

# Conflict Resolution and Mediation

## **Course**

Health Science

## **Unit II**

Communication

## **Essential Question**

*What is the purpose of conflict resolution and how does it help in the work place?*

## **TEKS**

130.204 (c) 3 (D)

## **Prior Student Learning**

*Conflict Resolution Lesson in Principles of Health Science*

## **Estimated time**

1-3 hours

## **Rationale**

Whether it is an argument with a friend or a misunderstanding with a co-worker, everyone has conflicts from time to time. It's important to know how to handle these problems effectively.

## **Objectives**

Upon completion of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- identify and understand conflict better;
- demonstrate an understanding of conflict resolution strategies;
- resolve sample conflicts; and
- appraise strategies for dealing with conflict.

## **Engage**

Show the picture that is provided later in this lesson and have the class discuss/argue what they think they see. The class will probably erupt with answers of a young women or old women, but allow the chaos of comments.

Secondly, quiet them down and ask two students to volunteer to come up to the front of the class and sit in two chairs side by side facing the teacher. These should be two students who opposed ideas of seeing a young woman and an old woman. You, the teacher, then instruct the students that only one student will speak at a time and the other is not allowed to interrupt. Let both students speak what they think they see in the picture, and then, when both are finished speaking, see if they can agree with each other that they are both seeing two images correctly.

## **Key Points**

- I. Conflict is a normal part of daily life. While we cannot avoid conflict there are methods we can learn in order to handle conflict in a constructive manner.
- II. Health care workers need to develop the skills to handle many different situations before they escalate.
- III. Conflict is common when there is a lack of good communication; many problems can be avoided by active listening.
  - A. In active listening, you don't judge the other person; instead, you try to understand the speaker's experience, feelings, and point of view
  - B. Make sure the speaker really knows you're listening
  - C. Pay attention and use eye contact if possible
  - D. Clarify anything you are not sure you understand by restating what

you heard

E. Examples of Active Listening

1. What do you mean by .?
2. Can you explain more about .?
3. Could you say more about what happened .?
4. Let me see if I understand you ..
5. So, it sounds like you're saying .
6. If I hear you right, you're saying ..
7. Sounds like what is important to you is .
8. It sounds like you're saying what you need is ..
9. If I understand you correctly, what you're saying is ..
10. It sounds like you place a high value on ..
11. I get the feeling that ..
12. Am I understanding that you think ..?

IV. Mediation

- A. Is a voluntary process that allows you the mediator to help disputants work to resolve their conflict
  1. Mediator – neutral third party
  2. Disputants – those who are in conflict
  3. Conflict – dispute between two or more people
- B. Mediation brings two people together in a safe and structured environment and helps them stay focused on finding a solution that meets their needs
  1. You will be helping your peers and others in your school, workplace, etc., to constructively resolve whatever problem or conflict they may have
  2. This is the role of a peer mediator
- C. Mediation is voluntary
  1. Both disputants must want to resolve the problem or conflict first
  2. Mediators cannot force disputants to mediate a dispute
  3. Mediators help the disputants realize that it is in their best interest to resolve the dispute instead of avoiding it or having to face other consequences.
- D. Confidentiality
  1. You should not at any time discuss with others what you heard in the mediation process
  2. If there are any questions or concerns, they should be discussed with the mediation coordinator and no one else
- E. Resolution
  1. When disputants have successfully resolved or worked out the conflict and have reached a solution/agreement we call that a resolution
  2. The resolution is written down on an agreement form
    - a. There are many different types of agreement forms available to use

- b. Select the best agreement form
    - c. Be consistent with using it every time there is a mediation
  - 3. The agreement form is signed by all parties and kept on file with your mediation coordinator.
- F. Co-Mediation – there are more advantages than disadvantages to co-mediation. The system is very effective and it is based on mutual trust, equal participation and sharing of ideas. It is important for both of the mediators to be involved early in the process so no one feels left out.
  - 1. Advantages of co-mediation
    - a. Different mediators can offer a broader array of insight and understanding
    - b. Mediators can split responsibilities
      - i. Active listening
      - ii. Recording
      - iii. Summarizing
      - iv. Agreement writing and signatures
    - c. Different mediators may use different skills and techniques
    - d. Processing and feedback after the session helps mediators improve their skills
    - e. Disputants may relate to one or the other of the mediators
  - 2. Disadvantages of co-mediation
    - a. Mediators may experience some degree of competition
    - b. One mediator may attempt to dominate the process
    - c. Role sharing can be awkward
    - d. Mediators may have different ideas about procedures
- V. Problem Solving – Four step model
  - A. Find a good time and place to talk – this means choosing a time when all parties are calm and ready to talk, and meeting in a quiet and private place
    - 1. Set the following ground rules (verbal and non-verbal)
      - a. No interrupting
      - b. No name calling
      - c. No put downs
      - d. Tell the truth
    - 2. Identify the problem or issue
      - a. Let each person say what happened
      - b. Focus on the problem -- not on personalities
      - c. Use active listening and “I” statements
      - d. Avoid communication blockers

3. Brainstorm for solutions
  - a. Let each person suggest ways to solve the problem or address the issue
  - b. Listen to each other without judging
  - c. Be willing to compromise
4. Choose a solution and agree upon it
  - a. Consider all the options; evaluate the pros and cons
  - b. Decide on one option that everyone can agree on
5. "I" Statements are designed to express and take responsibility for your feelings rather than blaming others. There are four steps to developing an "I" statement. The focus is on the action or the circumstance you want changed -- not on the person.
  - a. Tell the person, "I have a problem."
  - b. Make non-threatening description of the problem
  - c. Tell the person how you feel about the problem
  - d. Let reality be the disciplining agent by asking two questions:
    - i. If you continue the behavior, will it make our relationship better or worse?
    - ii. Do you want our relationship to get better or worse?

### **Activity**

- I. Complete the Peer Mediation Activity

### **Assessment**

Role Play Rubric

### **Materials**

E.G. Boring picture  
Peer Mediation Process Script  
Peer Mediation Agreement Form  
Peer Mediation Notes page  
Feelings Vocabulary List for disputants

### **Accommodations for Learning Differences**

For enrichment, the student will select a scene from a book, TV show, or movie in which a character has a conflict and does not deal with it constructively. Re-write the scene using problem solving strategies and communication to resolve the conflict.

For reinforcement, the student will think about how you handle your anger

and communicate your feelings now. What works for you? How could you deal with your anger and problems more constructively? Make a list of ways you can improve in this area.

### **National and State Education Standards**

National Health Science Standards

HLCO2.01 Communications

Health Care Workers will know the various methods of giving and obtaining information. They will communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. Adjust communication to other's ability to understand. Apply the elements of communication using the sender-receiver model. Apply active listening skills using reflection restatement and clarification techniques. Demonstrate courtesy to others including self-introduction. Interpret verbal and nonverbal behaviors to augment communication within the scope of practice.

TEKS

130.204 (c) 3 D evaluate the effectiveness of conflict resolution techniques in various situations

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

*English Language Arts*

II B Understand new vocabulary and concepts and use them accurately in reading, speaking and writing

III A Understand elements of communication both in informal group discussions and formal presentations

B Develop effective speaking styles for both group and one-on-one situations

IV A Apply listening skills as an individual and as a member of a group in a variety of settings

B Listen effectively in informal and formal situations

*Cross Disciplinary Standards*

I Key Cognitive Skills

B Writing across the curriculum

C Problem Solving

1. Analyze a situation to identify a problem to be solved

2. Develop and apply multiple strategies to solve a problem



*My Wife and My Mother-In-Law*, by the cartoonist W. E. Hill, 1915  
*This media file is in the **public domain** in the United States.*

# Peer Mediation Activity

## Directions

Students will formulate 5-8 scenarios that have resulted in conflict at the beginning of class. These can be real life scenarios or made up scenarios.

Once the scenarios have been written on the board students will get in groups of four and practice the mediation process, both as mediator and as those that are receiving mediation. They should take turns playing both roles.

A feelings vocabulary list is provided to help those that are receiving mediation and are in need of words to describe how they feel.

Once they are done practicing their first mediation have students from different groups volunteer to be the mediators and certain groups to be the ones receiving the mediation. For example, student 1 and student 2 (mediators) will have 5-8 different groups coming to them, but with different mediation scenarios. This will allow them to be proficient in the mediation process. Once all groups have gone through you may choose to have your students switch roles.

## Materials

Peer Mediation Process Script  
Peer Mediation Notes page  
Peer Mediation Agreement Form  
Feelings Vocabulary List

# Peer Mediation Script

## PART 1: The Introduction

“Hi, I am \_\_\_\_\_ and this is \_\_\_\_\_. If you have no problems with us being your mediator, then we will both be your mediators.”

- “Are we okay to be your mediators?”
- “Are you familiar with mediation?”
- “Mediation is students helping students. We have no power to enforce anything.”
- “We will not judge you or tell you what to do.”
- “We will not take sides.”
- “We are just here to help you resolve this situation.”
- “Everything that is said here will be confidential unless you choose to share with us something that is against the law, or harmful to you or someone else.”

## PART 2: The Rules

“For the mediation to work, we have some rules to follow. Do you agree to:

- “work to solve the problem?”
- “No name calling or put downs?”
- “No physical fighting?”
- “No interrupting?”
- “Be honest with your statements?”
- “Speak directly to us and not to each other in the beginning?”

“(Name of Disputant 1), do you agree to these rules?”

“(Name of Disputant 2), do you agree to these rules?”

## PART 3: The Story

Ask Disputant 1, “(Name of disputant 1), please tell us what happened and how you are feeling about it.”

*Restate and if necessary recheck for feelings. “So you are feeling \_\_\_\_\_?”*

Ask Disputant 2, “(Name of disputant 2), please tell us what happened and how you are feeling about it.”

*Restate and if necessary recheck for feelings. “So you are feeling \_\_\_\_\_?”*

Ask Disputant 1, “(Name of disputant 1)”, do you have anything you’d like to add?”

*Restate. Ask clarifying questions if necessary and restate again.*

Ask Disputant 2, “(Name of disputant 2)”, do you have anything you’d like to add?”

*Restate. Ask clarifying questions if necessary and restate again.*

Continue until both disputants say “No” and do not add anything beyond that word. Get two consecutive “No’s.”



## **PART 4: The Needs**

Ask Disputant 2, "What do you need to feel okay about this situation?" Restate.

Ask Disputant 1, "What do you need to feel okay about this situation?" Restate.

## **PART 5: The Solution**

Ask Disputant 2, "What can you do to solve this problem?" Restate.

Ask Disputant 1, "What can you do to solve this problem?" Restate.

If they need encouragement to solve:

- "What will happen if \_\_\_\_\_?"
- "Do you want that to happen?"
- "What else can you do?"

Solutions should be:

- Fair
- Specific
- Realistic

## **PART 6: The Agreement**

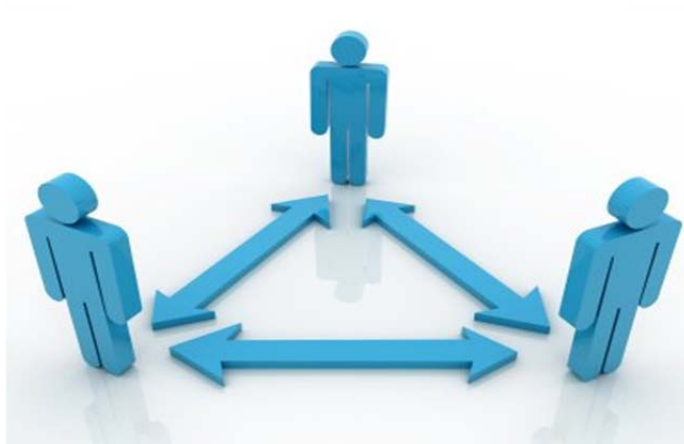
- Ask disputants if they think the Agreement solves the problem.
- Read Disputant 1's part of the Agreement and have him/her sign where you indicate.
- Read Disputant 2's part of the Agreement and have him/her sign where you indicate.
- Mediators, sign after the disputants.
- Plan a follow-up if needed.

## **PART 7: The Closure**

- Ask disputants to tell their friends they have resolved the conflict, to prevent rumors.
- Congratulate the disputants.
- Shake their hands and thank them for coming to mediation.

### **\*\*CAUCUS: IF THE MEDIATION IS NOT PROGRESSING\*\***

1. Thank the disputant for agreeing to meet privately with you.
2. Remind them of confidentiality and explain that whatever they share during caucus will remain confidential unless they give you permission to discuss it during mediation.
3. Listen to the story and validate the feelings.
4. Ask them if they really want to solve this problem.
5. Ask them what alternative they have if they do not use mediation to solve the problem.
6. Point out the advantages of using mediation.
7. Give both disputants equal time.



## **PEER MEDIATION NOTES**


# MEDIATION AGREEMENT FORM

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

MEDIATORS: \_\_\_\_\_

DISPUTANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT KIND OF CONFLICT?

- ARGUMENT     FIGHT     RUMOR     DISAGREEMENT  
 CYBER BULLYING     RELATIONSHIPS     OTHER

WHERE DID IT TAKE PLACE? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WAS THE CONFLICT ABOUT?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

AGREEMENT

\_\_\_\_\_ AGREED TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ AGREED TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DISPUTANTS SIGNATURES:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

MEDIATORS SIGNATURES:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FOLLOW UP:**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PERSON FOLLOWING UP \_\_\_\_\_

RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## **FEELINGS VOCABULARY LIST**

Angry	Frustrated	Ripped-Off
Annoyed	Furious	Rushed
Anxious	Glad	Sad
Attacked	Good	Satisfied
Belittled	Great	Scared
Betrayed	Hacked	Shocked
Blamed	Happy	Silly
Bored	Hateful	Smart
Cheerful	Hopeful	Surprised
Comfortable	Hurt	Uncomfortable
Concerned	Ignored	Upset
Confident	Impatient	Worried
Confused	Important	
Delighted	Irritated	
Depressed	Left-Out	
Disappointed	Misunderstood	
Dumb	Overwhelmed	
Eager	Pleased	
Embarrassed	Proud	
Empty	Put-Down	
Excited	Relaxed	