

Increase the Peace:

Skills for Resolving Conflicts



“I” Messages

Everyday people have disagreements. It's hard to go through life without them. We all grow up learning how to handle it. Some of us learn from parents, teachers, friends or even television. Children may even take lessons in conflict resolution. By learning these skills, they can become better at settling things. Conflict is not all bad. It usually brings about changes. Often these changes are for the best.

A **CONFLICT** is a disagreement between two or more people.

A **SOLUTION** is a settlement between two or more people.

A good skill in resolving and preventing conflicts is to use “I” messages. When we use statements that begin with the word “I”...

- We take responsibility for our feelings.
- Our words become less blaming and more focused on the important issues; and
- The person we are talking to feels less defensive.

Others will not feel attacked or threatened when we say, “I feel this way” or “I need that” as opposed to “you let me down” or “you have a big problem.”

Instead of accusing or blaming the other person, say how you feel and what you need from them, starting with the word “I.” For instance, do not say “You never pay attention to me. You don't care about how I feel.” Instead say, “I feel insecure when you ignore me. I need to know that you care about me.”



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