

Understanding Conflict

Conflict may develop when there are differences.

Conflict is common both in personal relationships and in the workplace.

Conflict can be productive but needs to be handled carefully

Why Bother to Solve It?

- Living with conflict can be tiring and upsetting
- Giving in may not help
- Both sides may be right in part

Some Warning Signs

- arguing about small things
- avoiding certain people
- becoming withdrawn
- sudden changes within established groups, e.g. leadership and attendance

What Can Be Done?

- recognise that there is conflict
- work out how it is affecting you and others
- try to sort out the causes
- tell others involved of your concern
- try to discuss the problem
- try to understand the other's feelings

Resolution

It starts with talking

- aim at a solution
- stick to the point
- overlook the past
- avoid personality conflicts
- stay calm

It may help to:

- give others the benefit of the doubt
- trust others
- be prepared to compromise

Action Plan for Conflict Within Groups

- Try to deal with the problems as early as possible
- Involve everyone who is affected
- Isolate the problem
- Get a full range of views
- Work out where people agree – this may be a strength of the group
- Establish that there is mutual respect within the group. Perhaps a neutral mediator to which all agree is needed
- Simplify the problem
- How may it be handled?
- Discuss all aspects – both pros and cons
- Invite a range of solutions
- Later, talk again on how the solutions are working
- Are there some still unresolved matters or new problems?

For further assistance contact:

- Citizens Advice Bureau 0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)
- Mental Health Education and Resource Centre 0800 424 399
- Relationship Services 0800 RELATE (0800 735 283)

Also see the Personal Help Services section in the front of the White Pages.

Useful websites include:

www.relate.org.nz

Pamphlets Available in This Series

Understanding...

Anger
Bereavement
Decision Making
Disaster
Loneliness and Friendship
Self-Esteem

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

Community Health Information Centre
Community and Public Health
(A Division of the Canterbury District Health Board)

310 Manchester Street, Christchurch
18 Woollcombe Street, Timaru
Elizabeth Street, Ashburton
3 Tarapuhi Street, Greymouth

www.cph.co.nz

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Community