

DEFUSING CONFLICTS:

Moving the conversation forward



Running into conflict is inevitable. The pivot point is how you respond. If you habitually withdraw, you're not giving your best. If you feel you've got to win every time, you're creating resentment.

STEP

1. Notice the conflict.

Tug the rope.

2. Find a non-judgmental starting point.

Drop the rope.

3. Listen to their story first.

Remember the house model.

4. Identify what the conflict is about, and articulate it as a shared interest.

5. Brainstorm options.

6. Look for options that recognize the interests of all involved.

WHAT YOU SAY

This is an internal step– you might notice that you had irritation, anger, boredom, or you might notice body language like eye rolling or a sideways glance.

You can ignore conflict, but you run the risk it will re-emerge later.

“Could we talk about what's happening here?”

Find a way to raise the issue without attacking.

You need to pause before you rush to judgment, and you need to create space for the other person.

“Tell me your perspective on this.”

Give the other person your full attention.

Don't start mentally preparing your arguments.

“Here is my take on the issue...”

“It seems to me that we are both interested in ____ (the patient's well-being.)”

“Could we list a couple options, then spend a minute talking about the pros and cons?”

“I see how this meets your interest in _____.”

“Perhaps we should consider _____ to be a good marker of whether we are going in the right direction?” (Proposing a trial of something for a defined period of time may be worthwhile.)