

# 12 Ways to Resolve Conflicts

## Peacefully

- 1. Practice.** Learning to settle problems peacefully takes practice. Role play with family or friends different ways to resolve conflicts.
- 2. Talk about Problems Before they Become Conflicts.** Try to resolve minor disagreements before they grow into major disputes.
- 3. Use "I-statements".** When you say, "You make me so\_\_\_," it blames the person and putting them on the defensive. When you say, "I feel\_\_ when you\_\_\_," it's talking about your feelings, not the other person's failures or mistakes. You are helping the other person understand your feelings and point of view. Then you tell the person what you need.

Example: Instead of "YOU are always interrupting," try, "I feel frustrated when someone interrupts me, because I lose my train of thought. I need you to wait until I'm finished speaking."

- 4. Talk about the Possible Reasons Behind the Conflict.** Try to find out where it started. Try to identify any "accidental messages".

- 5. Talk about the Problem Without Placing Blame.**

Example: "I don't like to be treated that way," or "I hate being late to movies."  
Maybe she didn't mean to insult you. Maybe he couldn't help being late.  
Give the person the benefit of the doubt.

- 6. Be a Good Listener.** Acknowledge what others are saying by nodding saying "yes" or "uh-huh". Ask questions. Don't interrupt. Give him/her your full attention.

- 7. Be Willing to Cooperate.** When you are in a conflict, you both have a problem. If you work together to solve the problem, you'll both benefit.

- 8. Be Willing to Compromise.** Decide what is really important to you and what you're willing to sacrifice to resolve the conflict. Give a little and you might get a lot.

- 9. Choose People to be Mediators.** When a conflict arises, a mediator/peace keeper steps in and helps the people involved in the conflict to talk, listen, cooperate, compromise, and look for solutions.

**10. Identify Adults you Trust and Respect.** Call them if you need them. If you can't get help from a peer mediator, ask an adult for help.

**11. Agree to Disagree.** Some conflicts simply can't be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, but you can still respect each other for having different opinions. Don't let your disagreements escalate to verbal or physical fights.

**12. Learn from your Experiences.** After each conflict, review in your mind what happened, why it happened, and how the conflict was resolved (if it was resolved). Write in your journal. Was there anything you could have done differently? Should have done differently? Did you learn anything that you might be able to use to resolve future conflicts? Did you learn anything that you might be able to use to prevent future conflicts?