



Using conflict to foster growth.

Learn how to best support yourself and others during disagreements.

Conflict is a normal part of life. And while it's okay to never be truly comfortable during a conflict, it's important to know that being able to resolve issues effectively is a healthy part of communicating with others.

Resolving conflict starts with two very important skills: the ability to quickly relieve stress in the heat of the moment and the ability to recognize and be comfortable with your emotions while still being able to react calmly.*

When handled in a healthy, positive way, conflict builds trust and can help strengthen the relationship between two people – regardless of age. This can help you feel more secure and confident about the future, knowing your relationship can survive disagreements.**

Try using these techniques to help yourself, a loved one or a friend work through conflict in a healthy way:

- 1. Relieve stress in the moment.** Engage the senses. For example, squeeze a stress ball, light a scented candle, sip some tea or find a calming image to look at for a few moments.*
- 2. Take time.** Give yourself or the other person some distance so you both can gather your thoughts and deal with your emotions.*
- 3. Prioritize the solution.** Don't focus on being right or winning the argument. Coming to an agreement and strengthening the relationship should be the main priority.*
- 4. Forget the past.** Focus on the issue in the moment, not something that happened three months ago. Holding grudges prevents you from seeing the current situation clearly.***
- 5. Plan for the future.** Once you've come to an understanding, set up a plan to check in and make sure both parties are still satisfied and following through on what they said they would do.***

*Segal, J, Robinson, L, and Smith, M. "Conflict Resolution Skills." HelpGuide.org. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>. Page last reviewed: February 24, 2023.

**Garney, J. "Teaching Kids How to Deal with Conflict." Child Mind Institute. <https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-how-to-deal-with-conflict>. Page last reviewed: March 28, 2023.

***Zitz, S. "9 Conflict Resolutions Skills for Strong, Healthy Relationships." Prevention. <https://www.prevention.com/sex/relationships/a41424072/conflict-resolution-skills>. September 28, 2022.

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