

# Conflict

## What is Conflict?

**Conflict is a universal experience that we all encounter and must learn to navigate throughout our lives. This is why it's essential to discuss and model healthy resolution strategies with your teen.**

In our modules, we define conflict as any situation where you might experience an argument, disagreement, or fight with another individual or group. It can arise in various relationships, including those with family, friends, peers, and romantic partners. Navigating these situations can be quite challenging!

## When to address conflict?

We mention that conflict should always be addressed after you have had a chance to regulate and calm down. It's important to also assess the situation and understand both sides, maybe here they might notice that they were in the wrong or perhaps should have communicated differently.

## Steps to take in navigating conflict:

### Steps to navigate conflict:

1

If you're feeling like you can't calmly communicate – give yourself sometime to calm down.

2

Evaluate the situation on your own and try to understand both sides.

3

Tell the person or people that you would like to talk about what happened.

4

Be an active listener and try to understand their story.

5

Use open body language to show the person you're listening.

6

Once everyone has had an opportunity to speak try find a way to solve the problem.



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## Why do we recommend these steps for conflict navigation?

**Prioritize Calming Time:** It's crucial to take time to regulate and calm your emotions before communicating with others, as this helps prevent situations from escalating further.

**Self-Reflection and Evaluation:** Taking a moment to reflect can provide insight into both sides of the conflict, it may help you to determine if you are being treated fairly or you may not have been respectful.

**Initiate Conversations:** Taking the initiative to start a conversation can facilitate progress and demonstrate maturity by being the bigger person.

**Practice Active Listening:** Being an active listener is a vital skill for effective communication, fostering a deeper understanding of others' feelings and emotions. For example, not touching your phone

**Use Open Body Language:** Demonstrating open body language signals respect and a willingness to listen and engage in communication. I.e. Eye contact, not crossing arms.

**Collaborative Problem Solving:** Working together to resolve conflict is essential for being able to navigate relationships. This is also a fantastic technique to educate your children, which can be applied in everyday life situations.

### **It's important to mention:**

**That not all conflict needs to be resolved. Step 2 in navigation is incredibly important to understand both sides and identify if it's healthy.**

**If they feel safe and respected in their relationship and the conflict itself then it is probably a conflict worth resolving.**

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## How can you support your teen?

### It's important to mention:

**They may not be ready or willing to talk!  
Knowing that you're there to support them when  
or if they're ready is just as important.**

### Healthy conflict modeling at home

It's essential for your teen to witness what healthy conflict resolution looks like. Consider this during disagreements at home or when discussing conflicts that arose in your workplace or among friends. Highlighting the strategies you used to resolve these conflicts in a constructive manner is crucial for helping them grasp the healthy approaches to problem-solving.

### How to discuss conflict openly at home:

When trying to support your teen to navigate a conflict they're struggling with your goal should be to create a safe, and non-judgmental space. The space allows them to speak and you to listen. Try to not interrogate them, but to assist with ways they can problem solve following the navigation steps. If you feel your teen has been placed in an unsafe situation it's important to communicate this and discuss next steps to resolving - for example getting the school involved, the coach, or possibly even the police (dependent on the situation).

### Conversation starters:

- "I noticed you were upset when you got home today. If you want to talk about it I'm here"
- How did that make you feel?
- What do you wish went differently in the situation?
- How can I support you with this?
- It sounds like this made you really hurt when \_\_\_\_\_ that must have been really difficult"
- "Do you feel safe in this relationship?"
- "Do you feel this is a situation you want to fix or step away from?"

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