

HOW DO I MANAGE CONFLICT?

PURPOSE: This activity is designed to bring awareness to how you normally react to conflict, and to reflect on how you can use that knowledge to increase your capacity for being able work with and harness the productive heat of conflict.

CONTEXT: Conflict, when harnessed productively, can often be the seed for transformation in a collaborative effort. Yet too often, we avoid conflict out of fear. Being able to withstand and hold the heat of conflict is vital in Deep Collaboration work.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer the questions individually on the following worksheet.
2. Find a partner and discuss what you learnt about yourself.
3. Return to the group to discuss. Your pair can choose to share with the group or not.
4. Further points to the discussion might be: As a group how can we support ourselves and each other to stay in the heat of conflict when we need to? What might be a safety word that people can use if it is not appropriate for them?
5. Share tips. Have the group share their tips for holding themselves through the heat of conflict, or make up a group saying to identify that we're getting into a (productive) conflict zone.

OUR HOT TIP:



Awareness of how you are feeling can be enough. Understand your triggers. When you notice your body symptoms or your behaviours start – find a little saying you can think to yourself such as “Here comes the heat...”.

Another tactic is to link this saying to a tune that you can hum – eg. “Here comes the heat” to the tune of “Here comes the sun”. Internally hum the tune when you feel yourself starting to react. This can help to take some of the intense feeling out of it.

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QUESTION	INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION
How do you manage conflict? When things get heated or arguments start, what happens to you?	
Do you feel it in your body? What does it feel like?	
Think about your behaviours. What do you tend to do? Some examples are: try to distract, make light of the situation, shut it down, leave, get agitated, get frustrated, get angry, get scared.	
List 3 reasons why you think you behave in this way	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. .. 2. .. 3. ..
Knowing your behaviour and the reasons behind it, ask yourself: What would be useful or helpful for me to support myself in holding conflict?	
Where is your absolute limit for holding conflict? When do you need to support yourself to leave?	
What do you need to practice, to be able to stay connected and in relationship with others whilst conflict is happening?	

Activity

FURTHER NOTES