

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT - EXERCISE

UNDERSTANDING OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CONFLICT

Part 1: Personal Reflection

- What does conflict bring to mind? What words, images, emotions do you associate with conflict? What connotations (positive, neutral, negative) do they carry?
- Can you think of some consequences that conflicts you have experienced or witnessed carried?

Part 2: Group Sharing

- Share with your group or a colleague. What insights arose from your discussions?
- What new aspects of conflict have been revealed by this sharing? How is the experience of others shaping your understanding of and relationship to conflict?

YOUR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE

Part 1: Connecting to Experience

- How do you personally approach interpersonal conflict?
- In your own words, describe your default behavior in situations where
 - 1) you were part of an interpersonal conflict and
 - 2) where you witnessed a conflict between two individuals or a group.
- As you are considering your default reactions to conflict situations, what insights are coming to mind? How would have a different reaction to conflict been more helpful?

Part 2: Reacting to the Input and Handout:

Go through the input sheet and the five different modes of handling conflict outlined in the handout. Gather your insights in your learning journal.

- Which style do you tend to use more readily than others?
- What social skills and attitudes do you personally bring to this particular style?
- How is this style benefiting you and fitting with your internal predispositions?
- What is the impact of your preferred conflict-handling style on others?
- What insights did you learn about the potential pitfalls of this particular style?
- What skills and attitudes are you invited to develop to expand your repertoire to other modes?

Make a list of your 3 main takeaways from this exercise and share with others.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

You may be interested to explore the input worksheet as well as Handout 1 for understanding your personal way of handling conflict and Handout 2 for keys to de-escalating conflict.