What to do Should Conflict Arise?

Should conflict arise, connecting with peoples' feelings and empathically reflecting back to them what they are saying is an effective starting point. Studies done in labour management negotiations indicate that the time needed to settle disputes can be considerably shortened if one simple rule is followed: each participant must paraphrase what the previous speaker has said before saying anything in rebuttal.

Once you have heard the feelings and needs of those involved in the conflict, you can use the steps below to communicate your needs and explore strategies to meet them, as well as the needs of others.



1. **Express Yourself Using the Four Ingredients of NVC:**

- Observation: "When I see / hear…"

Feeling: “I feel…”

Need: “Because I need / would like…”

Request: “Would you be willing to…”

2. **Hear their response and connect empathically with them. Try:**

- Reflective Listening - mirror back what you are hearing them say.

Connecting with the needs underneath what they are saying, “Are you needing…?”

Connecting with their feelings, if their feelings seem strong, “I’m sensing you’re feeling…?”

(N. B. You may need to do any of these things two or three times until you have connected fully to their needs and they sense that they have been heard.)

3. **Put all their needs and your needs on the table:**

- “I want you to get your needs met for…

…AND…

I also have a need for… (your original need(s) that you expressed with the four ingredients in part ‘2’ above).”

4. **Look for solutions / strategies:**

- “Do you have any suggestions for how we could resolve this so you get … (your need)… and I can get… (my need)?
  OR
  “How about if we…?”
