

RESPECT

IT'S UP TO ALL OF US

15 Activities On Respecting Yourself & Others

PROVIDED BY



LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION



Dear Reader,

This activity book is all about RESPECT—learning self-respect and how to respect others. While it is developed for middle and high school age youth, adults will also enjoy the activities as they teach them.

While many youth are taught about self-respect and respecting others in their homes, churches and in other youth organizations, it is challenging for some young people to understand that self-respect comes from within—not from appearance, achievements, fame or wealth. They may not understand that self-respect cannot be taken away from them. They may not understand how critically important self-respect is in determining a path in life. They may not understand that having self-respect will lead to others respecting them. And, equally important, they may not understand that self-respect helps them learn to respect others. That is why we are sharing these activities, taken from our full curriculum on life skills, with you. These activities have been taught in thousands of classrooms across the country, and we know they help young people learn the skills of RESPECT.

The activities in this handbook can be used with individual (one-to-one between adult and child), small group (4-6 young people), and large group learning environments. They are perfect for a family discussion, youth camps, organized youth groups, sports teams, and classrooms.

Each activity identifies appropriateness for individual, small or large group use, the objective of the activity, an estimate of the time, materials (if any) needed for the activity, and details on how to “teach” the activity. While we have put the activities in a specific order in this handbook, you can use the activities in any order that you would like, with one exception...ALWAYS DO ACTIVITY ONE FIRST.

For all teachers, we have these activities incorporated into our full classroom life skills lessons that can be downloaded for free at www.overcomingobstacles.org.

Thank you for helping build RESPECT among our young citizens and in our communities.

The Overcoming Obstacles Organization



R-E-S-P-E-C-T Defined

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To define respect and to identify the qualities that justify respect.

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Dictionary, paper, magazines, colored pencils and/or markers, glue

Leader's Guide:

- Have participants create a working definition of “respect.” Record their definition. Then, have a volunteer look up the dictionary’s definition of respect. Ask the participants to compare their definition with the dictionary definition and make adjustments to their definition as necessary.
- Guide participants to brainstorm a list of people whom they deem worthy of respect.
- Then, engage the group in a discussion about which qualities determine who is worthy of respect. Guide participants to explore beyond external qualities, such as beauty, material wealth, or popularity.

For example, write the name of an influential, well-known historical and/or cultural person on the board, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Susan B. Anthony, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Jackie Robinson, Jennifer Lopez, etc. Think of qualities that led this person to his/her success and fame: talent, hard work, and perseverance.

- Conclude that the qualities beneath the surface are the ones that determine the people who earn our respect. Have the young adults return to their list of people and determine if these people would still deserve their respect, according to the definition of respect.
- If time is available, have the group create a collage of people they respect. Post these on walls, and have each individual present his or her collage, identifying the qualities of the individuals that reflect their understanding of respect.



Self-Respect: Strengths Interview

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To identify five personal strengths, and to analyze the correlation between personal strength and self-respect.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, markers, board or flip chart on which to write, “Strengths Interview” activity sheet for each individual

Leader’s Guide:

- Create a list of a few respected public figures or celebrities. Point out that what we respect about others and ourselves comes from our personal strengths. Brainstorm the strengths of the public figures or celebrities listed; encourage the group to look beyond external qualities (such as money or fame). Inform the young adults that they will be determining their personal strengths, and that it is necessary to know our personal strengths in order to respect ourselves, and, in return, respect others.
- Distribute a copy of the “Strengths Interview” activity sheet to each individual. Divide the group into pairs and share the following instructions:
 - Take turns interviewing one another.
 - Your task is to find out *five* of your partner’s strengths.
 - No matter how much your partner tries to convince you that he/she doesn’t have any more strengths, you must keep asking until you’ve written five.
 - If your partner says that he/she has no strengths, ask specific questions about his/her interests. For example: Does your partner like to help others? Does your partner like to draw? Does your partner like music? A person’s interests often lead them to pursue related activities that become strengths. For example, someone who enjoys music might learn how to play the guitar. Over time, he/she may discover that being musically talented becomes a strength.
- Allow five minutes for each interview.
- After the interviews, ask each partner pair the following questions:
 - Were you surprised to find that you had a lot in common?
 - Did you learn anything new while you were interviewing your partner?
 - Why do you think it is important to know your strengths?
- Have each individual write down their strengths and post them on their bedroom wall, bathroom mirror, locker, or in some location they visit often, as a reminder. Explain that reminding ourselves of our special qualities will help us to persevere when we’re experiencing challenges.

Strengths Interview

Five of _____'s Strengths
Name of interviewee

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Interviewed by _____
Name



Self-Respect: The Top Ten List of Values

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: Individuals will examine and determine their personal values.

Time Estimate: 20 minutes

Materials Needed: Pens or pencils, “Top Ten” activity sheet for each individual

Leader’s Guide:

- Distribute a copy of the “Top Ten” activity sheet to each individual. Explain that these top ten lists are meant to help them discover who and what is important to them. Make sure all understand to list their top ten choices for each category.
- Allow ten minutes to complete the activity.
- When the activity sheets are completed, ask the following questions:
 - Look at your top ten list of people. Are those who are listed mostly friends or family? Are they people you’ve known for a long time? Are they people you know well, or admire from a distance? What qualities of character, if any, do these people share (examples could include honesty, loyalty, perseverance, kindness, etc.)?
 - Look at your top ten list of things you like to do. Are they things you do with others or alone? Do you mostly use your body, your mind, or both to do them? Can you do them near your home, or must you travel? Do they cost a lot of money, or are they free?
 - Look at your top ten list of places. Are they near or far? Do you like to go there alone or with other people? Are they all real or imaginary? Do they cost a lot of money, or are they free?
 - Look at your top ten list of things you’d like to own. How do these things reflect your values? If, for example, your list is filled with clothes, does this mean you value looking good?
 - Look at your top ten list of rules to live by. What qualities of character do these rules reflect?
 - Look at your top ten list of dreams for the future. Are these dreams important to you? How will you feel when you accomplish these dreams?
- Help participants understand that the people, places, and things that are important to us, as well as the rules that we live by, reflect who we are and what we value. We all have things that we value and those values should affect every choice we make.

NO. 3 ACTIVITY SHEET

Top Ten

The top 10 people in my life:

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

The top 10 things I like to do:

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

The top 10 places I like to go:

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

NO. 3 ACTIVITY SHEET

Top Ten

Continued

The top 10 things I'd like to own:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

The top 10 rules I live by:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

The top 10 dreams I have for the future:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |



Self-Respect: Making Value-Based Decisions

Activity is appropriate for small groups

Objective: To make decisions based on individual values.

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: None

Leader's Guide:

- Explain that you will be presenting the small group with a series of choices. Each person will make a choice and either stand up or remain seated, depending on the choice he/she makes.
- Ask a series of questions similar to the following, beginning with simple choices and moving to more difficult ones:
 - Would you rather dress up or dress down?
 - Would you rather be on stage or in the audience?
 - Would you rather be an athlete or an artist?
 - Would you rather have dinner at home with your family or go to a restaurant with your friends?
 - Would you rather have every piece of technology in the world or have the ability to travel wherever you like in the world, whenever you want?
 - Would you rather be popular with a lot of fair-weather friends or have one very loyal friend?
 - Would you rather be healthy but poor or sick but very rich?
- Ask the group if they thought the choices became more difficult toward the end. Encourage them to explain why and tell how they finally made a decision. Explain that the decisions and choices we make are influenced by what is important to us, or what we value. Point out that everyone made different choices and that there are as many different sets of values as there are people. We all need to respect our values, as well as respect the values of others.



Self-Respect: “To Thine Own Self Be True”

Activity is appropriate for large groups

Objective: To practice resisting pressure to make decisions that are not compatible with individual personal values.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils or pens, markers, board or flip chart on which to write

Leader’s Guide:

- Share the following quote from William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “To thine own self be true.” Discuss the meaning of this quote. Explain that, once we know what’s important to us, we must live by those values, even in the face of pressure.
- Divide the individuals into three groups. Have each group brainstorm one of the following scenarios and act it out for the class:
 - You’re at a party with a popular crowd, and someone you like and want to impress is encouraging you to do drugs. What do you do?
 - Someone you like has the answers to your midterm exam and is passing them around. You’ve been worried about passing the course: it’s a tough one. There’s little chance of getting caught because almost everyone who has been approached has taken the answers, so they’re not likely to snitch. What do you do?
 - You notice that your friends like to taunt the less-popular students at school. They want you to join in, and they tease you when you don’t. What do you do?
- Discuss the difficulty of maintaining your values in the face of pressure to change them. Remind the group that self-respect, as well as the respect of others, is strongly tied to our values. Ask if they think that self-respect is more important than having the respect of others. Point out that self-respect is defined by a person’s own value system, while the respect of others is defined by their value systems. Since another person’s value system may be different from their own, remind the group of the quote, “To thine own self be true.”
- Have the group either write a paragraph, talk with a partner, or talk with the entire group about a time when their values conflicted with the values of someone close to them. Discuss ways to resolve the conflicts.



Self-Respect: The Power Within

Activity is appropriate for small groups & large groups

Objective: To identify power in many forms, including the decisions one makes.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Markers, board or flip chart on which to write

Leader's Guide:

- Prompt participants to discuss things that give people power and write them on the board. Encourage all to explain their answers. Ask the following questions to spark the discussion:
 - Does health give people power?
 - Does wealth give people power?
 - Does beauty give people power?
 - Does physical size give people power?
 - Does knowledge give people power?
 - Does popularity give people power?
 - Does the ability to communicate give people power?
- Then take a poll, item by item, to see how many agree that the things they listed really give people power. Ask the group to identify examples of people from the past who used these forms of personal power.
- Have the individuals name someone or something that has more power than they do. Ask them to explain the source of this power. Explore examples given to help guide participants to the source of true power.

For example, if a participant says “A judge or the courts have power because they can suspend a person’s driver’s license,” make the following points in sequence:

- Explain that, even though the court has the power to suspend a person’s license, it does not have to do so.
- Before the court suspends a license, it gathers information on the offense and makes a decision about it.
- Prior to the court’s decision to suspend a license, the driver makes a decision to violate the law.
- What decision might the driver have made?
- Lead participants to conclude that the ability to make choices is a kind of power. This is the kind of power we all possess.



Power for a Positive Change

Activity is appropriate for large groups

Objective: To recognize the power of personal responsibility.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils

Leader's Guide:

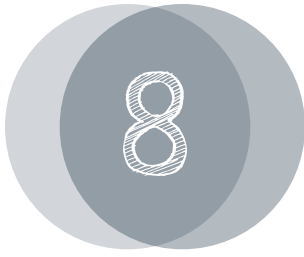
- Remind the young adults that we alone are responsible for how we use our personal power. Throughout history, people have used and abused different forms of power. Ask for examples of uses and abuses of power in today's society (abuse of authority, bullying, insider trading, cruelty to animals, hurting a person's reputation, elder abuse, etc.). For abuses, ask for volunteers to give one or two options for a positive change.
- Point out that personal power can be used to effect change, not only in our own lives, but also in the lives of those in our families, schools, and communities.
- Divide participants into groups of three or four and ask each group to choose something they would like to change about their community. Have them create a plan to use their personal power for a positive change. Remind participants that personal power is unique to the individual; as a group, each member needs to decide how he/she will use his/her own personal power to effect the positive change the group has chosen.

Use the following questions as prompts for the development of the plan:

- What one thing in your community needs to change?
- Why is the change needed?
- How would you make this change?
- How would you use your personal power to effect the change you suggest is needed?

"Forms of power" refers to the different, individual ways that a person can contribute to a positive community change. For example, let's say a group of participants decide to implement a community wide food bank drive as their change. One group member may really enjoy researching. His/her personal power for a positive change could be to research the most needed food bank items, or the best times to contact people about donating, etc. Another group member may be a talented communicator. He or she could be in charge of promoting the fundraiser.

- Have each group present their plans.



Dissolving Stereotypes: Finding Common Ground

Activity is appropriate for small groups & large groups

Objective: To recognize the need to look for common ground in conflict situations and with people one assumes he or she does not like.

Time Estimate: 30 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, empty bag or container

Leader's Guide:

- Brainstorm lists of groups that are famous for their rivalry (examples could include the Montagues vs. Capulets, Hatfields and McCoys, New York Yankees vs. Boston Red Sox, Crips vs. Bloods, Tupac vs. Notorious B.I.G.).
- Collect the lists and place the names of the rival groups in an empty bag or container. Shake the bag or container and then randomly pick the names of a pair of rivals. Divide young adults into two equal groups, and have them sit on opposite sides of the room – facing each other. Explain that the two groups will be addressing each other as rivals, like the groups they have listed.
- Distribute paper to each person in both groups. Ask for each to make a list of likes and dislikes for each of the following categories: food, clothing, hobbies, places, music, sports teams, and TV shows.
- Give each group time to discuss their likes and dislikes within their group and to form a group trait based on the things they have the most in common. Further, remind each group the opposite group is their supposed “enemy.” Ask each group to come up with one reason why they would not get along with the other group.
- Have each group take turns reading aloud one of their group members’ likes or dislikes. Explain that when one hears a like or dislike he/she agrees with, he/she should raise his/her hand. Assign one person from each group to be the record keeper; each record keeper will tally the number of participants from the opposing group that agree with a like or dislike named by the record keeper’s own group.
- Once each person has shared a like or dislike from both teams, have each group reconvene and analyze the end results of their tallies. Ask them to analyze how much they have in common with their “enemy” group.
- Lead a discussion in which young adults suggest some ideas on how people can look beyond superficial stereotypes and find common ground with people who appear to be very different.



Communicating Respectfully: “Easy Talk, Tough Talk”

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups & large groups

Objective: To explore what makes some conversations easy, while others more difficult.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, markers, board or flip chart on which to write

Leader’s Guide:

- Write the following list on the board: talking on the phone with someone, joking with friends, conversing with an adult, quarreling with a sibling, asking to borrow money, discussing a homework assignment. Ask what the listed items have in common. (All require verbal communication.)
- On a scale of one to five, with five being very important and one being not important at all, ask the individuals to rank the importance of verbal communication in their daily lives. Then, have a brief discussion about the importance of verbal communication. Ask if some verbal communication is more difficult than others.
- Instruct the participants to take a piece of paper, fold it into three columns and title the left column “Easy,” the middle column “Average,” and the right column “Difficult.”
- Explain that this activity will have them classify different conversations according to their difficulty. Ask them to list, for example, a conversation with a close friend about what to wear to a party (easy), asking a teacher for extra help on an assignment (average), informing your parents that you did not do well on a major assignment (difficult).
- If working with a group, divide the group into pairs and tell them that they have three minutes to list at least three examples of verbal communication in each column. If needed, prompt the group by asking questions such as the following:
 - Are some conversations you have with your parents more difficult than others?
 - Where would you rank confrontations with your peers?
 - How do you feel about conversations with teachers or bosses?
- While each pair is writing, draw three large columns on the board. Once the three minutes are up, ask for volunteers to fill in the columns on the board.
- Discuss which conversations are easy, average, and difficult and what makes some easy, others difficult. Reinforce that difficult conversations often involve personal or sensitive matters and may arouse emotions such as fear, anger, sadness, insecurity and hurt feelings. Explain that a respectful awareness of each person’s emotions can help make the difficult conversation easier.



Communicating Respectfully: I-Messages

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To develop techniques to effectively and respectfully communicate feelings and encourage open dialogue in difficult situations.

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Pens or pencils, “I-Messages” and “Vocabulary of Feelings” activity sheets for each individual

Leader’s Guide:

- Say, “An I-Message is a technique you can use to express yourself when you are upset or angry that will lead to an open discussion and will not escalate conflict. When you use an I-Message, people are more willing to listen to you and respond to your requests without becoming defensive. I-Messages encourage discussion and help reduce friction.”
- Explain how I-Messages work:
 - An I-Message begins with a statement of feelings.
 - It is followed by a statement of what the problem is.
 - An I-Message ends with your reasons for feeling the way you do. It tells others how their behavior affects you, and it avoids using the word “you” at the beginning of a statement.
- Provide a sample I-Message. For instance, “I feel hurt when you don’t answer my phone calls or text messages because I feel like I am being avoided by you, and have done something to make you upset.”
- Distribute the “I-Messages” and the “Vocabulary of Feelings” activity sheets. Have participants create individual I-Messages by filling out the proper format on the “I-Messages” sheet.
 - Line 1: Be sure to explain that although one may feel mad or angry, he or she should be careful to not use aggressive or accusatory language. Refer to the “Vocabulary of Feelings” sheet to identify synonyms.
 - Line 2: This should be a description of the exact behavior the other person commits that is upsetting.
 - Line 3: This should explain in detail why one is feeling how he or she is feeling. It explains the importance of the action or behavior to the other person.
- Share and discuss the value of I-Messages.
 - Why are I-Messages a valuable tool for communication?
 - When could you use an I-Message?
 - How can I-Messages become natural over time?

I-Messages

I-Messages are a great way to explain yourself when you are upset. When you use I-Messages, people are more willing to listen to you and respond to your requests without becoming defensive. I-Messages encourage open discussion and can help a conflict become resolved quickly and easily.

EXAMPLE

One of your friends often borrows things from you and doesn't return them.

I feel upset

when you don't return my things

because they are important to me.

Fill in the blanks for the following I-Messages:

1. Your closest friend is telling others about your personal life.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

2. Your teacher hasn't called on you all week, even though you've raised your hand.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

3. Someone in your family keeps making noise while you are trying to study.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

Vocabulary of Feelings

A

Afraid
Aggressive
Annoyed
Anxious
Apathetic
Apologetic
Apprehensive
Ashamed
Audacious

B

Bashful
Bold
Bored
Brave

C

Calm
Cautious
Cheerful
Comfortable
Competent
Confident
Confused
Curious
Cynical

D

Decisive
Depressed
Determined
Disappointed
Disapproving
Disgusted
Distressed

E

Ebullient
Ecstatic
Embarrassed
Energetic
Enraged
Enthusiastic
Envious
Excited
Exhausted

F

Friendly
Frightened
Frustrated

G

Grateful
Greedy
Guilty

H

Happy
Helpless
Hopeful
Horrorified

I

Impatient
Incompetent
Indecisive
Indifferent
Innocent
Insecure
Inspired
Insulted
Intimidated
Irritated

J

Jealous
Joyous

L

Lazy
Listless
Lonely

M

Marvelous
Mischievous
Miserable
Morose

N

Negative
Nervous

O

Oblivious
Optimistic
Overwhelmed

P

Paranoid
Peaceful
Perplexed
Petrified
Proud
Puzzled

R

Reckless
Regretful
Relaxed
Restless

S

Sad
Satisfied
Secure
Serene
Shocked
Shy
Silly
Skeptical
Sleepy
Sluggish
Smart
Stimulated
Stupefied
Subdued
Sullen
Surprised
Suspicious
Sympathetic

T

Tense
Tentative
Timid
Tranquil
Trusting

U

Uncomfortable
Undecided

W

Wary
Whimsical
Worried

Z

Zealous



Communicating Respectfully: Learning to be Assertive

Activity is appropriate for small groups & large groups

Objective: To define passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior, and to practice using assertive behavior, while learning to recognize passive and aggressive behavior.

Time Estimate: 20 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, markers, board or flip chart on which to write, dictionary

Leader's Guide:

- Have individuals take out their paper and pen and answer “Yes” or “No” to the following questions:
 - Does everyone have the right to earn respect and to keep their dignity in all situations?
 - Should everyone be able to express opinions?
 - Should everyone be able to ask for what they want?
- Explain that the answer to all these questions is, “Yes; they have these rights and so do other people.” Explain that the next activity will help them learn how to exercise these rights in a way that is respectful of others.
- Draw three columns on the board, labeled “Passive,” “Aggressive,” and “Assertive.” Divide individuals into three groups and assign each group one of the words on the board. Have them brainstorm a working definition for their assigned word.
- Once the working definitions are completed, have each group look up the actual dictionary definition of each word. Then, have each group present their word – with both definitions – to the entire group. Meanwhile, review the following with all:
 - Passive people seem to lack confidence and may seem ineffective.
 - Aggressive people often seem to be offensive and have a strong need to dominate. Often, aggressive people seem to be annoying, pushy, or brash.
 - Assertive people seem positive, confident, and fair when dealing with people.
- Ask individuals to describe how an aggressive and passive person may act. Then, ask all how they usually act when another person displays such behavior around them.
- Finally, come to the conclusion that assertive behavior is the best behavior. Such behavior encourages equality and healthy relationships amongst people. Assertive people stand up for their rights, express themselves honestly and courteously, and respect the rights of others.

12

Respectful Listening: The Do's and Don'ts

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To identify characteristics of active listening by observing role play and discussing observations.

Time Estimate: 20 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, markers, board or flip chart on which to write, "Listening Signals" activity sheet for each individual

Leader's Guide:

- Ask a pre-selected volunteer whom you have previously spoken with to share his or her favorite movie, plans for the weekend, or a special hobby or sport. Once he or she begins speaking, act as though you are not paying attention by looking for an object, doodling, slouching, snoring, asking unrelated questions, or repeating what the student says precisely.
- Stop and ask the group if you were a good listener. Have them critique your listening, and list the poor listening habits on the board.
- Have the young adults suggest ways you could have been a better listener (making eye contact, attentive posture, nodding your head, asking related questions, etc.). List these techniques on the board next to the poor listening habits.
- Repeat the conversation with the volunteer, this time performing active listening skills.
- After the conversation has ended, discuss with the young adults how active listening is a sign of respect. Remind them that it is frustrating to a speaker when others are not paying attention to them as they speak. Further explain that focusing is the key to listening. Recognizing a speaker's signals helps a listener to focus on the message.
- Distribute the "Listening Signals" activity sheet to all. Briefly discuss the phrases on the sheet. Then, ask the group to identify verbal signals the speaker may give in order to guide the listener. Explain that speakers also use movements with gestures at certain points to reinforce verbal signals. Quickly make a list of such nonverbal signals.
- Have the group divide into pairs. Have one volunteer in each pair speak to his/her partner about an important topic (plans for the future, current news events, etc.). The other partner in each pair should listen and observe the speaker's verbal and nonverbal signals. After one minute, ask partners to switch roles.
- As a whole group, discuss observations. Ask the group how being sensitive to signals improved their listening.

Listening Signals

<p>VERBAL SIGNALS</p> <p>Introduction Let's discuss I want to talk about Today's lecture covers First</p> <p>Main Ideas Let me repeat This is really important Make a note of Remember that</p> <p>Change in Direction Next Let's move on to On the other hand Even though</p> <p>Major Details For instance For example Namely The following reasons</p> <p>Conclusion Finally The last point In conclusion All in all</p>	<p>NONVERBAL SIGNALS</p> <p>Speaking more loudly Speaking more emphatically Movement Moving closer to the listener Eyes rolling Finger wagging</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL SIGNALS</p>	
<p>VERBAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>NONVERBAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



13

Respectfully Resolving Conflicts: Defining Conflict

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To define “conflict” and identify individual conflict triggers.

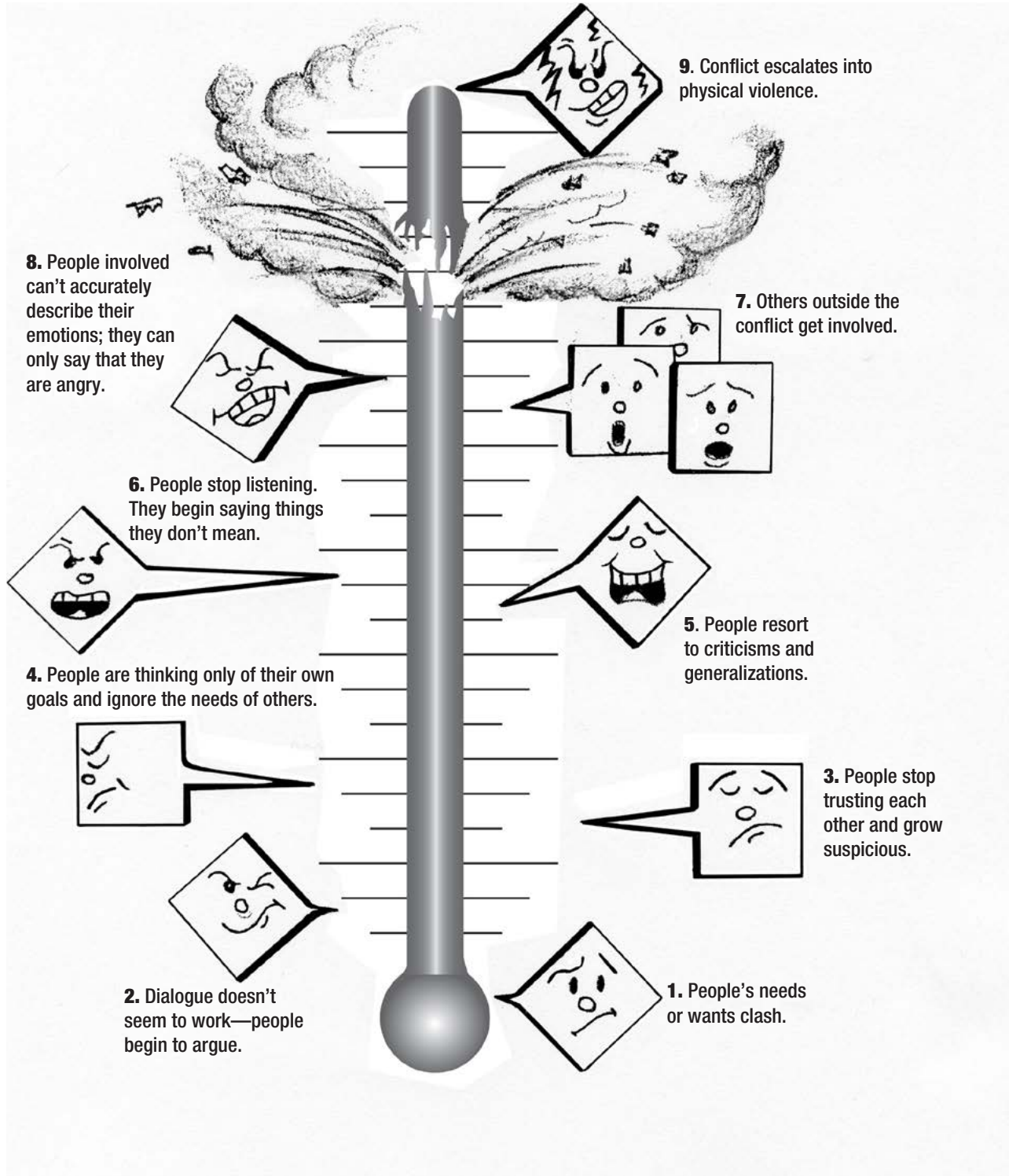
Time Estimate: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, dictionary, markers, board or flip chart on which to write, “The Stages of Conflict” activity sheet for each individual

Leader’s Guide:

- Ask each participant what he/she thinks of when he/she hears the word “conflict.” Encourage him/her to consider situations that create conflict, how he/she feels when involved in conflict, the results of the conflict, and so on. Record responses on paper, board or flip chart. If working with a group of people, list similar responses together.
- Once all ideas are listed, ask the young adults to suggest a definition for “conflict.” Record the responses.
- Then, ask a volunteer to look up the word “conflict” in the dictionary. Compare the dictionary definition with the created definition of “conflict.” Lead the participants to understand that a conflict is a *mental* struggle between two people. Physical struggles are often the result of the original mental struggle between two people.
- Pass out the “Stages of Conflict” activity sheet to all individuals.
- Next, ask the participants to explain the meaning of the saying, “That was the straw that broke the camel’s back.” Help all to recognize that when people are feeling burdened, a small incident might “break” them. Explain that stress is like a burden that can be the catalyst that turns a small conflict into an out-of-control situation. Ask the participants to identify sources of stress. Record responses.
- Point out that the relationship between conflict and stress is reciprocal: conflict is stressful and stress can provoke conflict. When we feel stressed, we are more likely to let conflict escalate. Review some stress management exercises (breathing, exercise, counting to ten, relaxation techniques, etc.).
- Emphasize that conflict is a part of life. But, we all can learn from conflict, and, in turn, try to make it into a positive experience. One strategy for managing conflict is to be ready for it.
- Ask the participants to consider the situations in his/her life that involve conflict. Ask for him/her to evaluate these recurring conflicts and what factors may be triggering conflicts in his/her life. Then, have him/her record several specific conflict situations in his/her life that he/she would like to manage more effectively.

The Stages of Conflict





14

Respectfully Resolving Conflicts: What Causes Anger?

Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, & large groups

Objective: To identify situations that make one angry and to consider ways to reduce or control anger.

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper, pens or pencils, markers, board or flip chart on which to write

Leader's Guide:

- Ask the young people, "What makes you angry?" Encourage all to list as many situations as possible. Record all responses on board or flip chart.
- Next, ask, "How do you know when you are angry?" Discuss the physiological reactions and explain how these are natural indicators of anger.
- Ask the group, "If so many different situations have the potential to provoke anger in us, what can we do to better be able to manage our anger and more effectively function?" List the specific techniques the group comes up with (controlled breathing, counting to ten, taking a walk, talking with someone, listening to relaxing music, exercising, getting a good night of sleep, etc.).
- Once the list is exhausted, have individuals write down five techniques that work for them.



15

Respectfully Resolving Conflicts: “I Said, I Meant”

Activity is appropriate for small groups & large groups

Objective: To identify the underlying meaning between words exchanged in conflict situations.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Pens or pencils, “I Said...I Meant” activity sheet for each individual

Leader’s Guide:

- Distribute copies of the “I Said...I Meant” activity sheet and have the young adults fold the sheet in half along the dotted line so that the bottom half is not visible.
- Ask two volunteers to read the dialogue between Brenda and Maria, supplying the appropriate tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions. Once the dialogue is completed, ask the group to explain what happened during the scenario, and identify the problem that was causing the conflict.
- Tell the group to unfold the sheet to expose the dialogue that includes the characters’ real thoughts and feelings in italics. Ask two volunteers to read the italicized part of the dialogue, using nonverbal messages to display what they are feeling.
- Ask the group to comment on how the volunteers’ nonverbal communication differed from the first reading, and what that might say about the characters’ emotions.
- Discuss why the characters in the scenario didn’t just say what they meant. Lead all to understand that our anger can lead us to speak without thinking. Ask the group how differently this conflict may have ended if the two people had communicated what they really meant.
- Wrap up the discussion by reminding the young adults that being aware of the emotions that are involved in a conflict will help them to communicate more effectively.

I Said...I Meant

Brenda and Maria are yelling at each other...

BRENDA: “I went to the store because I had to buy milk for Jasmine.”

MARIA: “I can’t believe you did that! You’re so stupid, leaving my baby sister by herself!”

BRENDA: “...but I asked Michael to watch her while I was out.”

MARIA: “I don’t even know why I trusted you to watch her anyway!”

BRENDA: “Fine! Take care of your own baby sister!”

.....

They meant...

BRENDA: “I went to the store because I had to buy milk for Jasmine.”
I was worried because there wasn’t any milk in the house for the baby.


MARIA: “I can’t believe you did that! You’re so stupid, leaving my baby sister by herself!”
It’s so dangerous to leave a baby alone! I’m terrified that something could have happened to her!

BRENDA: “...but I asked Michael to watch her while I was out.”
I’m stupid? What kind of sister takes care of her baby sister but doesn’t have milk in the house?

MARIA: “I don’t even know why I trusted you to watch her anyway!”
I had doubts about leaving Jasmine with her anyway. I remember the time she let her cry in the crib. I never said anything, but I was really annoyed.

BRENDA: “Fine! Take care of your own baby sister!”
And I was only doing her a favor! Forget it. I’ll never help her out again.

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To ensure that all young people learn the communication, decision making, and goal setting skills they need to be successful in life.