

6 STEPS TO TRANSFORMING CONFLICT

These steps are a proven formula to transforming conflict from a difficult, sh*tty and unproductive situation into an opportunity to deepen understanding, grow relationships and get better outcomes.

The 'facts' of the situation are always a problem. Conflict lives in the stories that we tell ourselves and others about these 'facts'. It's those narratives that cause the drama.

These 6 Steps will help you to understand your own narrative and to grow your understanding of others so that together you can sort your sh*t out!

Step 1: Prepare

This is about you. Think about the conflict - you'll have to be really honest with yourself. There may even be times where this is the only step that you get to do...

What are your:

- beliefs
- emotions
- thinking
- actions so far

What is the meaning that you're putting on this conflict? Challenge yourself to think of other meanings that may be more useful.

Remind yourself what you like about the other person, and what their strengths are. Be deeply honest with yourself - are you ready to give up your opinion or solution for a better one?

If not apply a bit of wholehearted empathy and put yourself in their shoes.

Imagine them asking and answering these questions too (remember that's just a guess!)

Step 2: Invite

Invite the person or people that you're conflicting with to process the situation together.

Explain that there's a formula you'd like to use and that your intention is:

- to understand their perspective
- to understand the situation better
- to check your assumptions
- to grow a strong relationship together

It helps to also state that you're open to a new solution/action/belief to whatever it was that started the conflict in the first place.

6 STEPS TO TRANSFORMING CONFLICT cont...

Step 3: Share

Take time to talk about the situation. Listen to each other's narrative without interrupting and without judgment.

You can talk about how the conflict AND the initial situation make you feel, what you believe, and what conclusions you've made.

Talk about it from your perspective - avoid using accusations and mind reads. Be clear and kind.

Step 4: Discover and Deepen

Ask questions to clarify and check your understanding. (Again do this without interruptions, and without judgement.)

Talk about how this conflict and the situation affects others. Consider the point of view of at least 3 other stakeholders. They can be close to the situation, for example your colleagues, as well as further away like your clients or customers.

Step 5: Collaborate

This is where the magic happens.

Discuss how you can do things differently in the future to make use of this new deeper and more understanding relationship. Make a plan as to how you'll honour the work you've done.

Include in your plan:

- how you'll pattern interrupt whenever you think you're getting derailed
- how to agree that you've agreed (it's super important to have agreed anchor points to return to)

Step 6: Recalibrate

Now you can go back and discuss whatever it was that started the conflict.

If you find yourselves drifting back into conflict, use whatever pattern interrupt that you agree on in step 5.