

# HOW TO TALK ABOUT CONFLICT

## Agree to talk about conflict when creating group guidelines/comfort agreement.

1. Start by asking group members to define conflict
2. Have group members choose a partner and each complete and share the following sentences:

**“When I am in conflict with someone, my body feels \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**“When I am in conflict with someone, I want to \_\_\_\_\_.”**

3. Brainstorm sources of conflict in groups.
4. Have group members think of a time when they have successfully handled conflict with someone. As a group, discuss what made it successful. Ask what they did or said and how they felt.

5. Pick from the list of “sources of conflict” and have group members form groups of three. Take turns practicing conflict resolution using the following, **“putting it on the table approach”**, created by Self-Help Connection in Nova Scotia:
  - Agree to put conflict on the table.
  - Have each person define the problem.
  - Have each person state what she/he needs.
  - Have an observer restate the problem.
  - If both parties agree that this is an accurate reflection of the problem, have all parties brainstorm solutions. List them.
  - Identify two or three solutions that seem workable, then narrow these down to one.
  - Make a commitment to try the solution.
  - Evaluate the solution at an agreed upon time. If the solution didn’t work, try the process again.

The right tools for solving disputes within our community are precision instruments such as reason, communication, empathy, curiosity, and understanding. They are also the right tools for building a global civilization of peace and prosperity. ~Paul K. Chappell