

**ONSET**  
**DEALING WITH  
DIFFICULT  
PEOPLE**  
AND THE CONFLICT THAT COMES WITH IT

**ONSET**  
**DIFFICULTY**  
IDENTIFY THE

**POWER MONSTERS**  
People who feed on power and are driven to control people as well as situations.



**ANSWER GUYS**  
People who know everything, just ask them.



**WHINERS**  
People who complain incessantly, and that's all they do



**MANIPULATORS**  
Expert deceivers who seldom give all the facts



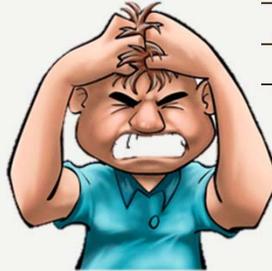
## TOUGH GUYS

People who bully others, make cutting remarks and throw tantrums



## OTHERS

- Others might include:
  - Unresponsive
  - Wishy-washy
  - Always agreeable



# OHSET

## PERSPECTIVE

KEEPING

## IMPORTANCE!

Just because it's not important to you, doesn't mean it's not important



## FACTS ONLY

Address issues and facts, NOT people.

# Just the Facts

## CHANGE...NOT

Don't expect people to change; they are not likely to change; AND this can be a good thing, it makes them more predictable



## LESS EMOTIONS

Whenever possible,  
leave out the  
emotions



# OHSET

## PLAN

HAVE A

## WHY WE AVOID CONFRONTATION

- Fear of injury
- Fear of failure
- Fear of hurting others' feelings
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of financial impacts



## SQUASHING THE FEAR



## ASK QUESTIONS

Be specific about the situation or about why "we're at this place..."



## TRY TO UNDERSTAND *THE PERSON*

See the situation from their view; and remember there are lots of things going on in peoples' lives besides this current issue



## CLEAR FACTS

Be certain the facts of the situation are clear, agree on as much as possible

**I'D AGREE WITH YOU,  
BUT THEN WE'D  
BOTH BE WRONG**

## DIRECTNESS

Deal with the person directly and discreetly if possible

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search ID: 670007  
Geoff Thompson  
"I'll be blunt and get straight to the point!"

## STRAIGHTFORWARD AND UNEMOTIONAL

Some issues are emotional and sometimes you are the only non-emotional party; it's hard, but worth it



## FIND COMMON GROUND



Find something you can agree on, even if it's as simple as "great weather we're having..."

## LISTEN!

Probably the most crucial element



## SHARE YOUR FEELINGS

While we're keeping emotions out, you obviously have feelings about the situation, behavior, etc. It's OK to share



## BE GRACIOUS

Webster defines  
Gracious as...

“kind and pleasant in  
manner,...”

“...merciful.”

I have heard it said, “If you  
have to choose between  
being right and being kind,  
always choose kind.”

# ONSET

## RESPOND

VERSUS REACTION

## KNOW YOURSELF

Often difficult  
situations escalate  
because of our  
response or  
reaction.



## SKILLED RESPONSES

Teach yourself to  
have skilled  
responses



## KNOW YOUR “HOT” BUTTON

Have coping  
strategies for  
dealing with  
reactions to things  
that you might  
perceive as a  
threat



## HAVING THE LAST WORD

Is having the last word  
really so important?

Let it go... move on –  
this will help others do  
the same

*What do you mean??*



*Nobody has  
the last word  
.....but me.*

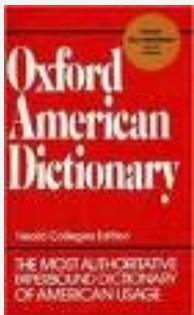


# CONFLICT

DEALING WITH THE MOST SERIOUS OF

## WHAT IS CONFLICT?

“1. a fight, a struggle.  
2. disagreement between people with different ideas or beliefs.” (Oxford 179)



## SIT DOWN

It’s much harder to be angry sitting down.



## SEND THE RIGHT MESSAGE WITH YOUR BODY LANGUAGE TOO!



## LISTENING

- The single most important key to conflict resolution.



My father says “It’s better to remain silent and be thought of a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt.”

## KEYS TO GOOD LISTENING

**#1**  
Most important, A closed mouth.

- The simple appearance of your listening can be beneficial.
- Ask questions. This demonstrates you are listening and can clear up any misunderstandings.
- Listen actively, so you can understand.

## FIND SOME COMMON GROUND

It's always helpful to find something both parties can agree on.



For example:

- You want what's best for their child
- What a beautiful day
- Great weather,

## KNOW HOW YOU WILL REACT

It's easiest to resolve conflict if we know what and why we feel the way we do. Most of us have hot buttons, know what they are and how you will respond. Understanding ourselves, makes it easier to share that information with others and helps us to concentrate on understanding the other person.

## BE HONEST. ARTICULATE CLEARLY.

Often called assertive communication, it's a way to say what's on your mind clearly and straightforward without being aggressive or criticizing the other person in some way.



## WORK FOR A SOLUTION

Once you have a clear understanding of the problem, try to come up with a solution. Don't be afraid to ask the other person what the best possible solution for them is AND don't be afraid to tell them, what is NOT a possibility.



## KNOW WHEN TO STOP

If your best skills aren't working, shut it down. Sometimes people have to agree to disagree or sometimes simply walk away without solution. When someone has nothing new to add and no solutions are possible, it's time to walk away.



**ONSET**

**COMMUNICATION**

IT'S REALLY THE KEY.

## CHOOSE TO COMMUNICATE IN A WAY THAT WORKS

- If it's not working, try another approach.
- Remember, it's not personal, it's an exchange of information...work toward the solution.
- Focus on the issue.
- It's not a conspiracy to make you have a bad day.

## IF ALL ELSE FAILS, TELL THE TRUTH.

- The truth is personal and contains I statements.
  - I'm doing the best I can.
  - I don't deserve to be shouted at
  - It's true, I haven't called you back
- Acknowledge the accuracies.



## CHOOSE YOUR MODE OF COMMUNICATION CAREFULLY

Email is not a good way to resolve conflict.

Face to Face discussion is best.

Phone conversation if face to face isn't possible.



## IF YOU USE EMAIL...

- Proofread!
- Remember, it's a written record.
- Consider who and where you are sending it.
- Don't forward an email without permission from the original sender
- IT'S NOT A GOOD CHOICE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION.



## DON'T SWING AT A PITCH IN THE DIRT

Ignore negative energy and rude disrespectful comments. They don't deserve or need a response.

Don't be afraid to absorb some of their energy by saying things like: "you might be right..." "You have a point..." "Hmm, I haven't considered that..."

Deflect energy by using humor only if it comes naturally and is appropriate.



## KEEP IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Just because the issue isn't important to you, doesn't mean it's not important.

Address issues and facts, not people.  
Leave the emotions out.



## HAVE A PLAN

- Know how you're going to respond.
- Teach yourself to have skilled responses.
- Know what threatens you, learn to stop when you're becoming defensive.
- Own your part of the problem.
- Be as discreet as possible.



## WHAT CONFLICT IS NOT.

It's not a hatred or an emotional feeling. People can have disagreements or conflict and still like each other and/or care about each other and respect each other.



## RESOLVING CONFLICT

SOME THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO AVOID

## AVOIDING CONFLICT ALTOGETHER

Letting things build up contributes to explosiveness and perpetuates challenges. Suddenly (or not so suddenly) the conflict resembles the snowball effect.



## BEING DEFENSIVE

Try not to let it be about you, try to let it be about the issue. This will help you not to be defensive. Accept and try to understand the other side, without feeling the need to defend yours.



## DRAMATIZING

When we feel hurt, misunderstood or disagree, we often want to generalize or dramatize the issue. For example, using words like "everyone is mad..." or "everything is all messed up..." or "you always come home late."



## BEING RIGHT

Someone once said to me, “if faced with a choice of being right or being kind, choose kind.”

There are many perspectives to issues, this does not necessarily mean there is a right and a wrong way to view it.



## READING BETWEEN THE LINES

Don't decide you know how someone is feeling. For example if someone is late, try not to assume it's because they don't care – ask! Don't attempt to read their mind or assume.



## DON'T FORGET TO LISTEN

Often we get so focused on what we want to say next or the point we MUST get across, that we fail to listen. Listening is the most critical element to resolution.



## LACKING ACCOUNTABILITY

It's easy to blame someone else. The other person, a third party, anyone as long as it's not us. It's important we take responsibility for our part.



## COMPETING

Trying to “win” the argument does not solve the challenge. This focus also diminishes listening. Work toward understanding and listening, not winning.



## ATTACKING

Resolving conflict does not include attacking the other person or their character. Saying things like “you're an idiot,” “you don't have any compassion,” etc. – this will create defensiveness on the other side and loses site of the focus of the discussion



## REFUSING TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE

Much like avoiding conflict, stonewalling the issue is also not productive. Solutions and/or healing can not begin if issues are not addressed.



## QUICK LIST

- Clarify the issue
- Ask questions
- Listen
- Put it in perspective
- Leave out the emotion
- It's NOT personal
- Understand all sides
- Be tactful
- Don't get defensive
- Know how YOU will respond
- Be direct
- Be discreet
- Don't expect them to change
- Be straightforward

## WHAT KINDS OF CONFLICT ARE MOST COMMON IN THE OHSET COMMUNITY?

- What do you mean my child got DQ'd?
- Nobody told me that was the rule.
- My child couldn't make it to the class, they overslept.
- I don't have time to make that many meetings.
- You're always picking on my kid.



## QUESTIONS

Some of this has been redundant in an effort to say it another way...

Did we miss anything?

Any questions?

Challenges we didn't cover?



## PRACTICE!

AND DON'T EXPECT TO BE PERFECT EVERY TIME. EVEN THE MOST SKILLED CONFLICT MANAGERS DON'T ALWAYS FIND RESOLUTION.



## HOSTILITY & ANGER

SIMPLE TIPS FOR DEALING WITH

## RESPONSE

When anger is directed at us, we often respond with anger or we retreat and let them "hammer" us. As long as either of these is happening, there is no focus on the real issue.



## GOALS

The goals of an angry person are either to force respect or intimidate



## WHAT NOT TO DO

**Don't just let it go**

This often will result in an accumulation and a loss of control. Appearing weak or getting angry usually have equal results; an escalation of the tirade and the angry either "go for the kill" or become threatened.

**Don't make promises you can't keep**

## TRY THIS

- Appear firm, strong, and unemotional. Use tact and a steady quiet, but deliberate voice; this will often get their attention and respect. Ask good questions that are pertinent to the issue, try to be friendly. Get the facts. Let them know you know they are upset. Repeat their issues back to them to be sure you understand. Ask what you can do to resolve the issue.



# RUDENESS

SIMPLE TIPS FOR DEALING WITH

## MOST COMMON RUDE BEHAVIOR

If you are trying to converse with someone and they are busy doing something else...



## WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't Compete



## WHAT TO DO

- Ask if they would like you to come back another time; and politely excuse yourself
- Ask questions to see if they're listening
- Get them involved by having to express themselves



# CLOSED MINDS

SIMPLE TIPS FOR DEALING WITH

## CLOSED MINDEDNESS

Closed minded people miss out on tons of cool stuff



## WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't expect them to change



## TRY THIS...

- Try and understand their point of view
- Explain the mutual benefits of your plan
- Acknowledge the obstacles
- Demonstrate (show evidence of ) the need for change



# OHSET

## COMMUNICATION

THE KEY IS

## SIMPLE TIPS

- Use "I" messages... I really need X to happen
- Be conscience of your body language
- Make sure you get and give a clear message
- Ask questions for clarity AND so the speaker knows you're listening
- LISTEN!!!!!!



# OHSET

## THE LEAST YOU SHOULD KNOW

ABOUT DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION