

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Styles

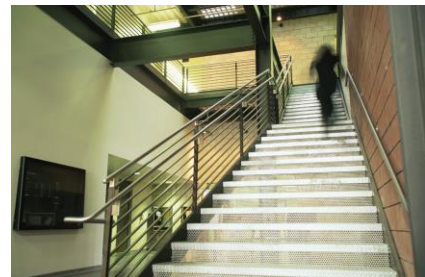
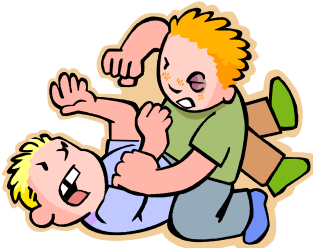
Student Worksheet # 1

We all respond to conflict in different ways. Here are six ways people tend to handle conflict.

1. Be aggressive! Take charge to demand you get your way.
2. Give in. Smooth over the conflict and do what the other person wants.
3. Avoid, deny, or ignore the conflict. You may run away or remove yourself physically or emotionally.
4. Don't do anything right away. Stop and reflect, and return to the problem later.
5. Check in with a friend or adult you trust. Get his or her advice.
6. Solve the problem by listening, negotiating, and reaching a solution that works for both people. Sometimes this means saying "no" to the other person.

Discuss the following questions with your partner. Write your answers in the blanks below.

1. I tend to handle conflict by
2. One good way my family handles conflict is
3. One thing I like about the way I handle conflict is
4. I think I could do better at handling conflict if I
5. How are people responding to conflict in these two pictures?



My Conflict Style in the Animal World

Module Reader # 1

“I’m the Boss!”

You take charge and confront. You might even use force to get your own way or protect yourself or others. Like a lion, you are always ready to be the boss.



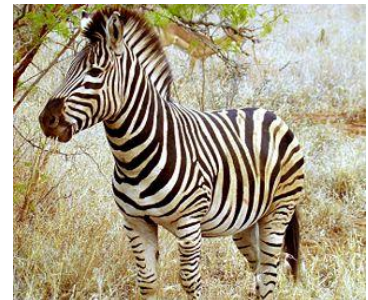
“What Problem?”

You tend to ignore problems or avoid them. If you have a problem, you tend to check out—either emotionally or by physically leaving. Like a turtle, you pull your head back inside your shell.



“Let’s All Just Get Along”

You tend to accommodate what other people want. You give in easily, and always want to smooth over any conflicts and blend in. You like to blend in with the group, like a zebra.



“I’ll Deal with That Tomorrow.”

You like to stop and think before you react. You’ll return to the problem later, after you’ve had time to think about your choices. You move slowly and deliberately, like a mountain goat finding the right path.



“Let Me Talk to My People!”

You go to a trusted friend or adult to get good advice about a conflict. You don’t just react in the heat of the moment. Like a gorilla, you have a community that supports you, and you use your brain!



“I’m Thinking about My Options.”

You think your way through your problems. You don’t always respond the same way. You listen, ask questions, observe, and negotiate. Like a dolphin, you are intelligent!



Learning More about Conflict

Module Worksheet #2

Interview an adult about a conflict he or she had. This could be a parent, neighbor, coach, religious leader, or teacher. Ask your interviewee to answer the questions.



What was the conflict about?

What did you need or want?

Was the conflict resolved? If so, how?

If you went through this conflict again, would you do anything differently the next time? If so, what?

After the interview, fill in the chart below.

YES	NO	NOT SURE	
			The person took charge and demanded change or action.
			The person tried to smooth over the conflict
			The person tried to deny or ignore the conflict.
			The person waited and thought about it before responding.
			The person asked someone else for advice.
			The person thought about it and tried to reach a solution that worked for both sides (negotiate, share, take turns).
			Nothing was done. The conflict was never resolved.
			One or both people apologized for their part in the conflict.
			Both people gave up a little of what they wanted (compromise).
			Listening to the other side helped make things better.
			The way the conflict was handled hurt the relationship.
			The way the conflict was handled helped the relationship.