the problem you diffuse the emotion and open the way for creating a partnership to resolve the issue.

3. Determine interests and avoid positions

Focusing on a position usually results in an ego invested stance. To move from being stuck in this no win dance, work to uncover positions.

4. Brainstorm options for mutual gain

Explore as many options as possible that accommodate both parties.

- ✓ Quantity first
- ✓ Quality Second

5. Build an action plan

Ensure agreement and clarity of follow through by committing to act. This will move things beyond the 'talk only' stage.

6. Follow-up and reassess

Monitor your progress over time and change things as needed.