

Conflict Coaching Fundamentals

CRES-1131

Linda Dobson

Master Certified Coach, MA ABSc (Leadership)

Third Edition
New Westminster, BC
September, 2021

© 2021, Justice Institute of British Columbia, Centre for
Conflict Resolution and Linda Dobson

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be
reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means,
electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording,
or any information storage and retrieval system, without
permission in writing from the publisher.

For instructional use only for Justice Institute courses
unless prior authorization has been obtained from the
Centre for Conflict Resolution.

Requests for permission to make copies of any part of this
work should be directed to:

Centre for Conflict Resolution
Justice Institute of British Columbia
715 McBride Boulevard
New Westminster, BC V3L 5T4
Canada
Tel: (604) 528-5608
www.jibc.ca

First Edition Published 2008.

Second Edition November 2018.

Third Edition September 2021.

Printed in Canada.

Acknowledgements

The Centre for Conflict Resolution would like to acknowledge Linda Dobson for her work developing this course and its companion manual.

Contents

Introduction	1
What is Coaching?	1
What is Conflict?	2
The Pinch Model of Conflict Analysis	3
What is Conflict Coaching?	4
Foundations of Conflict Coaching	4
The Role of the Conflict Coach	5
Coaching Characteristics	5
The Case for Coaching in Conflict Situations	6
The Costs of Conflict:	6
The Business Case for Coaching	8
Contexts of Coaching	11
Definitions of the Contexts	11
Blending Conflict Resolution and Coaching Approaches	13
Comparison of Roles: Negotiator, Mediator, Advocate and Conflict Coach	13
The Conflict Coaching Road Map	14
Five Phases of the Conflict Coaching Road Map	15
1. Prepare: Pre-work for preparing to conflict coach	15
Curiosity	15
Conflict Styles: Responding to Conflict	17
Differentiation Models	20
Triggers	21
2. Connect: Building the Coaching Relationship	23
The Power of Presence	23
The Power of the Conflict Coaching Relationship	24
Initiating the Conversation: The Nuts and Bolts of the First Session	25
Coaching Skill: Levels of Listening	25
Listening Competencies	27
Coaching Skill: Values	27
The Topic of <i>Face</i> - Face Saving	34
Sponsor, Agent, Target Model	36

3. Create Focus and Identify Goals	39
Focus: Vision and Goals	39
Goal Setting: The big “G” and little “g” goal	39
Skill: Reframing	41
Sources of Conflict	42
4. Discover: Expand Understanding	46
Misplaced Intentions, Actions and Effects	46
Ladder of Inference	47
The Heart of the Conflict: Identifying Interests	50
5. Decision and Action	51
Creating Perspectives	51
Wheels	51
Questions to Expand Perspectives	53
Four ACT questions	54
Goal Setting 101	55
References	58
Suggested Readings	62
Appendices	63
Appendix A: Coaching Letter: Working with Your Conflict Coach	63
Appendix B: Sample – Personal Information Fact Sheet	64
Appendix C: Sample – Conflict Coaching Synopsis	65
Appendix D: Sample – Action Plans	66
Appendix E: Balance Wheel	68
Appendix F: Glossary – Coaching Terms	69
Appendix G: Personal Learnings	72
Appendix H: Self-differentiation: Knowing Self	74
Appendix I: Seven Strategies for Treating Perception - or Framing - Problems	75
Appendix J: Content Process Relationship Diagram	76
Appendix K: Anger Arousal Cycle Diagram	77
Appendix L: Intent-Action-Effect Diagram	78

Introduction

The most profound personal growth does not happen while reading a book or meditating on a mat. It happens in the throes of conflict – when you are angry, afraid, frustrated. It happens when you are doing the same old thing and you suddenly realize that you have a choice.

(Tugaleva, 2007)

“Peace is not just the absence of conflict; peace is the creation of an environment where all can flourish”

(Mandela, 2004, para. 5).

What is Coaching?

“Coaching is partnering with ...[coachees] in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential”

(International Coaching Federation, 2020, Key Definitions section).

“Coaching is a powerful alliance designed to forward and enhance the lifelong process of learning, effectiveness, and fulfillment”

(Whitworth et al., 2007, p. 202).

According to Bungay Stanier,

“the essence of coaching lies in helping others and unlocking their potential”

(Robb, 2019, para. 10).

According to Senge et al. (1999):

The English word for ‘coach’ is derived from Kocs, the name of a village in northeastern Hungary, where carriages and carts were traditionally made. Nineteenth-century university students adopted the word as slang for ‘tutor’. Instructors, it seems, took such an intense, personal interest in their student’s progress that students felt conveyed through the exam as if driven in the instructor’s carriage. We think the word, today, still conveys some of that spirit of close partnership and mutual responsibility.

(p. 106)

Landsberg (1996) states that:

Coaching aims to enhance the performance and learning ability of others. It involves providing feedback, but it also uses other techniques such as motivation, effective questioning, and consciously matching your management styles to each coachee's readiness to undertake a task. It is based on helping ...[coachees] to help themselves through interacting dynamically with them— it does not rely on one-way flow of telling and instructing. (p. 97)

Additionally:

Transformational coaching is similar to life coaching. It involves helping people bettering themselves and their lives by bringing about necessary changes. Instead of changing how they act, however, as with life coaching clients, transformational coaching clients work on changing the way they see themselves.

*("What is transformational coaching?"
n.d., para. 3)*

What is Conflict?

Conflict is defined as a difference of wants, needs, values, concerns, and interests. Communities and organizations represent a composite of thousands of diverse individuals who consciously and unconsciously bring their differences to work. It is natural and predictable that conflicts will occur.

Conflict Coaching brings an additional perspective to conflict by acknowledging conflict as a catalyst and giving vast potential for improved decision-making. It also fosters better understanding of others and increased levels of creativity and innovation.

"Interpersonal conflict is defined broadly to include both 1) substantive disagreements such as differences over objectives, structures, policies, and practices, and 2) the more personal and emotional differences that arise between human beings" (Walton, 1997, p. 110).

"To be human is to experience conflict"
(Bolton, 1986, p. 206).

"Differences between at least two interdependent parties who perceive or who are experiencing incompatible goals or needs, thinking differently about processes or routes to that goal, or interference in meeting their goals or needs"

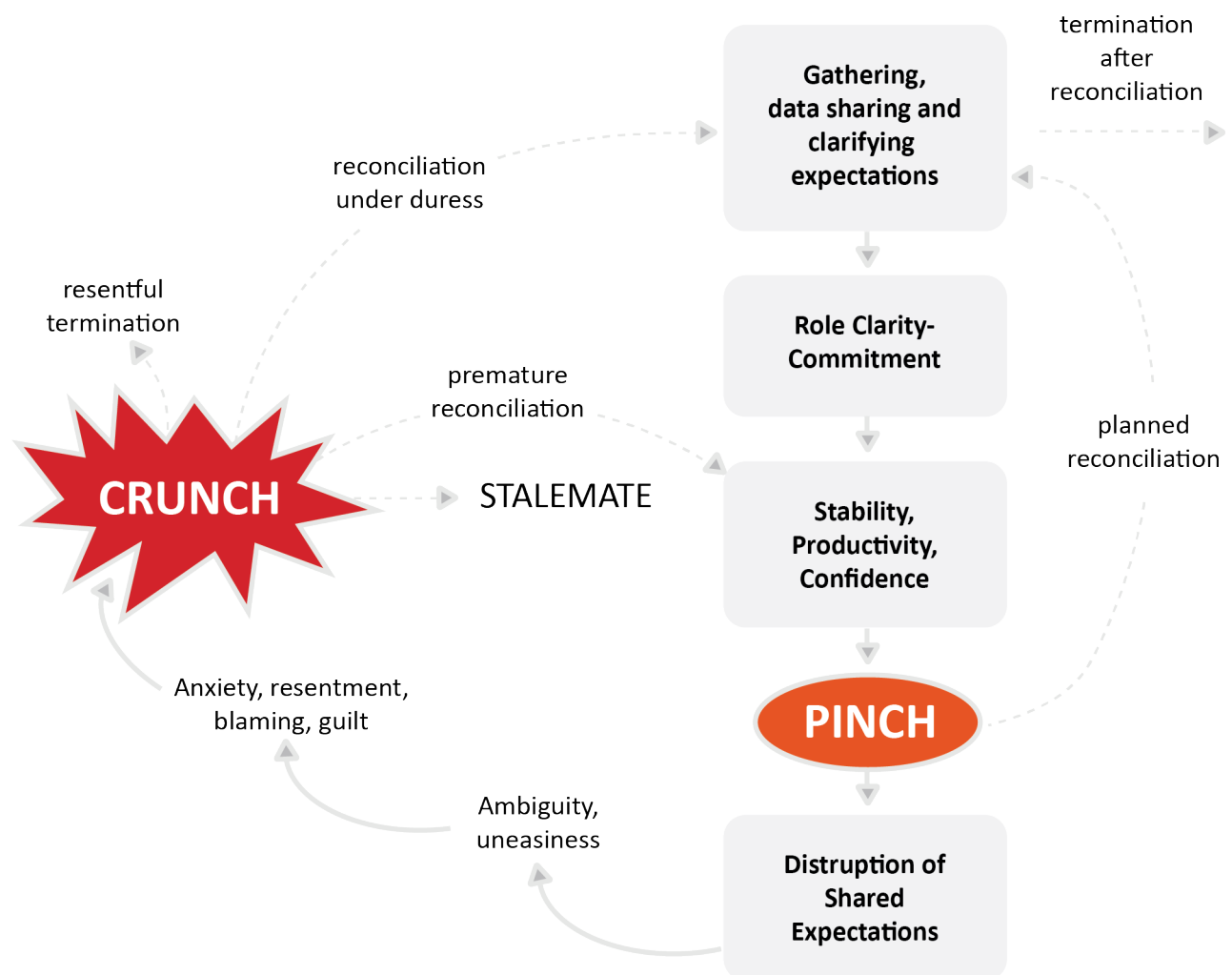
(Justice Institute of British Columbia, 2017, p. 12).

“When expectations and commitments are compromised by one or both parties resulting in a disruption of expectations, increased anxiety and subsequent opportunity for termination or renegotiation of the relationship”

(L. Dobson, 2008, personal communication).

The Pinch Model of Conflict Analysis

What happens to create conflict?



(Sherwood & Scherer, 1995)

What is Conflict Coaching?

Conflict Coaching helps individuals **to engage more effectively with others when experiencing conflict.** In this course, you will learn about the Conflict Coaching Road Map – a combination of the best dispute resolution theories and professional coaching practices.

Conflict Coaching:

- Supports coachees to examine their traditional approaches to conflict.
- Poses powerful and provocative questions to explore personal values and goals.
- Identifies coachee behaviours and communication with others to find the source of the conflict.
- Acknowledges personal and professional strengths and uses them to become building blocks for resolution.
- Challenges, beliefs and assumptions, asks the tough questions, examines possible blind spots and limitations.
- Examines the uniquely personal opportunities and choices within the current conflict to develop solutions that are effective and congruent with coachee's values and goals.
- Can help to de-escalate crisis points, build collaborative relationships, and replace unproductive behaviours with more effective skills.

During conflicts, coachees often disassociate themselves with their values and sense of worth. The conflict coach's responsibility is to help coachees identify and use the power of personal values to choose resolutions consistent with their internal moral compass.

Conflict Coaches believe in their coachee's capacity (even when the coachee may not).

Foundations of Conflict Coaching

(Inspired by Kimsey-House et al., 2017)

1. The coachee is naturally creative and resourceful and whole.

Conflict Coaching works on the assumption that your coachee does not need to be 'fixed' and that they continue to possess the ability to embody wholeness, even when they feel broken by their conflicts. When we consider our coachee as "creative, resourceful and whole" (p. 3), it is easy to acknowledge that the coach has the questions, but the coachee has the answers.

2. Conflict Coaching encompasses the coachee's whole life – personal and professional, including their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

Coaching recognizes that parts of our 'selves' move from work to home and vice versa. Coaching in conflict situations may focus on challenges in the workplace or in the coachee's personal life. At the same time, it recognizes the emotional, physical, spiritual, and psychological aspects of the whole life.

3. The coachee defines the trajectory of the conversation.

Coaching is based on the goals of the individual or team (although this manual focuses on one-to-one coaching). The coachee chooses the focus for the coaching conversation while the coach listens, contributes observations, and asks powerful questions. Throughout the coaching conversation, goals are distilled and used as catalysts for change.

4. The coach and coachee mutually share power.

Unlike mediation and negotiation, Conflict Coaching conversations are co-developed. The coach has expertise in listening, asking powerful questions, and having a non-judgemental presence, while the coachee brings the expertise of their own lives. This co-designed interactive conversation means that both participants are responsible for, and actively engaged in, the process of finding resolutions that make sense.

The Role of the Conflict Coach

There are hundreds of articles and books written on the role of the 21st century coach. There are executive coaches, leader coaches, personal coaches, life coaches, voice coaches, career coaches, professional development coaches... the list is endless.

This manual explores the role and responsibilities of the Conflict Coach. The dynamics used in Conflict Coaching have context within many other strands of coaching. This manual blends conflict theory with the practice of coaching to maximize resolution opportunities.



The Conflict Coach:

- partners with the coachee to co-develop effective solutions to personal and professional challenges.
- provides a supportive environment where coach and coachee identify resolution goals, deepen understanding of the issues, and develop action plans that are consistent with the coachee's values and goals.
- helps the coachee de-escalate intense emotions, work effectively to resolve issues, and implement strategic action plans that may involve modifications of behaviour and acquisition of new skills.

Coaching Characteristics

(Core competencies: International Coaching Federation)

The International Coaching Federation (2019) has developed eight core competencies to explain the skills and approaches used within today's coaching profession. These competencies form the basis of Conflict Coaching.

A. Foundation

1. Demonstrates ethical practice.
2. Embodies a coaching mindset.

B. Co-creating the Relationship

1. Establishes and maintains agreements.
2. Cultivates trust and safety.
3. Maintains presence.

C. Communicating Effectively

1. Listens actively.
2. Evokes awareness.

D. Cultivates Learning and Growth

1. Facilitates coachee growth.

The Case for Coaching in Conflict Situations

The Costs of Conflict:

According to Howatt (2015), in his article,

“The Long-Term Costs of Not Resolving Workplace Conflict:”

Unmanaged or unresolved conflict contributes to employee absenteeism that cost the Canadian economy an estimated \$16.1 billion in 2012, according to the Conference Board of Canada. Managing conflict is a critical competency for every leader and employee, regardless of the size of the organization.

(paras. 4 & 5)

Furthermore, Howatt (2015) states that:

Leaders who lack conflict management skills and avoid conflict often end up being less effective at achieving their defined business objectives, have more trouble managing people and being fulfilled at their job. Unresolved conflict can also have a negative impact on the leader-employee relationship. For example, it can lead to eroded trust, decreased motivation, lowered morale, increased stress, and health risks, decreased performance and productivity, increased absenteeism, and employees quitting.

(para. 6)

Workplace conflict can result in:

- **Wasted time.**

Studies have shown that as much as 20-40% of a manager’s time is spent dealing with various aspects of confusion, disagreement, and conflict (Runde & Flanagan, 2012, p. 17)

- **Loss of quality employees.**

Employees leave an organization to seek a place where they can work with less tension and greater satisfaction. Exit interviews show that at least 50% of employees leave an organization due to conflict – and usually the good ones are the ones who go. Replacing a skilled employee can cost anywhere from 30 – 400% of an employee’s salary due to lost productivity, recruiting, orientation, and getting up to speed. The cost of replacing entry-level employees can range from 30-50% of their annual salary. For mid-level employees, this cost can go up to approximately 150% of their salary, and for high-level employees the costs can reach as much as 400% of their annual salary.

(Pollack Peacebuilding Systems, 2020)

- **Legal action.**

According to VanBuskirk (2014), “employees who experience workplace conflict may elect to enforce their rights through a number of different venues provided within the legal system” (p. 137).

The costs of unresolved conflict in the workplace also put unnecessary burdens on both organizations and the people within those organizations. Effects include:

- **Mental health/stress**

The American Psychological Association estimates that more than \$500 billion is siphoned off from the U.S. economy because of workplace stress, and 550 million workdays are lost each year due to stress on the job. Sixty percent to 80% of workplace accidents are attributed to stress, and it's estimated that more than 80% of doctor visits are due to stress. Workplace stress has been linked to health problems ranging from metabolic syndrome to cardiovascular disease and mortality.

(Seppala & Cameron, 2015, para. 4)

"An estimated 15% of employees feel that poor interpersonal relations are a source of stress at work" (Watson Wyatt Canada, ca. 2007, p. 102).

- **Absenteeism and disengagement**

"In studies by the Queens School of Business and by the Gallup Organization, disengaged workers had 37% higher absenteeism, 49% more accidents, and 60% more errors and defects in their work. In organizations with low employee engagement scores, they experienced 18% lower productivity, 16% lower profitability, 37% lower job growth, and 65% lower share price over time. Importantly, businesses with highly engaged employees enjoyed 100% more job applications"

(Seppala & Cameron, 2015, para. 7)

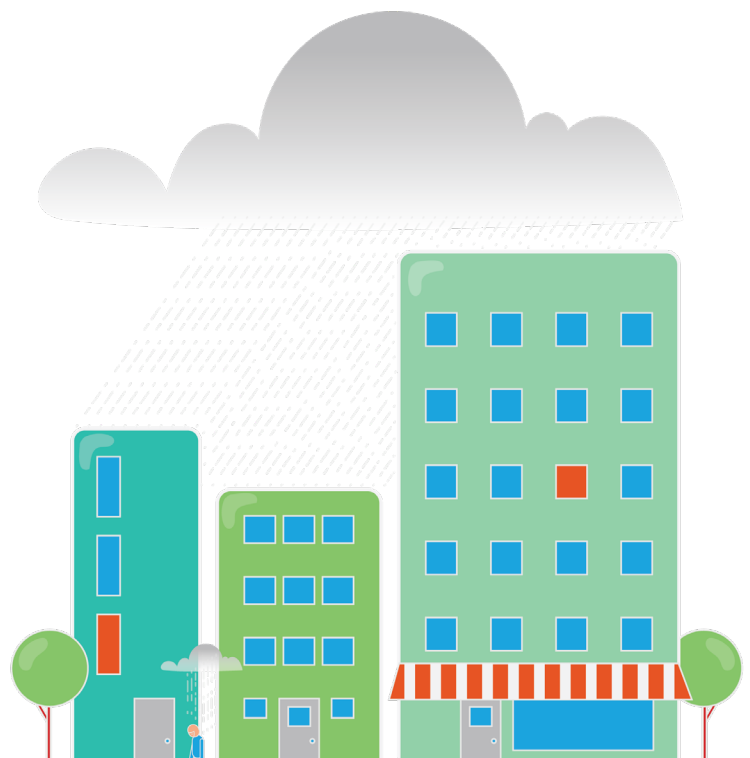
- **Workplace violence/bullying**

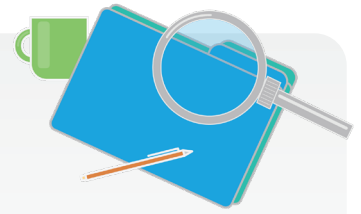
"There is a drastic increase in the severity of work-related issues with workplace violence and work-related conflict contributing the greatest increases." (Shepell.fgi, 2002, Finding highlights section)

- **Community/family harm**

"Conflict is a good example of how harm can be produced in the workplace and of how this harm "spills over" into families and communities." (Health Canada, 2000, p. 15).

"Such harm includes both inner-directed harm (suicidal behaviour, recklessness, agitated depression and abuse of alcohol, drugs) and outer-directed expressions (threatening behaviour, emotional and/or verbal abuse, bullying, harassment, assault, domestic violence, road rage." (Health Canada, 2000, p.16)





The Business Case for Coaching

Booz Allen Hamilton Study (Parker-Wilkins, 2006)

689% Return on Investment

Senior leaders identified eight business areas that they expected executive coaching to have an impact on. Of these eight areas, two areas were cited as being especially impacted by at least half of the leaders who were coached. These two areas were teamwork (58%) and team member satisfaction (54%). Three other areas were selected by 31% of the leaders as having been impacted. These were quality of consulting, retention, and productivity. Accelerating promotions (19%) and increasing coachee satisfaction (12%) were also cited to a lesser degree. Only one leader (4%) credited coaching with increasing diversity (Anderson, 2004, paras. 7-10).

Monetary benefits were rigorously documented, isolated from other potential influencing factors and discounted for error of the estimate and other factors. The total monetary benefits were \$3,268,325 with four impact areas each producing at least a half million dollars of annualized benefit to the business: improved teamwork (\$981,980), quality of consulting (\$863,625), retention (\$626,456) and team member satisfaction (\$541,250). Given a total, fully loaded cost of the coaching of \$414,310, the ROI was 689% (Anderson, 2004, para. 10).

The Manchester Study (McGovern et al., 2001):

Improvements to Company and Performance

Improvements	
Corporate	Performance
Productivity	Working relationships (reports)
Quality	Working relationships (supervisors)
Organizational strength	Teamwork
Customer service	Relationships with peers
Reduction in customer complaints	Job satisfaction
Retention	Conflict reduction
Cost reductions	Organizational commitment
Bottom line profitability	

Exercise: Define and Describe

In the space below, write your own definition of Conflict Coaching, as you might describe it to your coachee. Include a description of your role as coach and what your expectations are of your coachee's role.

Conflict Coaching is...

My role as a Conflict Coach is...

Your coachee's role is...

Exercise: What are the qualities of an effective Conflict Coach?

Generate a list of conflict coach characteristics.

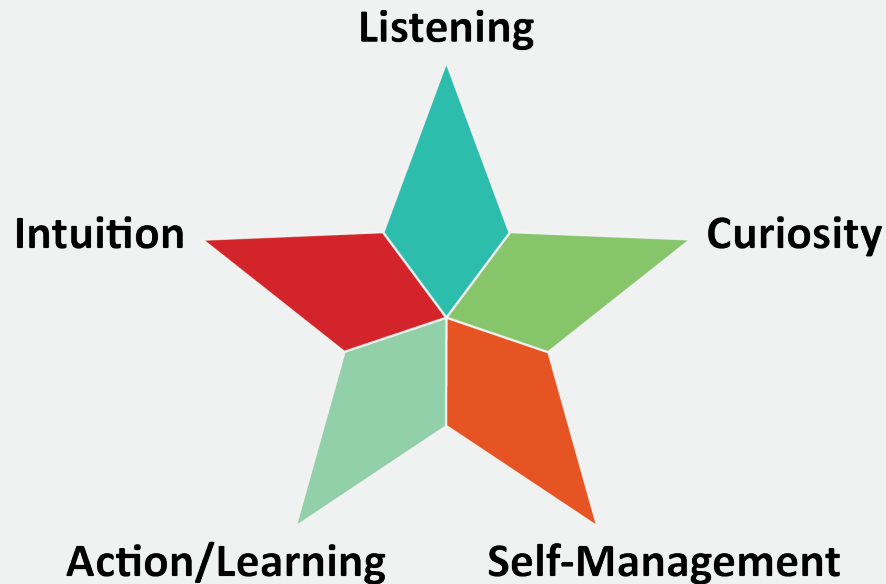
List three conflict coaching characteristics you currently use and consider your strengths.

List three conflict coaching characteristics you want to develop or strengthen.



Contexts of Coaching

In addition to the four characteristics, there are five contexts of coaching from The Coactive Coaching Model:



Definitions of the Contexts

Listening:

The role of the conflict coach is to listen for the coachee's vision, values, and commitment through both verbal and nonverbal language. Listening includes awareness of the coach's personal bias or views and purposefully re-directing the focus of their attention toward the coachee's narrative. According to the International Coaching Federation, there are several levels of listening:

Level 1 or *natural listening* describes the type of listening that occurs in most day-to-day interactions, where the listener is mainly focused on their own thoughts, feelings, and opinions rather than the thoughts and feelings of the other party.

Level 2 listening, or *focused listening* calls for a different kind of listening from the coach. This occurs when the coach is entirely focused on the coachee, without judging, interrupting, or turning their attention toward themselves.

Level 3 or *comprehensive* listening is an advanced skill. The coach maintains both a strong focus on the coachee and intuitively notices what is said and unsaid. At the same time, the coach observes what is occurring within the environment that may be impacting the coaching conversation.

Intuition:

Intuition is the art of trusting and utilizing one's inner knowing. While a coach's intuitive thoughts, feelings, ideas, or images may not make immediate sense to the coach, they may be extremely helpful to the coachee. The coach can *blurt* out their intuition or frame their hunch as "I have a sense..." or "I have a hunch..."

Curiosity:

One of the foundations of effective coaching is curiosity. However, as we mature, our sense of curiosity and discovery is often lost. We simply stop asking why the sky is blue and just accept

that it is blue. However, as coaches, we need to cultivate curiosity and be intensely curious about the behaviours, thoughts, and emotions of our coachees. It is from curiosity that powerful questions emerge.

Forward Action/Deepen Learning:

In Conflict Coaching, the coach is always forwarding the coachee's actions and deepening their understanding. This is the intention of the process of resolution. The coach is responsible for keeping the coachee on track during coaching conversations and ensuring that the coachee is steadily advancing toward their goal. Deepening the learning is the by-product of powerful questions – the coachee learns more about themselves, their motivations, their aspirations and how to respond with greater awareness and choice.

Self-Management:

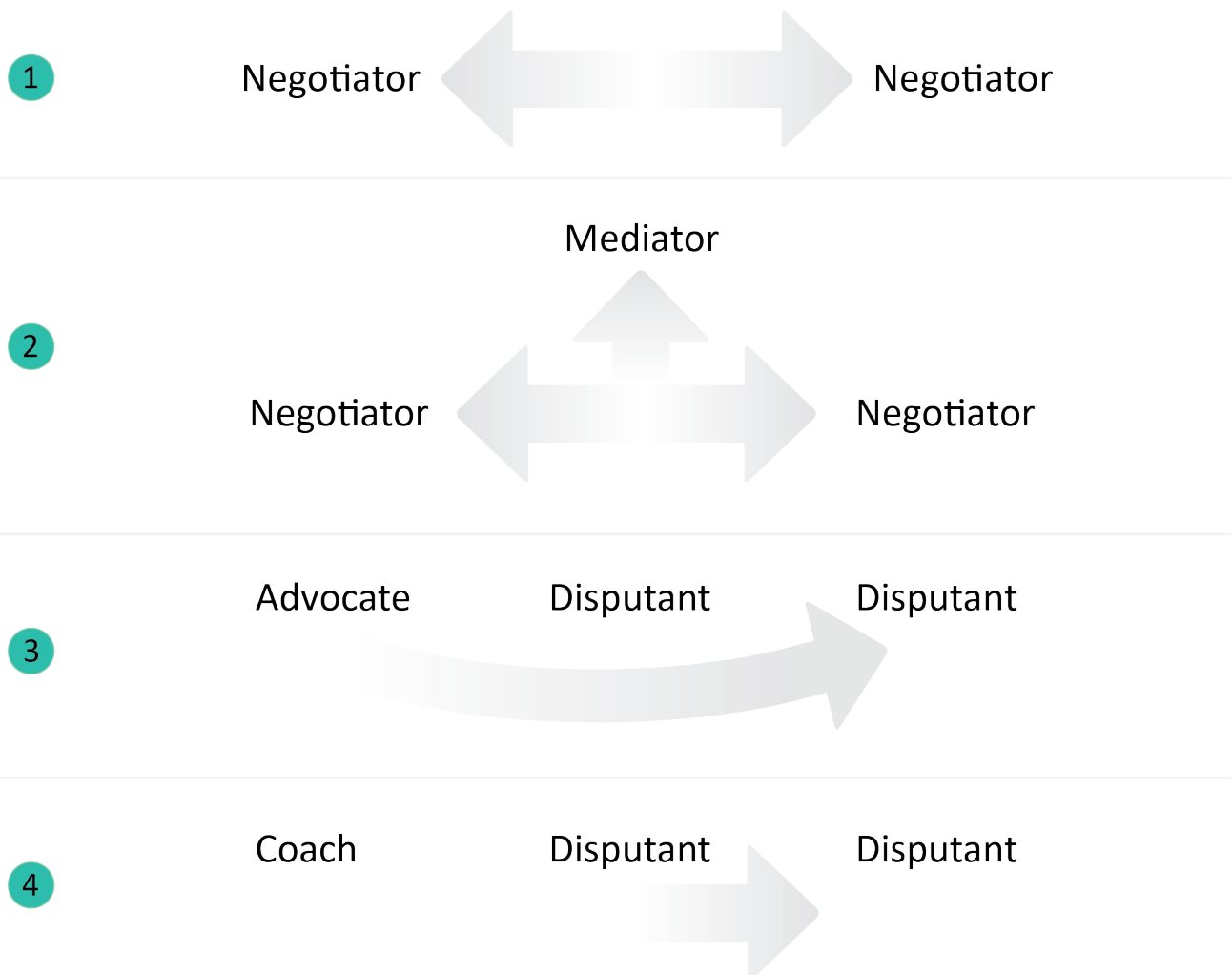
Self-management describes the intention and action of the coach to put aside their own assumptions, *fixes*, and judgements about the coachee in order to promote the coachee's own agenda. It is vital that the coach *manage* their personal triggers, knee jerk responses, and their typical patterns of responding to conflicts. When the coach is self-aware and can self-manage, they can assist coachees to *self-manage* as well.

Blending Conflict Resolution and Coaching Approaches

Conflict Coaching follows an established four-stage dispute resolution process that is used in many alternative dispute resolution institutions, including the Justice Institute of BC. The purpose of this manual is to synthesize the traditional dispute resolution model, juxtaposing current professional coaching theories and processes to align with conventional resolution processes.

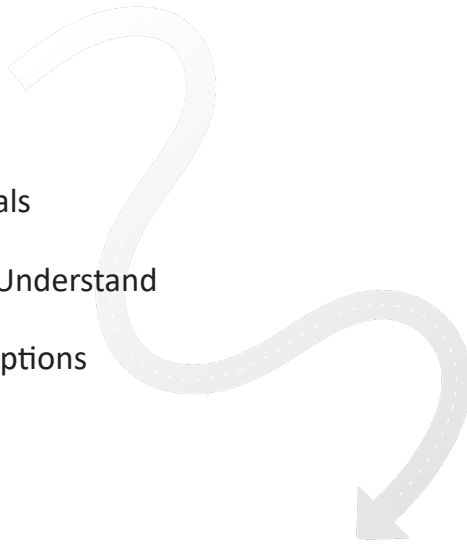
Stages of ADR Model	Conflict Coaching Model
Pre-work	Prepare to coach
Opening	Build the relationship
Identifying	Focus on issues and goals
Exploring	Discover meaning and Insight
Closing	Confirm action

Comparison of Roles: Negotiator, Mediator, Advocate and Conflict Coach



The Conflict Coaching Road Map

1. Prepare
2. Connect
3. Focus and Goals
4. Discover and Understand
5. Actions and Options



1. Prepare

- The coach reflects on their personal ability to be aware and self-manage during conflict situations.
- The coach is curious about his/her own personal conflict style.
- The coach practices differentiation of self and other.
- The coach attends to self-management issues, such as how to stay curious and manage triggers.

2. Connect

- Initial contact with the coachee and explanation of the role of the coach and the process of Conflict Coaching.
- The coachee experiences 'coach-like' listening, support and safety.
- Coach and coachee define boundaries for the coaching sessions.
- Coach and coachee begin to co-create coaching relationship.

3. Focus and Goals

- Coach and coachee gain more awareness of the conflict.
- Coach clarifies values and needs that create conflict and listens for limiting thoughts / behaviours.
- Coachee begins to articulate both an overarching goal and the micro goals needed to move to resolution.

4. Discover and Understand

- Coach asks provocative questions to encourage coachee to examine the situation from various perspectives using intuition, hunches, and observations.
- Coach challenges attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that are resident in the conflict situation.
- Coachee is seen as creative and resourceful as they examine their own hard truths (about how they communicate and behave in the conflict).
- Coach assists the coachee to begin to leverage personal strengths and values toward resolution.
- Coach promotes movement from thinking, to doing, and action.

5. Actions and Options

- Coach assists the coachee to develop capacity to make wise choices based on new knowledge and perspectives.
- Coachee develops a systematic plan of action based on reflective choices in line with vision and values.
- Structures are created to enhance decisions that can hold the coachee accountable for doing what they have discussed.
- Coachee and coach review action agreements, discuss 'gremlin' activity, and think about possible next steps needed to maintain resolution. Celebrate hard work and success.

Five Phases of the Conflict Coaching Road Map

1. Prepare: Pre-work for preparing to conflict coach

Goal: Self-reflection is a conscious decision designed to optimize personal strengths and talents and increase the quality of our responsiveness during our coaching sessions. By taking time to reflect, coaches deepen self-awareness and enhance the ability to self-manage, so they are ready to help others.

- Be ready to describe Conflict Coaching and the roles of the conflict coach and coachee.
- Create awareness of coach's conflict styles and understand its impact on coach responses.
- Develop self awareness and self management techniques to manage triggers.
- Be ready to be very curious about your coachee's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

Tools:

- Curiosity
- Conflict Styles
- Differentiation model
- Triggers
- Agreement to Conflict Coach (if applicable). See handout.

Curiosity

Curiosity is one of the most important skills for Conflict Coaches. When people are in conflict, they have often developed a 'rationale' for why they are behaving or thinking in a certain manner. Whenever coaches or coachees look at an issue from only one perspective, opportunities for considering alternative beliefs or solutions are limited. Curiosity allows the coach to pose questions that provide the coachee with data and help the coachee to understand their issues and interests more effectively.

Coaches approach the conversation with an attitude of curiosity in several different ways.

- By using their awareness of their level of curiosity to enhance powerful questions. Simply being aware that you have shifted from 'I know' to 'you know' creates a dynamic that promotes higher levels of curiosity.
- By beginning the conversations with a 'child's mind'. Remember what it was like to examine something new with the wonder of a child (if you cannot think child, think puppy!) The view from a child's mind takes you away from having to know the answers, and it places you in a 'what else is there to know' frame of mind.



- By using open questions that begin with who, what, when, how or where.
- By being responsive. Curiosity elicits information, which in turn creates greater curiosity and leads to the next question – *as it reflects on the coachee's response.*

Managers and leaders often ask questions to gain information and inform judgements and decisions. As coaches, your role is to ask questions that help the other party to understand themselves better. As Whitmore states in 'Co-Active Coaching', being curious is "not being attached to a path or destination and yet always being intentional about seeking out meaning, uncovering values, discovering learning for the ...[coachee]. It is not aimless meandering" (Kimsey-House et al, 2017, p. 66).

Curiosity Exercise:

Goal: Practice getting curious!

In pairs, select one person (person 'A') to make a statement e.g. "I want to be a stronger leader." Person 'B' then responds with "I'm curious..." and follows it with an open question.

Note to Person 'B', please feel free to add other comments and follow most of 'A's' responses starting with "I'm curious..."

Proceed with this exercise for 4-5 minutes, then stop and debrief the following questions before changing roles.

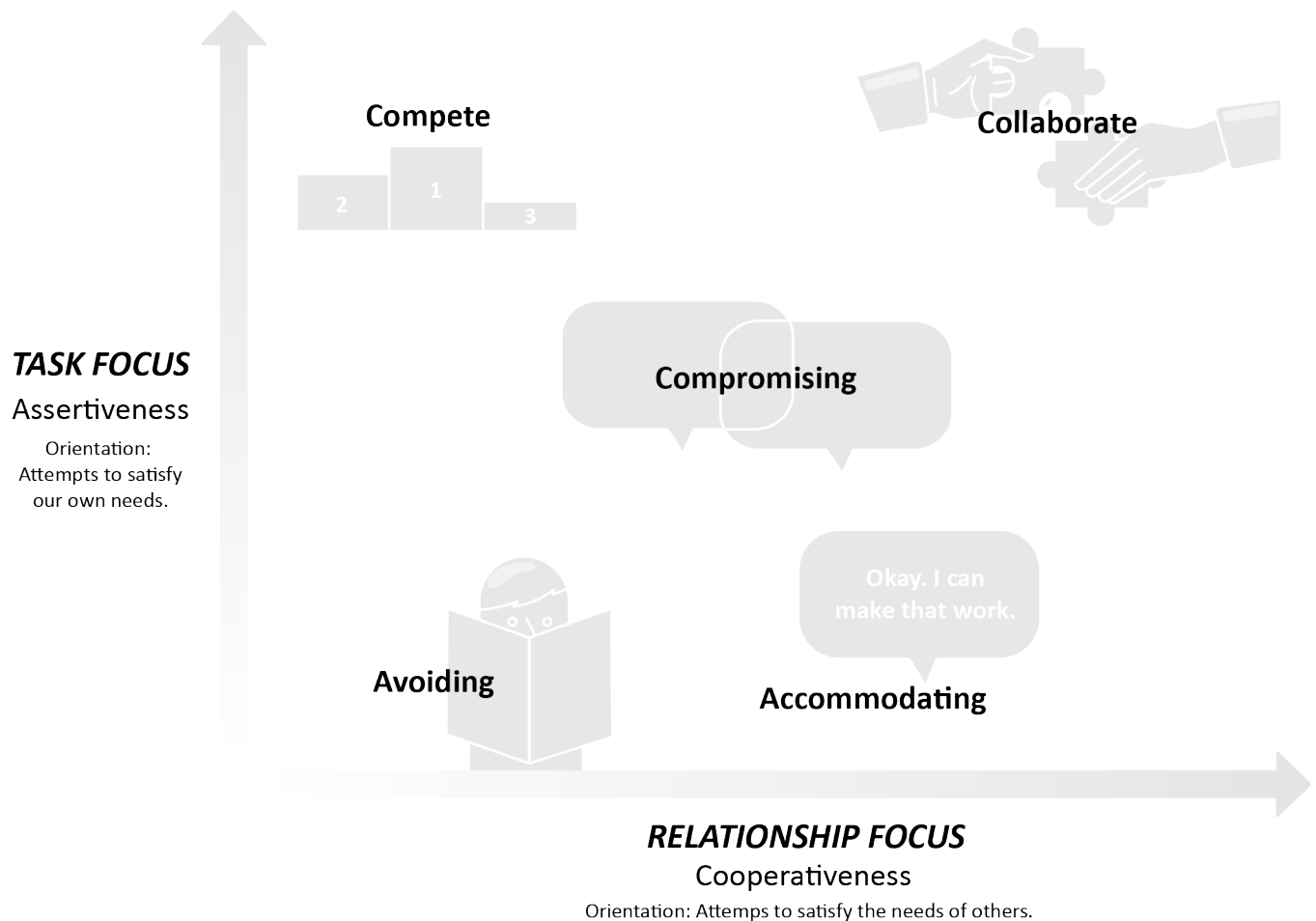
Debrief: Person 'B'

1. What was easy about this exercise?
2. What was it like to sustain your message "I am curious?"
3. What difference did inserting "I am curious" have on your next comments?
4. What difference did it have on your frame of mind?
5. What did you learn that would help you increase your level of curiosity?

Debrief: Person 'A'

1. What did you like about this exercise?
2. How did your partner illustrate curiosity?
3. What was the impact of hearing "I am curious ..."?
4. What would you have liked more of, or less of, from your partner?

Please remember to thank your partner.



Conflict Styles: Responding to Conflict

There are a variety of conflict style ‘inventories’ that provide users with information about how they, and others, respond to differences that create conflict. Most find their genesis in Blake and Moutons *Managerial Grid* – a quadrant-based analysis of management behaviours. Blake and Mouton suggest that behaviours can be viewed as either ‘task focused’ or ‘relationship focused’.

Thomas and Kilmann (Thomas Kilmann Conflict Style Inventory), Ron Kraybill (Kraybill Conflict Styles Inventory, and J. Hall (Conflict Styles) are the best-known theorists of conflict styles. They all elaborate on Blake and Moutons analysis, suggesting that there are five predominant conflict styles that individuals use when confronted with conflict.

Conflict Coaches use these tools in various ways. First, the tools help determine the coach’s predominant conflict style. Awareness of personal style helps coaches to notice their own response to another’s dilemma, to self-correct, or to choose the style that is most helpful to the coachee.

Secondly, Conflict Coaches use their knowledge of conflict styles to notice coachee behaviour, stay curious, and ask questions. These questions help coachees assess the positive and negative impact of their style within the current conflict. While coachees may be unable to *name* their style without access to one of the inventories, the coach can listen for language that supports a particular conflict style in use.

Please see the graphic above to remind you of the common conflict styles.

Responding to Conflict

Exercise: Conflict Styles Inventory: Five Conflict Styles

In groups of five, examine the five different conflict styles. When doing this exercise, imagine what you might hear yourself saying when you are in conflict, or begin to think about what you might hear others (your coachee) say in conflict. What might they say if they had an **‘Avoiding’** conflict style? E.g., They might say “I don’t think I would want to address that with x. I will just wait and see what happens”.

What would you expect to hear from someone who uses the *Avoid* style?

What would you expect to hear from someone who uses the *Compete* style?

What might you expect to hear from a person who uses the *Collaborate* style?

What might you expect to hear from a person who uses the *Accommodate* style?

What might you expect to hear from a person who uses the *Compromise* style?

Responding to Conflict

Exercise: Conflict Styles Inventory Five Conflict Styles

In groups of five, examine the five different conflict styles and build a list of 5 powerful questions that you might ask your coachee (given their conflict style).

Stay curious and develop questions that would assist your coachee to assess their own style in use. You do not have to teach this. Simply let your own understanding of the many different conflict styles guide your awareness and questions.

What are some of the questions you might ask someone who uses the *Avoid* style?

What are some of the questions you might ask someone who uses the *Compete* style?

What are some of the questions you might ask someone who uses the *Collaborate* style?

What are some of the questions you might ask someone who uses the *Accommodate* style?

What are some of the questions you might ask someone who uses the *Compromise* style?

Differentiation Models

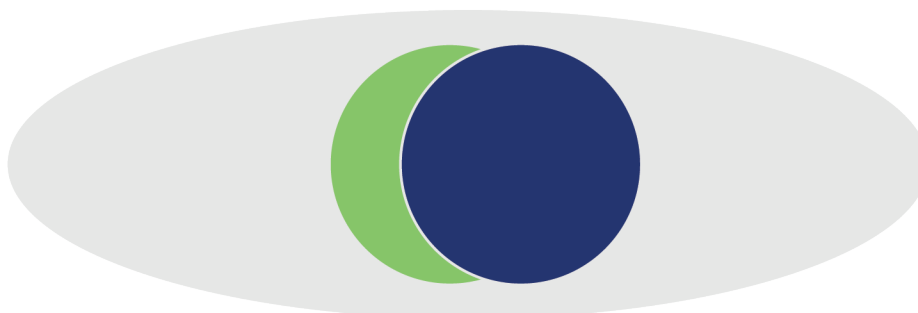
Self-Differentiation: Knowing Self

Dr. Ron Short developed this self-differentiation model to illustrate how we can be under involved, over involved, and *just right* with our coachee's stories (Short, 1991, p. 24). The goal is to both separate (maintain your objectivity to view what is happening in the moment) and connect (maintain a subjective sense of empathy and compassion for your coachee in the moment).



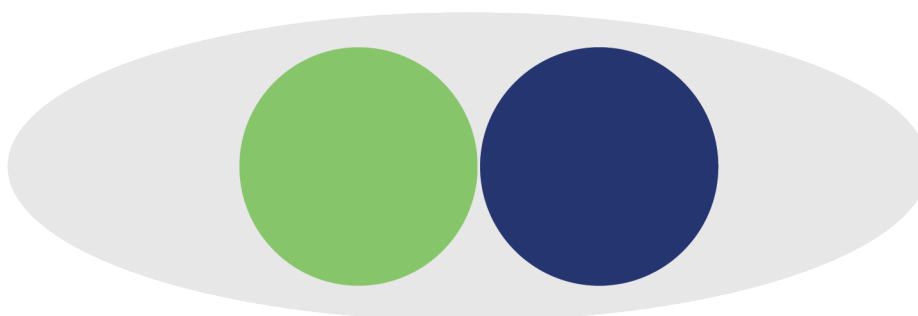
SEPARATE

Danger of coach being uncaring, disengaged, and too objective.



CONNECTED

Danger of coach overly identifying with coachee, becoming excessively subjective of the coachee's concerns, and personalizing coachee's dilemma.



SEPARATE AND CONNECTED

Coach is seen as interested and genuinely engaged. Allows the coachee to own their experience. Sees the coachee as creative and resourceful.



Triggers

Self-Management: Managing Personal Triggers

Triggers are those *buttons* that get pushed when we encounter a personal event that holds specific meaning for us. Often the event evokes a response that has the potential to distract the Conflict Coach from staying present with the coachee.

Because coaches work with difficult issues that often create a universal response such as frustration, anger, or defensiveness, it is natural for coaches to feel many of the same emotions as their coachees. However, coaching is not the time to experience our own emotions. As difficult as this might be (because our *old brain* cannot always distinguish a perceived threat from a real threat), conflict coaches want to continue to direct their attention to the coachee's experience instead of their own.

One way that conflict coaches can manage *triggering* experiences (within the coaching session) and maintain a coachee-focus is to purposefully become

aware of personal triggers and develop strategies to work with them. Keep in mind that triggers inform us of our own unresolved issues that may need attending to.

When we are preparing for our coaching sessions, it is useful to think about the questions on the following page to help you identify and acknowledge triggers. Take the time to strategize about what to do when conversations trigger you.

Reflection Exercise: Triggering Events

Exploration of personal triggers is further developed in Advanced Conflict Coaching.

What might your coachee say that could trigger and distract you during your coaching?

What might your coachee do that could trigger and distract you during your coaching?

What emotions could trigger and distract you during your coaching?

What strategies can you design and implement so that you are able to continue to pay attention to your coachee?

2. Connect: Building the Coaching Relationship

It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.

—e.e. cummings



Working through conflicts is a courageous act.

Goal: Create a safe, productive relationship where coach and coachee can honestly and openly address the conflict situation and create opportunities for constructive, positive change.

Tools:

- Presence
- Shared responsibility
- Listening (Levels 1,2,3)
- Values and the Inner Critic
- Powerful Questions
- Face-Saving
- Reflective Listening
 - paraphrasing
 - summarizing
 - empathy
- When working in organizations

The Power of Presence

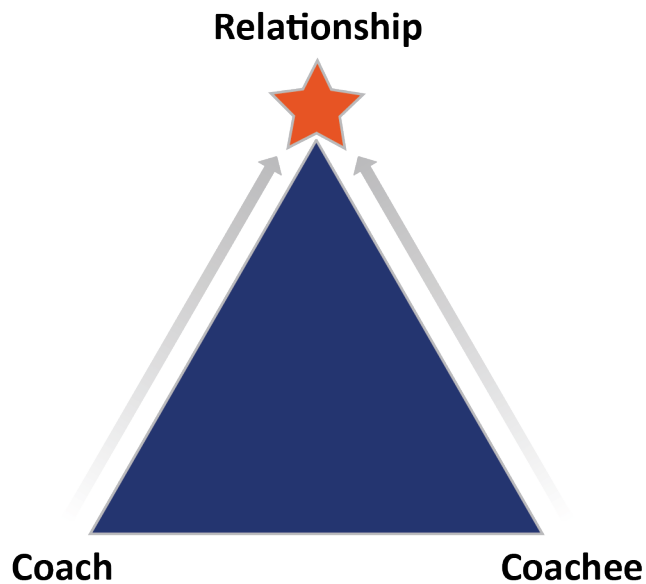
There is an adage, “be where your feet are,” and no where is this truer than when helping others to resolve their differences. Our busy lives make it challenging to help others reflect on their troubling situations. We often listen to others while multitasking – checking messages, sorting through

files, or ruminating on the next meeting or activity. It is difficult to “be where our feet are”, and it is essential that conflict coaches learn to be “nowhere else but here” – with our coachee.

How do we stop the internal and external demands on us and learn to be an effective and efficient conflict coach? The skills are simple – but not easy:

- Practice mindfulness. Research suggests that mindfulness heightens capacity for focused concentration. There are many mindfulness apps that teach us how to sustain attention.
- Notice your *here and now* experience – become experts in noticing your current internal responses. If you find your mind wandering during conversations, take note of your experience (my mind is wandering), then return your attention to the conversation.
- Identify distractors – turn off notices, alerts, or other audible and visual distractions. Is your desk facing things that draw your attention away from your coachee? Consider changing seating for coaching conversations. Are you meeting in a noisy or busy space? Find alternative meeting spots.
- Check your values – are people important to you? Is clarity a value. Is supporting others a value? Do you value integrity or passion? Locate the values that support you to be present.
- Notice your self-talk. See if you can temporarily suspend the *voices in your head*.
- Develop your skills. Most people have not learned to maintain focus without responding to distractions. Are there specific skills, such as learning how to ask powerful questions, or listening in levels two and three that would help you to pay attention to your coachees’ verbal and nonverbal communication?
- Commit to your Conflict Coaching and your coachee. Honour your commitment to be the best possible conflict coach.

The Power of the Conflict Coaching Relationship



“At the initiation of the learning partnership, building relationships between coachee and coach creates a winning triangle of engagement. When coach and coachee join forces, they build the relationship through powerful dialogue – more powerful than either party’s independent comments or contribution. It is within the relationship that each party can bring its full spectrum of talent and resourcefulness”

(Whitworth et al., 2007, p. 17).

Characteristics of Safe Environments for Coaching

Before moving to the initial session, review the characteristics of a safe and courageous environment:

- Spaciousness or non-attachment to preconceived ideas
- Holding the coachee as resourceful, creative, and whole
- Being straight and honest with coachee; being with them
- Allowing for real feelings; providing room to *clear* or express emotion
- Establishing rapport; caring for coachee
- Asking difficult or hard to ask questions
- Managing self, so you do not get in the way of your coachee’s learning
- Being curious
- Owning it when you do something outside of the coachee’s agenda
- Listening at level 2 and 3
- Building trust – do what you say you will do
- Knowing that no one gets to be wrong; we are all learning together

HOW WILL YOU CREATE A SAFE AND COURAGEOUS SPACE FOR YOUR COACHEE?

Add your own thoughts to the list.

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE WHEN YOU CREATE SAFETY FOR YOUR COACHEE?

Initiating the Conversation: The Nuts and Bolts of the First Session

- Introduce yourself (for internal coaches please describe your multiple roles) and any credentials you have that pertain to the coaching activity (communication, peer counselling, coaching, dispute resolution courses and certifications). Describe your role as coach and explain that you are not an expert consultant. Describe the *conflict coaching relationship*. Ask yourself, what is it that I bring to a coachee that will assist in their movement toward resolution.
- Present guidelines – especially confidentiality. Be behaviourally descriptive. What does confidentiality mean for your coachee? Who else may need to know about these coaching sessions? What happens to the notes and information generated during the sessions? Who will have access to this information?
- Get intensely curious about the coachee. Who are they? What roles do they have in their work life and home life? How long have they been employed? Where are they employed? Who do they report to? Have them introduce the conflict issues and let them know that you will be talking about the issues in greater depth soon.
- Articulate how your coaching sessions will take place. Clarify assumptions, use descriptive language, reflect impact. Ask where, when, how, with whom. Let your coachee know that you will be supportive and challenging. Ask what that means for the coachee. How would they like you to support them and challenge them? Talk about expectations and fieldwork that will take place between sessions. **Confirm commitment to move to resolution.**

Coaching Skill: Levels of Listening

The greatest gift we can give another is their one minute.

— Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life

Level 1:

Level 1 listening is the kind of listening we participate in every day. It involves two or more people exchanging information. All parties are involved in contributing to content, adding information, and asking questions.

Level 1 listening is filtered through our verbal and nonverbal experience. We are influenced by our perceptions of what the person is saying to us while we are listening, and we often respond from the perspective of “me”. Our focus is a shared focus.

Level 2:

Level 2 listening uses the skills of curiosity and deep listening. There is a strong focus on the other. When we recognize our thoughts are about ourselves rather than the other, we reorient our attention toward the other.

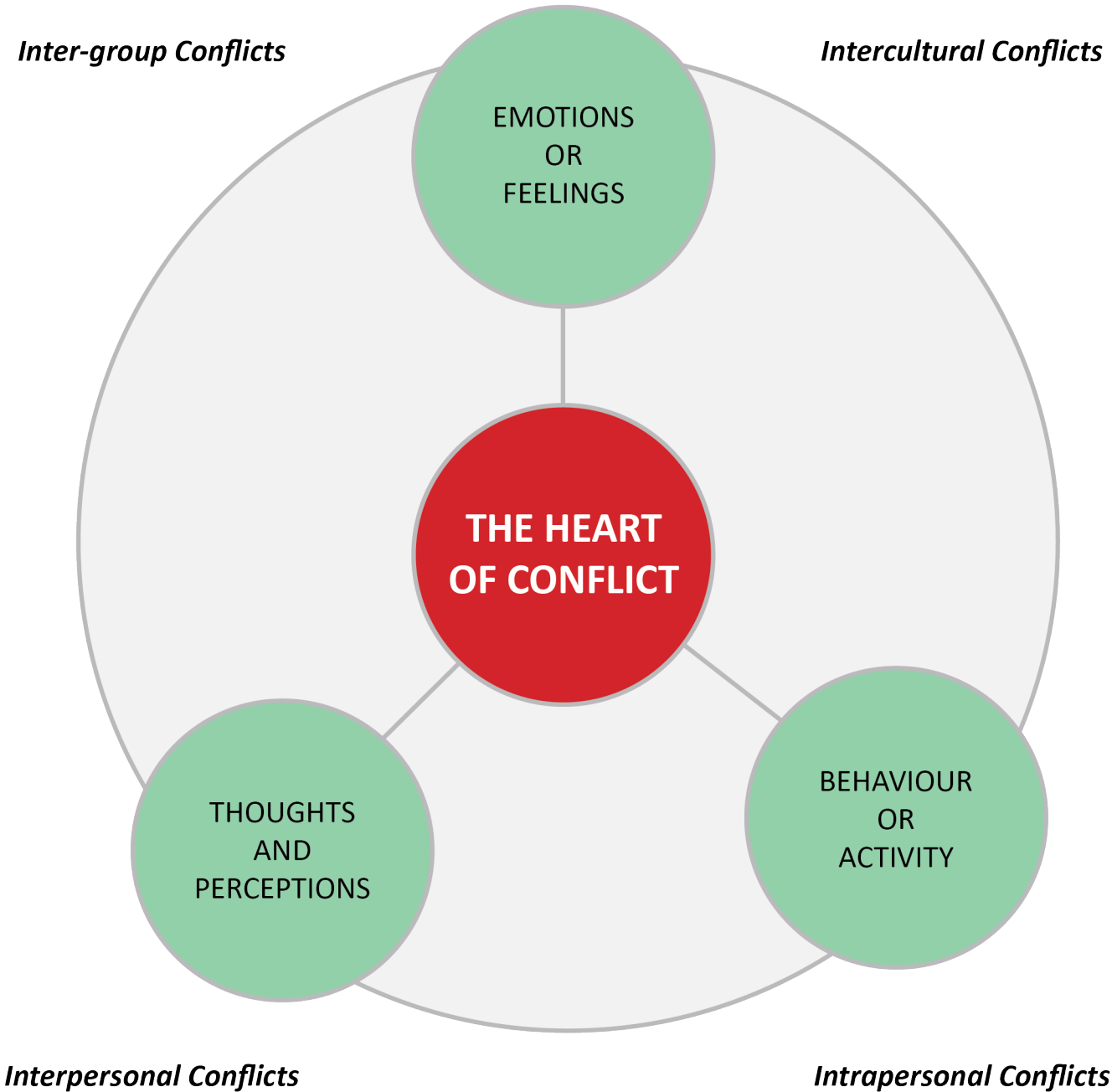
Level 2 listening appears easy, yet most people find it challenging to maintain a focus on another person. When we listen, it seems ‘natural’ to add our own thoughts and feelings about the speaker’s content.

Level 3:

Level 3 listening concerns itself with the *all* – everything that is influencing the conversation. This might include external noise, physical posture, environment, and even the intuitive *hunches* you may have about what is underneath the message the other is sending.

Level 3 listening is the most advanced form of listening.

During our coaching conversations, what are we listening for? Listening is multifaceted. It includes the appreciation of the coachee’s culture and world view, their group and family dynamics and norms, and any interpersonal and intrapersonal elements. As we listen, we are also aware of the presence of the three dimensions of intrapersonal conflict – thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.



Listening Competencies

“Having an understanding attitude doesn’t mean presuming to know a person’s thoughts and feelings. It means being open to listening and discovering”

(Nicols & Straus, 2021, p. 59)

Examine the listening competencies below.



Where do you excel as a listener?
What do you need to focus on
so that you can listen even more
effectively?

- The listener accurately receives and comprehends messages.
- The listener is focused on the behaviours that demonstrate support for the relationship of the coachee.
- Listening with accuracy and discriminating facts from opinions.
- The listener analyzes facts to understand messages. “A good listener is a witness, not a judge of your experience” (Nicols & Straus, 2021, p. 19).
- The listener remembers significant details of the conversation. Being heard means being taken seriously.
- Listening indicates a show of support, giving attention to individual involvement with verbal and nonverbal behaviour.
- The listener can make the other person comfortable while communicating.

Coaching Skill: Values

Why values matter when Conflict Coaching?

Conflict is often referred to as “a value that has been stepped on.”

Values are the primary motivators for behaviour. They empower people to pursue unimagined dreams and engage in altruistic behaviours that are far beyond their comfort zones. They inspire goals, fortify intentions, and help break through mediocrity to achieve ambition. Within the Conflict Coaching relationship, values support our coachee’s intentions for change and resolution (the primary reason for having a Conflict Coach).

How Conflict Coaches use values.

Values are those elements of the coachee that do not need any work to build or change. They are already resident within, and during movement toward change, they are readily available to inspire, motivate and support the coachee’s intentions. During coaching sessions, coaches listen carefully for, and identify, coachee’s values. Values also serve to act as a ‘plumb line’ to determine whether the coachee is acting in their best interest. If coachees are overemphasizing one value, to the exclusion of others, coaches can assist coachees to examine their responses. When the coachee is acting in a manner that contradicts their values, or needs to enhance a skill or attitude, coaches can call attention to the value that supports positive change.

How do we identify our coachee’s values?

Values are present in almost all activities and are most easily accessed through conversations. As we listen to the highs and lows of our coachee’s world, we can discern values that support or drive their thinking and actions. For example, a coachee may be talking about their frustration in dealing with a peer who is consistently late with their tasks and takes (what appears to be) unnecessarily long coffee breaks. The coachee is illustrating values of accountability, teamwork, and collaboration.

What is Important to You? What do You Value?

accomplishment	commitment	education
hard work	participation	morality
honesty	ownership	money
hope	conformity	energy
humour	humility	neatness
individualism	impulsiveness	obedience
achievement	consistency	enthusiasm
innovation	spontaneity	wisdom
intellect	speed	ownership
affluence	creativity	equality
joy	spirituality	responsibility
laughter	stability	respect
ambition	control	experience
loyalty	teamwork	participation
security	tenacity	laughter
autonomy	discipline	fame
involvement	taking risks	family
managing	technique	freedom
clarity	duty	fun
material goods	tradition	free time
success	truth	goodness
challenge	endurance	grace
status	travel	happiness
recognition	trust	

Coaching Skill Exercise

Listening and Identifying Values:

Goal: Use Level 2 listening skills while listening for coachee's values

Form pairs: Choose one person to be the *speaker* and the other the *listener*.

Speaker Role

Think of an epic moment in your life: one that has special significance for you. It could be a work situation, family, or personal event. Think about how you felt, who was involved, where it took place, and why this event was so extraordinary. Be prepared to share this experience with your partner.

Listener Role

Your job is to listen with your full attention on the speaker. Listen for the values that are resident beneath their words. Level 2 listening is when you listen without filtering and without judgement. Take into consideration the emotions and speech patterns of the speaker (how fast they are talking, how loud, etc.). When people get more excited or more challenged, their speaking patterns reflect their intensity – and where there is intensity there are values! If a judgement enters your mind, simply put it aside and continue to listen to your partner. Listen for what was important to them about that event and why it was important (values). You are encouraged to ask open questions that help clarify and expand on the speaker's awareness of the experience. Try to avoid the use of 'I', which is a sign that you are moving from Level 2 to Level 1 Listening.



Once you have finished:

Listener: Talk to the speaker about the values that you heard. How many values did you identify? (There are usually several). How did the speaker react to your identification of their values in the debrief? What was it like for you to identify their values?

Speaker: What was it like to be listened to so intently? What questions did you like? Were you surprised by the values that the listener heard? Were there any that the listener missed? Tell them now if you have not done so already.

Change roles and repeat exercise.

Exercise: Identifying Values

List five values that you live your life by (tenets by which you make decisions that motivate your behaviour)

List five values you have about resolving conflict

Name three values you want to build on



The Wolf, Gremlins, Inner Critics, and Other Committees

*A grandson is speaking with his grandfather.
The grandfather says he has two wolves
within him.*

*One is always speaking of the best of
things, all that is good, all that is possible,
overcoming obstacles, learning, and growing.*

*The other is always speaking of the worst
of things, all that is bad, why nothing can
change, avoidance of risks, and general
pessimism.*

*The grandfather goes on to say that they
are always fighting with each other, tearing
each other apart. Finally, the grandson asks,
“Which one wins?”*

*“The one that I nourish,” replies the
grandfather.*

When coaches ask their coachees what brought them to Conflict Coaching, there is a possibility the coachee will answer (or include content) from their internal ‘critical voices’. These *voices* are referred to, by various authors, as **the wolf, the committee, the gremlin or the dragon** and are usually big, bad, scary, judgements that live inside your coachees head (we all have them!).

Examples of internal voices or critics range from the Security Critic, that tell us, “be in control, play it safe,” to our Approval Gremlin, “figure out how to look good,” to our Power Critic’s, “stay powerful and win at all costs!”

While these voices can have an important message, they are mostly intent on keeping your coachee (and you as a coach) stuck and unempowered.



What to do?

- Ask where these critics show up in other parts of the coachee’s life?
- What does it cost to have them around?
- What is the comfort zone they provide you with?

—unknown origin

How to Tame Your Gremlin (aka Inner Critic)

The following is derived from Taming Your Gremlin (Carson, 1983).

The gremlin is a powerful voice within the coaching relationship. Gremlins resist change, and coaching is about change – **big** change! When your coachee is creating big changes, gremlins will assuredly show up! Carson provides wonderful tools for grappling with the gremlin.

#1

Rule number one: In taming your gremlin, do not make new rules!

Instead: Become aware

Becoming aware of your gremlin is not something that requires intellectual knowledge, strain, study, or even intense concentration. It involves only relaxing and simply noticing. It is something you allow yourself to do, rather than try to do. Detecting gremlins can start with noticing your body.

Decide what you would like to do and play with options

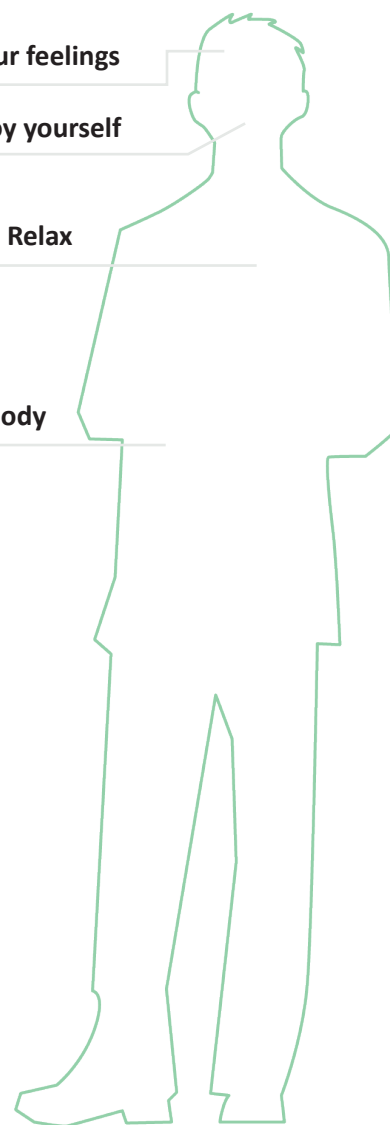
To be at choice in each moment is vital in taming your gremlin. Playing means not being hung up in your gremlin; it means enjoying yourself! As you begin to play and notice your emotions and their effect on your body, stay with your feelings. Your gremlin wants you in your head. Slow everything down, relax and take the time to feel your emotions. Remind yourself that you do not have to do anything with your emotions; they are not dangerous. Experience the relaxed power you have.

Acknowledge your feelings

Enjoy yourself

Relax

Notice your body



Maintain awareness

Taming your gremlin is an ongoing process – a forever adventure. As you begin to tame your gremlin, you will gain an appreciation for the simple truth that happiness is not a static state – not an entity to be captured. Rather, it is an experience that is always available and accessible.

Being in process is an attitude – an appreciation of this truth and of the reality that your life will be forever unfolding and your future always unknown. Simply noticing, choosing, playing with options, and being in process are states of being that are available to you from moment to moment.

Questions for Exploring a Critical Voice

Feel free to use other labels appropriate to your coachee – critical voice, negative voice, inner critic, etc.

- What does your gremlin look like?
- What are its favourite phrases?
- Draw a picture of your gremlin?
- What color is it?
- When does your gremlin usually show up?
- What do you want to say to your gremlin?
- Ally questions.
- What does your ally voice say?
- Talk about your ally voice. How do you identify it?

The Topic of *Face*- Face Saving

As conflict coaches, we will inevitably encounter conversations where the coachee speaks about behaviours, thoughts or emotions that contradict who they believe themselves to be. This is tough. We all want to present the very best parts of ourselves to others. When your coachee is speaking about their engagement in the conflict, they may be wanting to *save face* – to avoid the differences between how they want to see themselves, and how they actually think, feel or behave. The subject of *face* will be explored in depth in Advanced Conflict Coaching.

According to Rosenberg (2004):

Much has been written about the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. One perspective put forth by a leading researcher on face theories, Stella Ting-Toomey, is that the negotiation came down to how both sides could retreat to more peaceful positions without losing face or causing loss of face for each other. From the correspondence between the two leaders (Kennedy and Khrushchev), it is apparent that they were trying to figure out how they could both retain personal and national honor in relation to each other and to the international arena. Kennedy, in his memoirs, wrote about the seven lessons he learned during the crisis, number six being, “Don’t humiliate your opponent,” which is, of course, a central face issue. And, as Ting-Toomey put it, “By understanding the face-honoring process intuitively, intellectually, and diplomatically, the two statesmen learned to honor and give face mutually in the eyes of their salient referents and in the arena of international diplomacy”.

Face is a multi-faceted term, and its meaning is inextricably linked with culture and other terms such as honor and its opposite, humiliation. Saving face or giving face has different levels of importance, depending on the culture or society with which one is dealing. Perhaps the most familiar term to many is “saving face,” which we understand simply to mean not being disrespectful to others in public or taking preventive actions so that we will not appear to lose face in the eyes of others. Some will immediately associate the term “face” with Sino-Japanese cultures, but it would be a mistake to think that those are the only cases where face issues are important. In the Cuban missile crisis, it was very important for both sides not to lose face or credibility, and this need guided both sides’ negotiating tactics.

Ting-Toomey defines face as “the interaction between the degree of threats or considerations one party offers to another party, and the degree of claim for a sense of self-respect (or demand for respect toward one’s national image or cultural group) put forth by the other party in a given situation.” Specific to face-negotiation theory, face is understood as the image one projects of oneself or one’s national image in a public forum. As Brown understood the issue:

Among the most troublesome kinds of problems that arise in negotiation are the intangible issues related to loss of face. In some instances, protecting against loss of face becomes so central an issue that it swamps the importance of the tangible issues at stake and generates intense conflicts that can impede progress toward agreement and increase substantially the costs of conflict resolution (paras. 1 – 4).

Critical Communication Skills for Conflict Coaches

Much has been written about the essential skills for developing understanding and acceptance with another. While the list below is not exhaustive, it is essential that conflict coaches develop proficiency in learning key communication skills when coaching in conflict. In addition to fostering positive regard between coach and coachee, using effective communication skills contributes to building rapport, which is necessary to develop trust and safety. Many coachees lack the fundamental communication skills necessary to re-create better relationships, so coaches model effective communication. Coaches may find themselves intervening (briefly) to demonstrate or teach a specific skill e.g., if your coachee is having a difficult time responding to requests, you might model assertion skills and invite your coachee to roleplay with you.

- Empathy
- Open questions
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Checking assumptions – probing for clarity

The Impromptu Meeting: Crisis Intervention

There are times during Conflict Coaching when it becomes necessary to de-escalate a situation. At such times, championing and powerful questions are too cognitive a response.

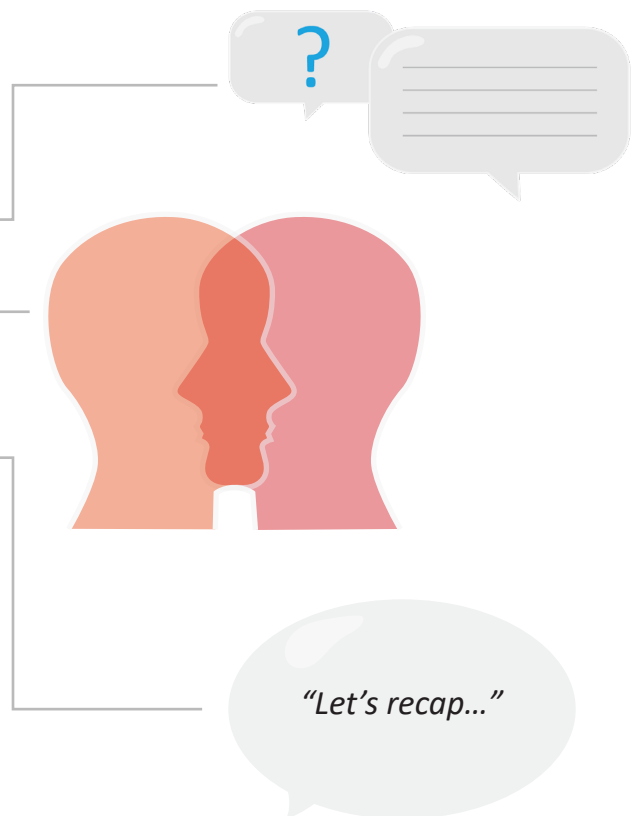
When coachees become highly agitated, first ensure both parties safety. For the coach that means making sure that your physical and emotional safety is guaranteed and immediately finding alternatives if it is not.

When a coachee is in crisis, they likely do not feel safe or secure. It is helpful to use listening skills to hear the coachee's perspective without interrupting. This is a time for empathy and communicating understanding of the words the coachee is using.

The power of listening cannot be understated. As the coachee is met with a reflective listening response, they will gradually de-escalate to the point that the

coach can begin to ask simple questions (who, what, when, how, where). This will help the coachee to take a step away from their situation.

When the coachee has managed to reduce their level of tension, the coach can begin to help them work through the situation.



Sponsor, Agent, Target Model

Notes when working within organizations. Using the SAT Model

When working within organizations, it is useful to know who your primary coachee is and what reporting procedures are expected. This needs to be done prior to the initial session.

Generally, coaches work with one individual (the coachee), and the coaching is confidential. However, there are instances where an organization will request that you assist an individual in resolving a dispute or conflict that has become a performance issue. In this situation, HR or other managers may want to monitor what is said during the coaching sessions.

It is vital for all parties to identify and agree on the nature of the role of the coach and all confidential agreements.

Mary Beth O'Neil (2007) references Daryl Conner's 'Sponsor, Agent, Target' model to illustrate specific points of accountability in organizations (pp. 115-116). The current understanding in coaching is that the primary coachee or target is the individual who works most closely with the coach or agent. This individual forms the primary coaching relationship with the coach. Issues of confidentiality, commitment, and accountability are built on the relationship with the primary coachee.

This does not diminish the importance of developing a clear understanding about roles with the organization's contact person (or the sponsor). The sponsor may want or need to be involved in the coachees progress. During the initial session, the coach and coachee clarify the role of the sponsor in the coaching relationship. For example, how will the sponsor be involved in the coaching contract? Will the sponsor be actively involved in providing feedback to the coach, the coachee, or both regarding observed changes in the coachee's actions or attitudes? What kind of information is shared with the sponsor, when and how?

Some sponsors will want or need to be involved, while others will disengage and allow the coachee to retain anonymity regarding coaching. It is essential

that the coach clarifies the roles of all parties. This will help to create a safe and spacious environment for the coachee and will also help to develop resolutions that make sense.

Sponsor:

- Single person identified as having power to make change happen
- Has formal power with line authority
- Has vision and goals for change: has criteria for success
- Has control over resources, money, time, and people
- Stays engaged and monitors progress

Sustaining sponsor:

- Same aspects as sponsor at their own level
- Creates same environment as sponsor at top of jurisdiction
- Carries sponsorship throughout organization
- Can alter a change effort
- Black hole: a sustaining sponsor who resists requests to go to the sponsor to clear discrepancies or potential conflicts

Target: (Coachee)

- Implements and accomplishes
- Listens and clarifies needs and wants
- Provides essential information, experience
- Drives agenda
- Is the primary coachee who builds the coaching relationship with coach

Agent: (coach)

- Is a coactive coach.
- Clarifies intentions of coachee(s)
- Facilitates change effort of target
- Determines manner of reporting to sponsor (if needed)

Questions for the Sponsor

- Who is the sponsor? (This could be your coachee).
- What is their perceived role?
- What is their desired level of involvement?
- How often will you meet, if at all?
- What is the expectation of the coaching contract?
- What do they want to see happen? What, if any, issues are important to work on in the coaching contract?
- Does the coachee know what the issues are? How will they know?
- Will you meet to talk about issues?
- What is their understanding of a successful coaching contract?
- How will we know if the contract is successful? When?
- What is their expectation of the duration of the coaching contract?
- Who else knows about the coaching?
- What about confidentiality?
- Will there be any written information about the coaching? Who will it be given to?
- Where will it go? (personnel file?)
- What is the sponsor's role with the coachee following the coaching contract?

Exercise: Powerful Questions for Creating the Coaching Relationship:

Build a list of powerful questions you can use to clarify the goals of the Conflict Coaching session.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

3. Create Focus and Identify Goals

The world makes way for the person who knows where they are going.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Goal: Explore and identify the topics for the Conflict Coaching session that will lead to values-based decisions and actions.

Tools:

- Vision
- Values
- Big “G” and little “g” goals
- Reframing
- Acknowledging/Championing

Goal setting is fundamental to the success of the Conflict Coaching relationship. “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there” is a truism in life as well as in coaching. Without strategic focus for the resolution, the coaching sessions will not achieve significant actions.

Goal setting creates the opportunity for achievements that are consistent with the coachee’s vision and values and are aligned with the corporation’s vision and mandates. Goals need to include any new information learned when checking assumptions.

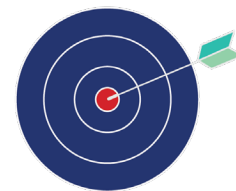
Coaching sessions provide time and space to examine goals, to create specific goals, and to maintain a goal focus throughout the resolution dialogue. To be successful, goals must be specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely. (see handout: SMART goals.)

Focus: Vision and Goals

WHAT IS YOUR COACHEE’S VISION FOR THEIR RESOLUTION? WHAT IS THEIR GOAL?

Our coachees come to Conflict Coaching with a strong idea of what they do not want to experience in their lives. It is also important to help them create a perspective of what they do want to see happen and identify their preferred outcome or goals. During the Focus phase, coachees highlight two elements – coachee vision and coachee goals.

It is hard for your coachee to think of visioning into a preferred future or developing positive actions when they are caught in the emotional morass of conflict. This is a time when your coachee needs to experience being thoroughly listened to and understood. Until coachees have experienced listening that confirms that the coach appreciates their dilemma, they will continue to express their dissatisfaction. By listening in levels 2 and 3 and remaining curious, the coach will demonstrate their intention to work alongside the coachee. The additional skills of reframing, empathy, acknowledging, and championing confirm the coach’s intention to work side by side to ensure that coachees become creators of their own resolution - and not victims of the conflict.



Goal Setting: The big “G” and little “g” goal

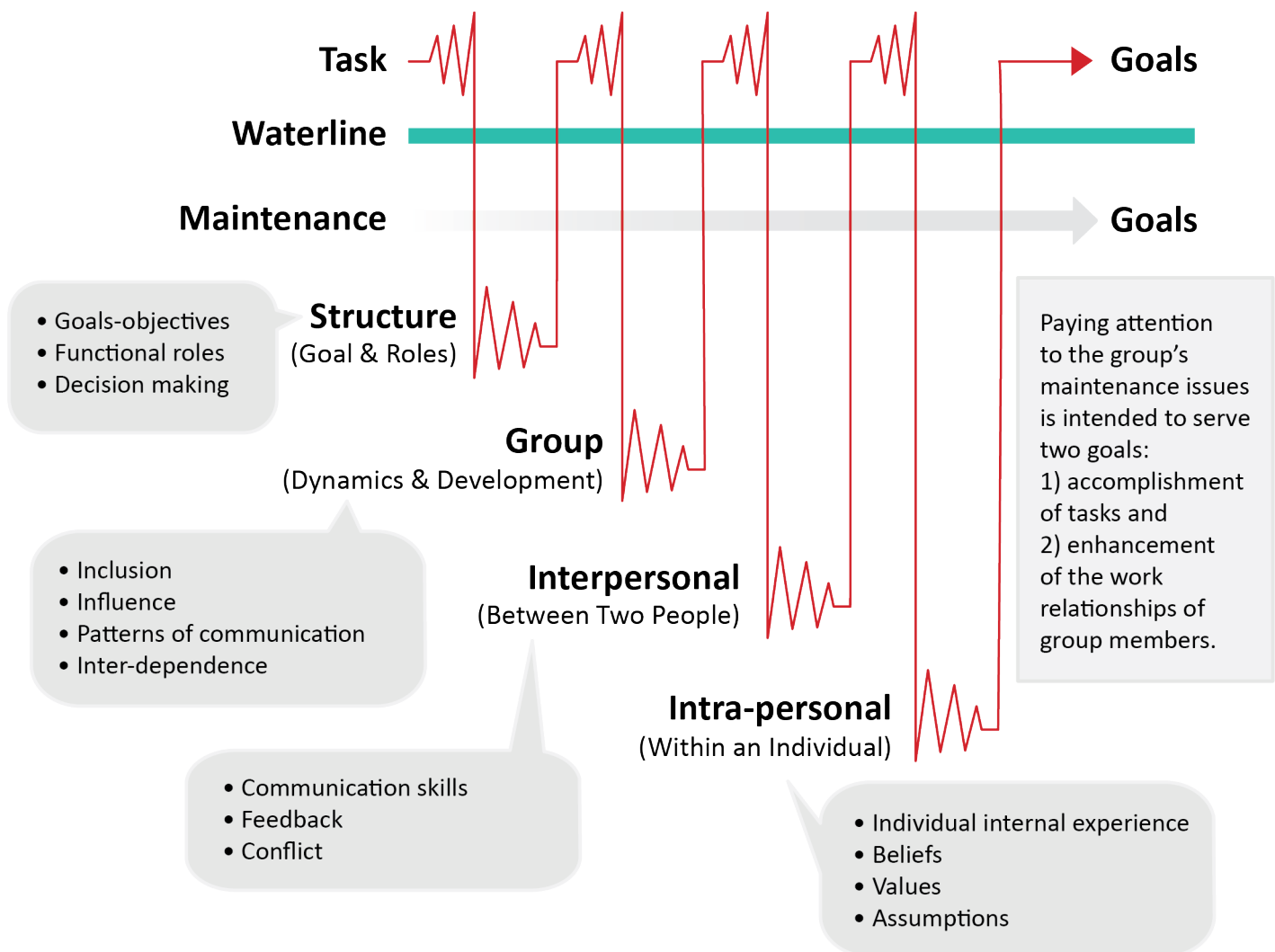
In Conflict Coaching it is essential to help coachees formulate their overarching goal for the session. This is the broad brushstroke goal that will set the direction for the coaching session(s). It is purposely general and can become their big, audacious goal! For example, the coachee could start with, “I want to build a better relationship with my boss.” This might become big and audacious. For example,

“I want to have a creative, mutually supportive relationship with my boss, where I become the go-to person for creative ideas and solutions”. Wow! What a difference! Coaches should not get stuck in the mundane as you help your coachees build their big “G” goals – they are called big “G” for a reason!

Little “g” goals: Little “g” goals are the micro goals your coachee needs to achieve to master their big “G”. This is like taking apart a challenge and designating specific focus areas to address. To carry the example above forward, little “g” goals might include engagement in meetings, asserting ideas, supportive behaviours, requesting time, etc.

When working within organizations, it is helpful to analyse and assess the genesis of the conflict – where did it start? This can be especially helpful in determining where the coachee could focus when trying to resolve workplace issues.

The Waterline Model is useful for large and small organizations, for government, and for profit and not-for-profit groups.



R. Harrison, J. Scherer, & R. Short, Waterline Model Diagram,
<https://primarygoals.com/teams/models/waterline/>

Powerful Questions

What can we learn from a four-year old girl? (Berger, 2018, p. 7). Studies have shown that the typical child asks between 100 to 300 questions a day (interestingly some research shows that a four-year-old girl asks even more questions than a boy of that age). This information comes from questionologist Warren Berger, the author of two books for every conflict coach's bookshelf: *The Book of Beautiful Questions* (2018) and *A More Beautiful Question* (2014). Berger captures the art of powerful questions, an essential tool, which can invite our coachees to reflect, understand, and action new insights. Powerful questions allow them to do this.

Coaching typically describes powerful questions as having between 7 – 10 words. This keeps the question focused and stops the coach from over explaining (which can get in the way of understanding the coaches query). In *The Book of Beautiful Questions*, Berger gives examples of powerful questions that we can use in decision making, creative thinking, and leadership.



Skill: Reframing

When people are in conflict they often 'frame' their words from their own experience, using language that is both divisive and positional. By applying different language to the same event, coaches bring a more neutral perspective to the dialogue. It is not that coaches want to diminish the importance of the words; instead, they want to provide coachees with the opportunity to view the current situation from a different perspective. Reframing allows for perspective shifting. What is a reframe? A reframe is simply changing the words and meaning to a neutral or, if possible, positive perspective.

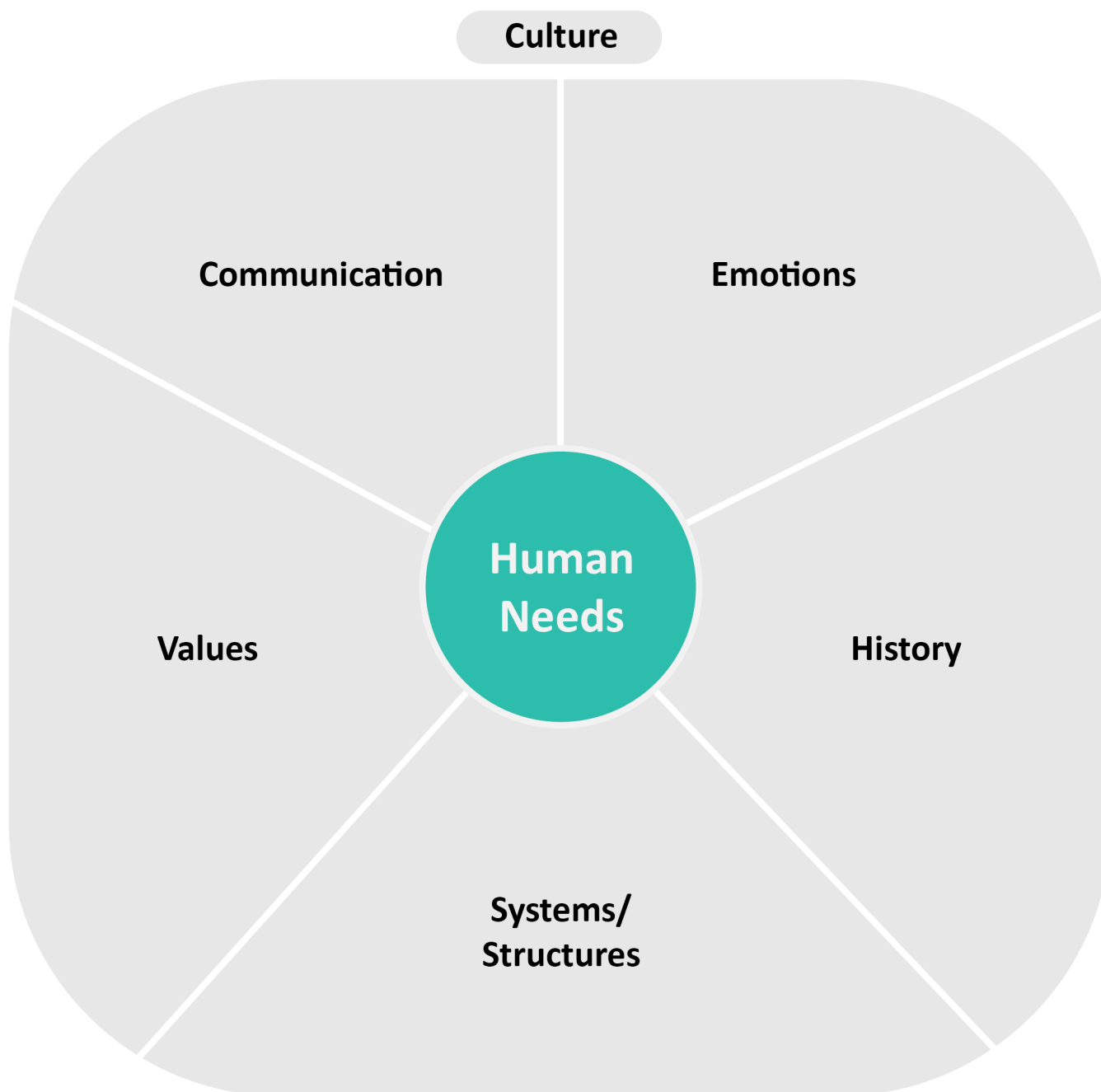
E.g., Coachee: "I am fed up with the way I am treated like a child. They give all the responsibility to John and never to me. I am thinking of finding a new job."

Coach: (reframe) "You want to be given greater opportunity to show you can take on more responsibility."

Notice that the coach is not changing the meaning (although in this short example there are multiple opportunities for reframing topics), neither is the coach prescribing a solution. A reframe simply reiterates the *heard* meaning. The coachee is then able to correct, modify or accept the coaches reframe.

Sources of Conflict

Adapted from B. Mayer (2010). The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution.



Sources of Conflict: Small Group Exercise

Question: What sources of conflict typically affect your organization?

Question: What sources of conflict might be affecting individuals involved in your coachee's conflicts?

Question: What sources of conflict most significantly affect your own conflicts?

Exercise: The Sources of Conflict

An interesting exercise to do next time you are in a conflict would be to pull out your journal and, using a scale of 1 to 10, assess what the source and scale of this conflict is. Then ask what another source could be, and a third, and so on. When you know the source, you can design a resolution that really attends to the things that are motivating the conflict!



Notes:

Exercise: Powerful Questions for Focusing

Build a list of powerful questions you can use to clarify the issues and goals of the dispute.

[illegible]

4. Discover: Expand Understanding

Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so we may fear less.

- Marie Curie

It is not that I am so smart. It's that I stay with problems longer.

- Albert Einstein

Goal: Gain new perspectives and insights that expand the coachee's understanding of the conflict dynamics at play. Challenge assumptions regarding the coachee's and the other's intentions and actions. Examine the effect of those behaviours on both parties.

Tools:

- Deepening learning through reflection
- Challenging assumptions
- Listening Levels 2 and 3
- Asking powerful questions
- Uncovering interests
- Acknowledging

Misplaced Intentions, Actions and Effects



Conflict Coaches clarify the coachee's intentions, actions, and effects. This conversation focuses on not only the coachee's intentions, but on the possible intentions, actions, and effects of the other individual.

It is very helpful to address the assumptions that coachees make regarding intent, actions, and effects.

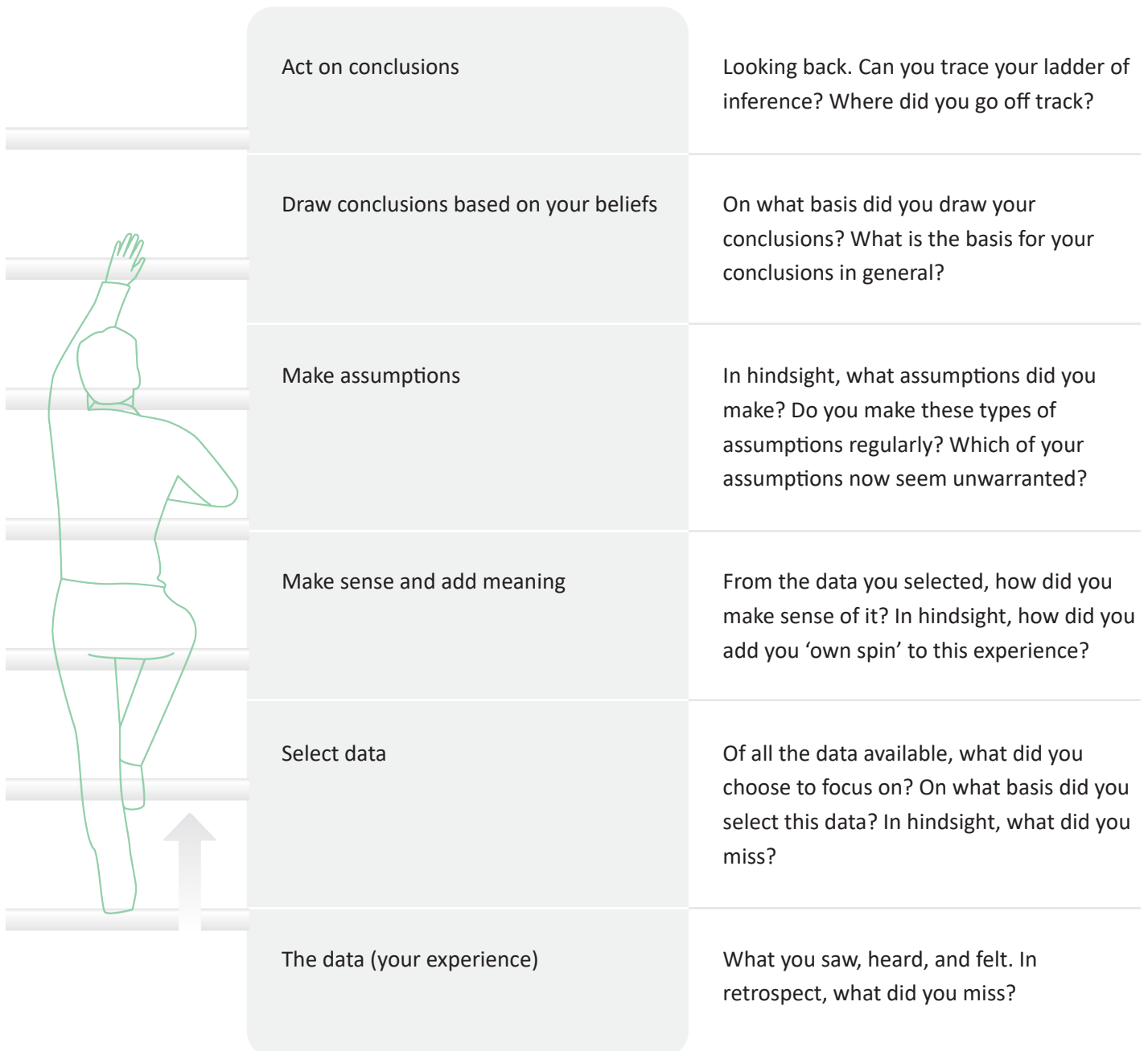
Ladder of Inference

(from Peter Senge, 1999, *The Dance of Change*)

Use the workspace below to clarify and test the assumptions and beliefs of both you and your coachee. Sketch out a 'Ladder of Inference' for a 'mis-communication' you have been involved with recently.

Start with the bottom rung of the ladder and work up.

Briefly describe the 'mis-communication' situation:



Use these questions to assess patterns/habits and to make improvements in interactions with others.

1. At what point along the Ladder of Inference did you make the greatest 'leap of faith' (i.e., where your thinking now seems to have been the least accurate)?

2. At what point along the Ladder of Inference were you solid in your thinking (i.e., where your thinking was well grounded and objective)?

3. If you decide to change your thinking about this person, relationship, or situation, where along the Ladder of Inference would be a good place to start?

4. What steps will you take to re-examine your assumptions, conclusions, and beliefs?

Exercise: Powerful Questions for Discovery

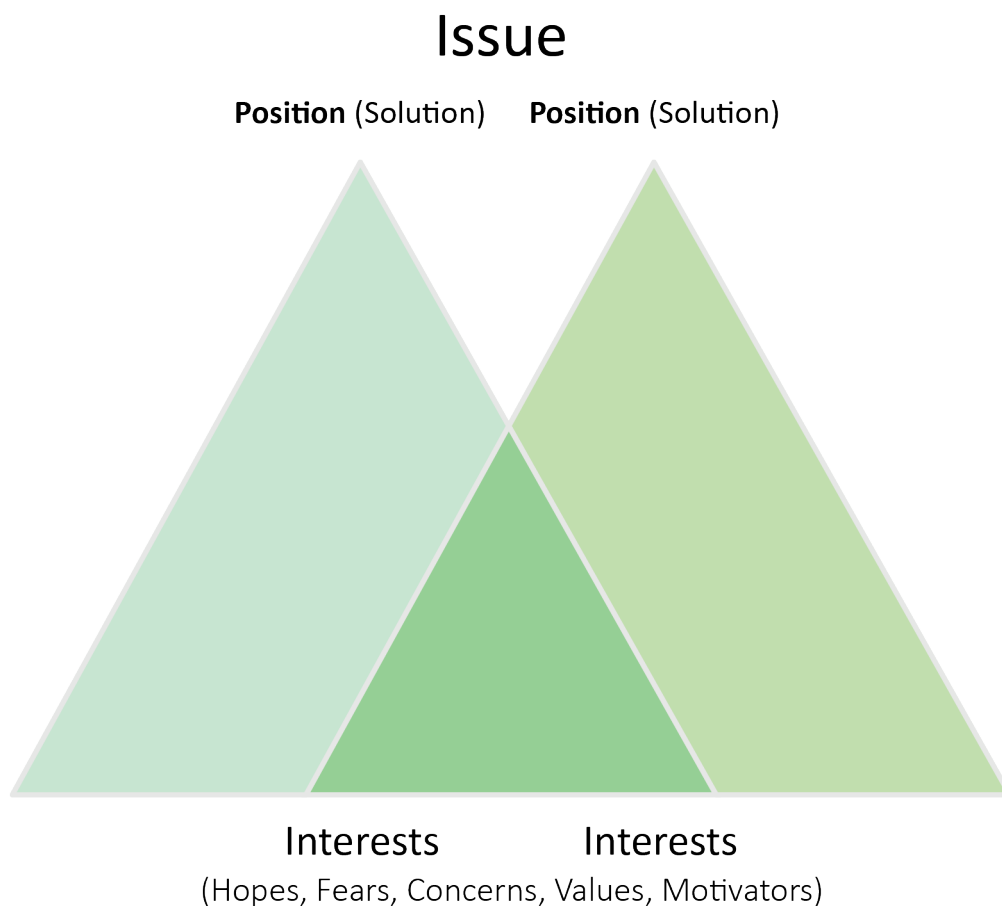
Build a list of powerful questions you can use to help coachees expand their understanding of the issues and perspectives of the dispute.

[illegible]

The Heart of the Conflict: Identifying Interests

In alternative dispute resolution, the words 'issues', 'positions' and 'interests' are key phrases used to identify specific aspects of the dispute.

Coaches help coachees identify the primary topics for discussion during the conflict conversation (the issues), and clarify the coachee's key concerns, motivations, hopes and fears (the interests). Coaches can pose questions such as "What is important to you about...?", or "What are your concerns about..." which in turn, help the coachee clarify the interests.



For more information about interest based resolution practices, please see the JIBC courses in Negotiation, Mediation or Shifting to Interests and Beyond.

5. Decision and Action

Decision is the spark that ignites action.

Until a decision is made, nothing happens...

Decision is the courageous facing of issues, knowing that if they are not faced, problems will remain forever unanswered.

- Wilferd Arlan Peterson

Goal: Examine options based on new understanding, and choose an action plan that represents goals, values, and new insights. Build resolution action plans that satisfy the needs and values of the coachee and the other (if possible). Champion and create accountability.

Tools:

- Creating perspectives with wheels
- Setting Smart Goals and Action Plans
- Championing
- Accountability / requests
- Acknowledging
- Formulating the essential questions **ACT-ion Planning**

Creating Perspectives

Looking at the coachees' perspectives

Discovering perspectives can be the most challenging and most engaging part of coaching coachees in conflict. Generally, coachees in disputes believe they know what is 'right' and have formulated a solution (their position).

It is imperative that coaches challenge coachees to examine new perspectives so that coachees gain appreciation of the vast number of choices available to them. Within the coaching relationship, the coachee can 'try on' a variety of options and determine the best way of performing that option.

There are many exciting ways to develop perspectives.

- Build laughter into the process
- Brainstorm
- Choose a last chapter of a book
- Visualize a movie (fast forward, funny hats, backwards, slow time)
- Create a story with different characters or endings
- Wheels

It is important during perspective shifting exercises that your coachee feels supported, encouraged, and challenged. As your coachee synthesizes the learning and prioritizes selections, the role of coach becomes one of reality checker, where attitudes and beliefs are challenged, and possible obstacles identified. Helping coachees to examine and select options creates a sense of choice regarding actions and outcomes.

Wheels

Wheels are just one of the tools available to help coachees assess current reality, define objectives, and understand options. They can be useful tools throughout the coaching process, especially during the Expanding Understanding and Action Planning phases of coaching in conflict.

Wheel exercises (or dialogue that helps coachees shift from a single idea or solution) help coachees retain their sense of choice in the resolution process.

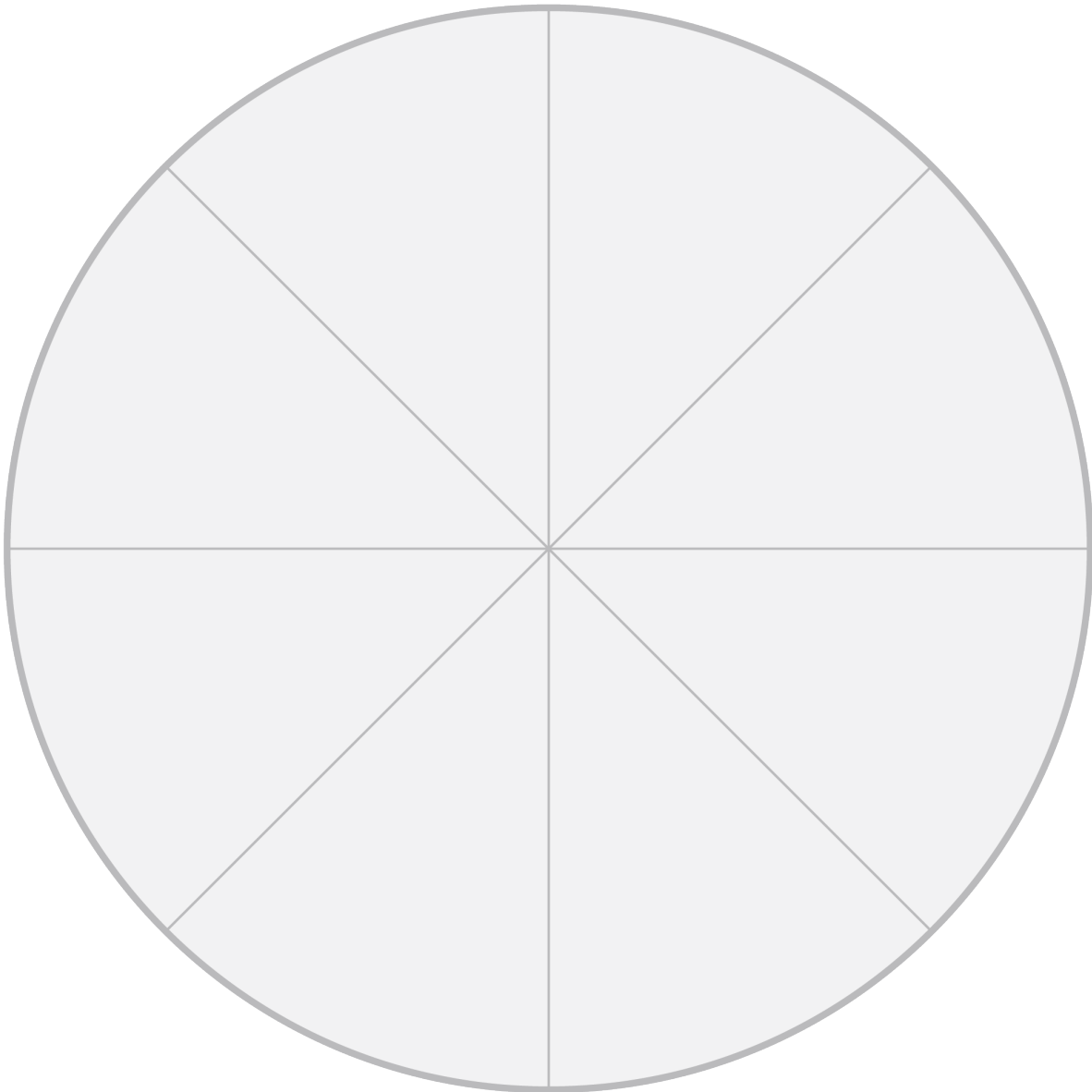
The following is adapted from Kimsey-House et al. (2017).

1. Helps coachees see how they are fixated on one way of looking and thinking
2. Identify additional perspectives
3. Get inside the different perspectives
4. Choose a perspective
5. Create a plan that addresses the situation
6. Commit to the plan – seriously
7. Act

Exercise: Wheels

Select a dispute that you would like to resolve and clarify your goals for the resolution based on your values, hopes, fears, and concerns (your interests).

With your goals in mind, write eight different options for resolving this dispute. You might choose to put “other” in one space in case you think of something after discussing the other options.



Imagine yourself pursuing each of the solutions. Begin to ask **provocative questions!** What would it look like? How would you be responding? How would you like to respond? How might the other respond? What would you be experiencing in your body? What would your thoughts be? What distractions might come up for you? What would keep you from pursuing this option? What are the benefits?

Sample Wheels

Conflict Styles Wheel: When faced with a conflict situation I:

Compete
 Avoid
 Collaborate
 Compromise
 Accommodate

Communication Skills Wheel:

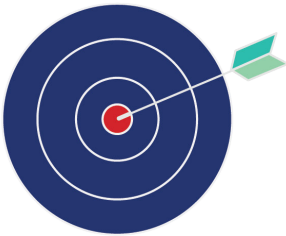
Summarize
 Paraphrase
 Ask open questions
 Reframe
 Empathize
 Identify interests
 Describe behaviours
 What else?

Questions to Expand Perspectives

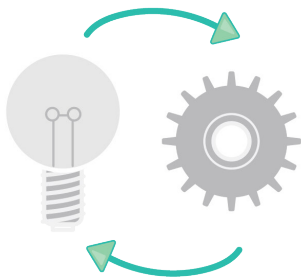
- What would make this easy?
- Be someone else – what would they do?
- Who do you want to be?
- Who do you need to be?
- Whom do you choose to be?
- What will you commit to?
- What is the metaview?
- What symbol could you use for this option?

Four ACT questions

What is your goal? _____



What will you do? _____



When will you do it? _____

What will help you sustain your decision over time?



How will you know if you are successful? _____



Goal Setting 101

To action the resolution, the coachee must be aware of what they want to achieve. A favourite refrain of a colleague (after listening to possibilities, discoveries and ideas) was to shout out, “So, what’s the goal?” Goal setting formalizes the intent to action.

Ken Blanchard, co-author of Situational Leadership (1991) and many other dynamic leadership books, uses the acronym SMART goals.

Specific

What am I going to do, and how will I assess the results?

Meaningful

Will they produce significant results?

Attainable

Can I expect to achieve this goal?

Relevant

Why am I doing this?

Trackable

How will I assess the progress?

What does it take to coach SMART goals?

- Remember, your coachees are creative, resourceful, and whole.
- They are capable of extraordinary actions.
- What is it that they want to have happen?
- What big, and little, steps can they do to begin?
- What will make the biggest difference?
- Who do they need to become to accomplish these goals?
- What values support their goal(s)?

Exercise: SMART Goals

Specific

What am I going to do, and how will I assess the results?

Meaningful

Will they produce significant results?

Attainable

Can I expect to achieve this goal?

Relevant

Why am I doing this?

Trackable

How will I assess the progress?

Exercise: Powerful Questions for Deciding and Action Planning

Build a list of powerful questions you can use to clarify the choices and actions of the Conflict Coaching session.

[illegible]

References

- Anderson, M. (2004, April). *The business impact of leadership coaching at a professional services firm*. Coaching South Africa [Executive briefing].
http://www.coachingsa.co.za/publications_and_useful_links.htm#a9
- Berger, W. (2014). *A more beautiful question: The power of inquiry to spark breakthrough ideas*. Bloomsbury USA.
- Berger, W. (2018). *The book of beautiful questions: The powerful questions that will help you decide, create, connect, and lead*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Bolton, R. (1986). *People skills: How to assert yourself, listen to others and resolve conflicts*. Simon & Schuster.
- Blanchard, K. (1998). *Situational leadership*. Pfeiffer Wiley.
- Bungay Stanier, M. (2016). *The coaching habit: Say less, ask more & change the way you lead forever*. Box of Crayons Press.
- Carson, R. (2003). *Taming your gremlin: A surprisingly simple method for getting out of your own way*. Harper & Row.
- Glaser, T. (2019). Summary of “Seven strategies for treating perception - or framing – problems” by Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. <https://www.beyondintractability.org/bksum/fisher-getting>
- Harrison, R., Scherer, J., & Short, R. (n.d.). Waterline Model Diagram.
<https://primarygoals.com/teams/models/waterline/>
- Health Canada. (2000). *Best advice on stress risk management in the workplace. Part 1 of 2*.
<http://www.mtpinnacle.com/pdfs/Best-Advise-on-Stress-Management.pdf>
- Howatt, B. (2015, July 16). The long-term costs of not resolving workplace conflicts. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/careers/leadership-lab/the-long-term-costs-of-not-resolving-workplace-conflicts/article25527147/>
- International Coaching Federation. (2021). *Coaching core competencies*.
<https://coachingfederation.org/core-competencies>

International Coaching Federation. (2021, February 5). *Code of ethics*. (Revised ed.).

<https://coachingfederation.org/code-of-ethics>

Justice Institute of British Columbia, Centre for Conflict Resolution. (2017). *Foundations of collaborative conflict resolution* (15th ed.).

Kimsey-House, H., Kimsey-House, K., Sandahl, P., & Whitworth, L. (2017). *Co-active coaching.: The proven framework for transformative conversations at work and in life* (4th ed.).

Nicholas Brealey Pub.

Landsberg, M. (1996). *The Tao of coaching*. Harper Collins Business.

Mandela, N. (2004, January 31). Message by Nelson Mandela to the Global Convention on Peace and Non-Violence, New Delhi, India. Government of South Africa. http://www.mandela.gov.za/mandela_speeches/2004/040131_peace.htm

Mayer, B. (2010). *The dynamics of conflict resolution. A practitioner's guide*. Jossey Bass.

McGovern, J., Lindemann, M., Vergara, M., Murphy, S., Barker, L., & Warrenfeltz, R. (2001).

Maximizing the impact of executive coaching: Behavioral change, organizational outcomes, and return on investment. *The Manchester Review*, 6 (1), 3-11.

Nichols, M., & Straus, M. (2021). *The lost art of listening: How learning to listen can improve relationships* (3rd ed.). The Guilford Press.

O'Neill, M. B. (2007). *Executive coaching with backbone and heart: A systems approach to engaging leaders with their challenges* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Parker-Wilkins, V. (2006). Business impact of executive coaching: Demonstrating monetary value. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 38(3), 122-127. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00197850610659373>

Pollock Peacebuilding Systems. (2020). *Workplace conflict statistics & the cost of conflict at work*. <https://pollackpeacebuilding.com/workplace-conflict-statistics/>

Robb, J. (2019, May 18). 7 questions that will make you a better coach & leader [Review of the Book, *The coaching habit* by M. Bungay Stanier]. Read to Lead. <https://jayrobb.me/2019/05/18/7-questions-thatll-make-you-a-better-coach-leader-review-of-the-coaching-habit/>

- Rosenberg, S. (2004, February). *Face*. Beyond Intractability.
<https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/face>
- Runde, C., & Flanagan, T. (2012). *Becoming a conflict competent leader* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Seppala, E., & Cameron, K. (2015, December 1). Proof that positive work cultures are more productive. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2015/12/proof-that-positive-work-cultures-are-more-productive#:~:text=Sixty%20percent%20to%2080%25%20of,to%20cardiovascular%20disease%20and%20mortality>.
- Senge, P., Roberts, C., Kleiner, A., Ross, R., Roth, G., & Smith, B. (1999). *The dance of change. The challenges to sustaining momentum in a learning organization*. Currency / Doubleday.
- Shepell, J. (2002, November 15). *Workplace trends linked to mental health crisis in Canada. Research briefing puts stress, violence, conflict and harassment on the table* [Press release]. <https://www.shepellfgiservices.com/newsroom/pr-nov152002.asp>.
- Sherwood, J., & Scherer, J. (1995). *The pinch model of conflict analysis*. Primary Goals Marketing Automation. <https://primarygoals.com/teams/diagrams/pinch-model/>
- Short, R. (1991). *A special kind of leadership: The key to learning organizations*. Learning in Action Technologies.
- Tugaleva, V. (2007, October 26). *The most profound personal #growth does not happen while reading a book or meditating on a mat. It happens in the throes of #conflict—when you are angry, afraid, frustrated. It happens when you are doing the same old thing and you suddenly realize that you have a #choice* [Post]. Tumblr. <https://vtugaleva.tumblr.com/post/152204390765/the-most-profound-personal-growth-does-not>
- VanBuskirk, K. (2014). *What motivates New Brunswick employees to sue their employers, and does the law offer a relevant response?* [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Nottingham Trent University. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/30624295.pdf>
- Walton, R. E. (1997). Managing conflict in organizations. In M. Crawford, L. Kydd, & C. Riches (Eds.), *Leadership and teams in educational management* (pp. 110-118). Open University Press.
- Watson Wyatt Canada. (ca. 2007). *Mental health in the labour force: Literature review and*

research gap analysis. http://www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca/jul_07/WW%20GAP%20Report%20-May30_2007.pdf

What is transformational coaching? (n.d). Careers in psychology.org

<https://careersinpsychology.org/transformational-coach-career/>

Whitworth, L., Kimsey-House, K., Kimsey-House, H., & Sandahl, P. (2007). *Co-active coaching: New skills for coaching people toward success in work and life* (2nd ed.). Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Suggested Readings

- Adams, M. (2009). *Change your questions, change your life*. Berrett-Koehler Publisher's, Inc.
- Blanchard, K., Oncken, W., & Burrows, H. (1989). *The one minute manager meets the Monkey*. Harmer Collins Canada.
- Blanchard, K. (2017). *The new leadership and the one minute manager*. John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Blanchard, S., & Homan, M. (2004). *Leverage your best, ditch the rest: The coaching secrets top executives depend on*. Harper Collins.
- Brown, B. (2015). *Daring greatly*. Avery.
- Gergorson, H. (2018). *Questions are the answer*. Harper Collins.
- Goldsmith, M. (2016). *Triggers: Sparking positive change and making it last*. Profile Books Ltd.
- Goldsmith, M., Lyons, L., Freas, A., & Witherspoon, R. (2000). *Coaching for leadership: how the world's greatest coaches help leaders learn*. Jossey-Bass / Pfeiffer.
- Halpern, J. (2007). Empathy and Patient–Physician Conflicts. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 22(5), 696-700.
Retrieved from <https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/pmc1852904>
- Langer, E. (1997). *The power of mindful learning*. Addison-Wosley.
- Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team*. Jossey-Bass
- Louie, A. (2017). Dive-in: Answers are below the waterline (Builds teams). <https://leadx.org/articles/dive-answers-waterline/>
- Whitmore, J. (2017). *Coaching for performance: The principles and practice of coaching and leadership*. Quercus

Appendices

Appendix A: Coaching Letter: Working with Your Conflict Coach

If you are considering working with a coach to enhance or create an effective plan for resolving differences, you will want to understand how to get the most from your work together.

Coaching is an increasingly popular way of accelerating professional growth and resolving difficulties in the workplace. Unlike other training and development opportunities, coaching is completely personalized and private.

Research has shown that coaching can create greater personal productivity, enhance working relationships, and develop higher levels of job satisfaction. It can also help individuals not only survive new organizational realities - but thrive!

Coaching often lasts between 3- 12 months, although timeframes can be tailored to meet the needs of both coach and coachee. Coaching sessions are structured to result in significant, specific, and measurable changes in behaviour. Coach and coachee collaborate in every aspect of the engagement, beginning with both parties determining schedules, format, and guidelines for the coaching sessions.

Coaches are committed to helping coachees leverage strengths, examine current realities, and challenge and champion, so that coachees meet and even surpass their goals. The coach asks questions to allow time for reflection, serve as a sounding board for clarifying thinking and actions, and champion new actions that promote resolution goals.

What coaches and coachees agree to is a shared commitment to learn, explore and action new behaviours that support goal achievement.

Appendix B: Sample – Personal Information Fact Sheet

All personal information is confidential.

Coachee Information

Full Name: _____

Name you like to be called: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Numbers

Home telephone: _____ Work: _____

Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Pager: _____

Employment Information

Current Occupation: _____

Employers Name: _____

Other employment information: _____

Personal Information

Date of Birth: _____

Marital Status: _____ Anniversary: _____

Name of Significant other: _____ S.O's Birthday: _____

Number of children: _____

Children(s) name(s) and _____ Date of Birth: _____

Children(s) name(s) and _____ Date of Birth: _____

Children(s) name(s) and _____ Date of Birth: _____

Children(s) name(s) and _____ Date of Birth: _____

Children(s) name(s) and _____ Date of Birth: _____

Notes: _____

Appendix C: Sample – Conflict Coaching Synopsis

Coaching Synopsis

Meeting Report

Date: _____

Name: _____

Big “G” Goal for Coaching: _____

Fieldwork: _____

Comments: _____

Current Issues: _____

Coaching Skills: _____

Homework Given: _____

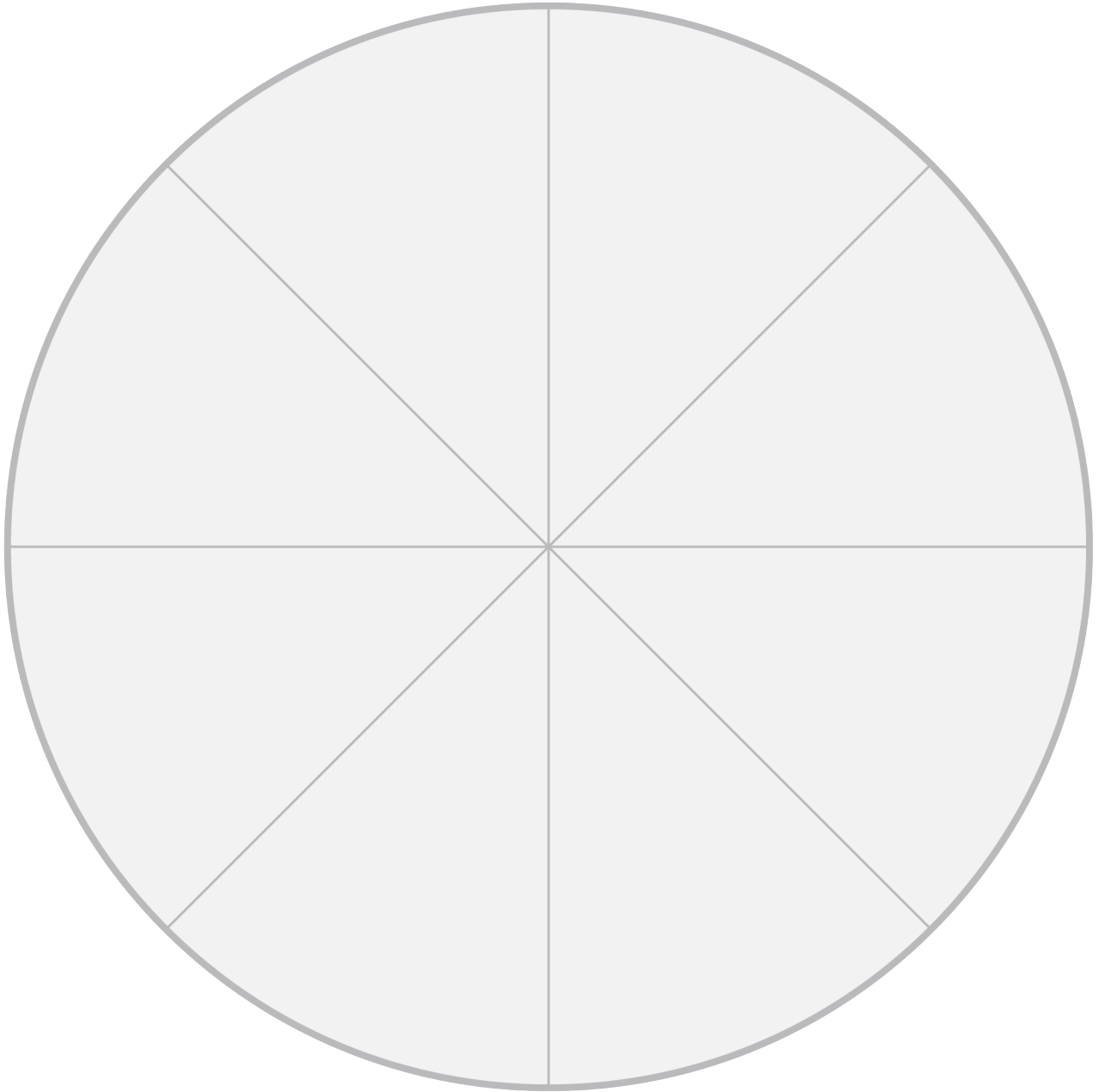
Coachee Learnings: _____

Appendix D: Sample – Action Plans

[illegible]

Six Week Coaching Action Plan

Appendix E: Balance Wheel



- Select a characteristic you wish to work on for each segment of the 'pie'.
- Letting the center of the 'pie' be the value 0, and the outside rim be the value 10, determine where you believe you would be between 1 and 10.

Appendix F: Glossary – Coaching Terms

Accountability - Accountability is holding your coachees accountable for what they say they will do. In coactive coaching, there are three questions designed to hold your coachee accountable: 1) What are you going to do? 2) When will you do this? 3) How will you know it is done? Accountability is designed to hold the coachee's vision and commitment. It can include looking at the unintended consequences of the action or inaction and include redefining/ or reassessing the purposed activities.

Acknowledgement - Acknowledgement, in the coactive coaching model, is more than affirmation of the coachee's actions. It addresses the Self and the internal strengths the coachee used to accomplish what they achieved. It is the coach speaking of their deep understanding of their coachee's intentions.

Articulating what is going on - Articulating what is going on uses the skills such as paraphrasing, mirroring, empathic responses, and summaries. It allows your coachee to understand their own experience more completely.

Asking permission - Asking permission is requesting that the coachee will allow you to speak truthfully, even when it may not be comfortable. Asking permission empowers both the coachee and the coaching relationship.

Bottom-lining - This skill assists the coachee to speak about the 'heart' of the issue with brevity, instead of providing a full history with each statement. Coaches will often need to *train* the coachee (usually during the initial session) on how to do this.

Brainstorming - This exercise is an effective way of expanding the coachee's perspectives. There is no attachment to the ideas that are suggested.

Celebrating - Celebrating allows the coach and coachee to share in the 'doing and being' of an activity. It is not specific to successes and can include failures, disappointments, and attempts. Coaching may need to 'chunk' attempts to change, and coaches and coachees celebrate the incremental changes taking place in the coachee's life.

Challenging - Asking that the coachee stretches their current position or task and go beyond their current operating procedures. Requesting that they push beyond their current thinking can have extraordinary results.

"I want you to list twenty-five attributes of effective teams."

"I want you to use the skills of paraphrasing 20 times each day for a week."

Championing - Fundamental to coactive coaching is holding your coachee as creative, resourceful, and whole. Championing is articulating to your coachee that you know they are capable and have extraordinary abilities. Coachees lose sight of their resourcefulness, and it is the coach's role to hold that vision for their coachee.

Clarifying - Clarifying uses the skills inherent to conflict resolution (questioning, reframing, summarizing) to make something clearer. Clarifying is used extensively during the initial session, as well as during coaching sessions.

Clearing - Also called venting. This skill assists the coachee to release the emotional energy around an issue.

Coachee's agenda - The coachee's agenda is the primary driver of the coaching process. It encompasses the 'whole' life of the coachee, including the coachee's purpose, values, dreams, and goals. It is the responsibility of the coach to hold the agenda for the coachee.

Confidentiality - All information that the coachee passes to the coach is considered confidential unless otherwise agreed upon by the coachee. Trust is essential between the coach and coachee, and it is the foundation of the coaching relationship.

Creating trust - For the coaching relationship to work, the coach must create safety and trust. Trust means establishing and keeping agreements, actively participating with the coachee's agenda, and maintaining confidentiality.

Dancing in the moment - This coactive term refers to the interplay between the coach and coachee, like a dance! As part of the coaching relationship, the coachee will lead the content of the conversation, and then the coach will initiate or ask a powerful question, request behaviour, or simply be with the coachee. Coaching is a samba, swing, and tango, all at once!

Designing the alliance - The designed alliance describes the relationship between coach and coachee. It is when the coachee grants power to the alliance and becomes accountable for their actions within the alliance. The coach upholds the agreements of the initial meeting, holds the agenda, and uses coaching skills to forward the action or deepen the learning of the coachee.

Failure - Failure is celebrated within the context of the coactive coaching model. Unlike the traditional meaning of failure, as being synonymous with 'wrong', failure in the coactive coaching model provides an opportunity for reflection and change.

Forwarding the action - Holding the coachee's agenda is both a philosophical stance and a skill employed by coaches, and it is fundamental to the coactive coaching model. It is when the coach leaves behind their judgment, opinions, expert status, and solutions in support of their coachee's discovery of values, perspectives, choices, and ways of 'being'. Forwarding the action requires the coach to put all the attention on the coachee and the coachee's agenda, not on the coach's agenda for the coachee.

Holding the focus - Holding the coachees focus can be one of the most difficult aspects for the coach. It demands that despite distractions in their lives and workplaces, and the strong feelings and negative voice of the Gremlin or inner critic, the coach will hold the coachee's highest values and desired outcomes.

Homework inquiry - A homework inquiry is the powerful set of questions used at the end of a coaching session designed to deepen the coachees learning and reflect on a specific situation.

"What is resolution?" "What am I resisting?" "What are my assumptions?"

Intruding/Taking charge - Intruding or taking charge is used with the permission of the coachee (set up in the initial session) and is a very direct statement intended to have the coachee honestly assess their situation in the moment.

Intuiting - Intuiting is trusting and utilizing one's inner knowing. While the knowledge may not even make sense to the coach, coactive coaching uses this skill to 'blurt' what is sensed. The information is often extremely helpful to the coachee, and can be prefaced with "I have a sense..." or "I have a hunch..."

Life balance - Life balance is a moveable target, and in coactive coaching life is always either moving toward or moving away from balance. The areas of balance are generally career, money, friends and family, romance, personal growth, fun and recreation, spirituality, health, and physical surrounding. In Conflict Coaching, the coachee's life balance can be used to assist the whole person to move toward resolution.

Life purpose - Life purpose answers the question "Why am I on this planet?" It is the essence statement that, when lived, allows life to be rich and full for self and others. When you are unaware, or disregard your life purpose, life can feel hollow and unfulfilling.

Listening - The coach listens for the coachee's highest purpose, vision, values, and commitment through language or demeanour. Listening is about being aware of the coach's own voice, and purposefully directing the focus onto the coachee's story. Level 1 listening is when the coach is listening to their own thoughts and judgments, and their opinions about the coachee's information. Level 2 listening refers to listening that is focused on the coachee. Level 3 listening is being fully conscious; listening to not only the coachee but also what is occurring in the space surrounding the conversation.

Metaphor - Metaphors, used extensively in conflict resolution training, are used to illustrate, or clarify an observation of the coachee. Metaphors can be a highly intuitive process.

Metaview - Metaview is the view from 'the balcony' or 'the helicopter'. It is used by a coach to notice and examine what is occurring for their coachee. It is like negotiations objective view from 'the balcony' and serves to expand and clarify.

Planning and goal setting - Planning and goal setting assist the coachee and the coach to assess how the coaching process is working. Coachees can lack direction in how to address issues. Creating and planning goals can help facilitate clarity and purpose.

Powerful questions - Powerful questions evoke clarity, action, commitment. They provoke thought, challenge assumptions, generate energy, probe for a deeper meaning, and evoke related questions. Powerful questions are open questions and are usually 10 words or less.

Reframing - Used extensively in the conflict resolution community, reframing is used to provide the coachee with a different perspective.

Requesting - Coaches use requests to move their coachee's forward, and they are always based on the coachee's agenda. The request includes a specific action, conditions of satisfaction, and a date or time by which it will be done. There are three responses to the request: yes, no, and a counteroffer, and the coach generally establishes this response during the initial session.

Self-management - Self-management is the intention and action of the coach to put aside their own assumptions, 'fixes', and judgments of the coachee, in service of holding the coachee's own agenda. It can also include assisting the coachee to 'self-manage' gremlins, inner critics or chosen behaviours.

Structures - Structures are reminders to the coachee of their core values, choices, commitments, or purposes. They are personally impactful and can range from songs or photos, to messages on voice mail.

Values - Values represent who you are today and are deeply held principles that you hold in your life. They are the 'drivers' of behaviour and are fundamental to the coaching relationship.

Vision - Coactive coaching defines vision as a multifaceted mental image and set of goals that personally define and inspire the coachee to take action and create that picture in their actual life. A powerful vision is sensuous, exciting, and magnetic, constantly attracting the coachee's desire to bring the image to fruition. Vision provides the coachee with the direction and can provide meaning to their life.

Appendix G: Personal Learnings

Log Summary – Day 1

Date: _____

Most important personal learning from this day is:

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

Transfer of Learnings

To what tasks, issues, situations back on the job, do these learnings apply?

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

Other notes:

Log Summary – Day 2

Date: _____

Most important personal learning from this day is:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Transfer of Learnings

To what tasks, issues, situations back on the job, do these learnings apply.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My plan to practise the skills of interpersonal conflict management is:

Appendix H: Self-differentiation: Knowing Self

Differentiation Behaviour Inventory

Awareness of experience

- Awareness of bodily sensations, feelings, thoughts, wants; chooses to express or not express those internal states, knowing why in the moment.

Distinguishes between thoughts and feelings

- The capability to recognize the thoughts within the feelings and the feelings within the thoughts.

Speaks from an “I” position

- Takes responsibility for declaring point of view and ownership for the consequences of deciding and acting without impinging on the values or beliefs of others.

Describes impact

- The capacity to describe in the moment the emotional impact of another upon self.

Direct address

- Speaks directly to and not about any other member.

Accurate self-image

- Is aware of competencies and limitations, strengths, and liabilities; can analyze self; knows the difference between confidence and certitude.

Personal presence

- Maintains a clearly defined personal presence and well-defined sense of ‘self’ identity, especially in moments of intense emotionality or ambiguity, while remaining in the ‘hot’ emotional field and connected with the other. Knows where the self ends and the other begins.

Takes responsibility

- For co-creating so that in any experience, a relevant question is:
 - What is my part here?
 - How am I co-creating what I am experiencing?
 - How might my past be colouring my present?

Congruence

- Extent to which external presentation matches inner experience; behaves naturally and authentically vs. pretending to be what they are not.
- The degree to which the espoused theory of the self is more aligned with one’s theory in use.

Appendix I: Seven Strategies for Treating Perception - or Framing - Problems

From Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (1991). *Getting to Yes*, pp. 21- 39.

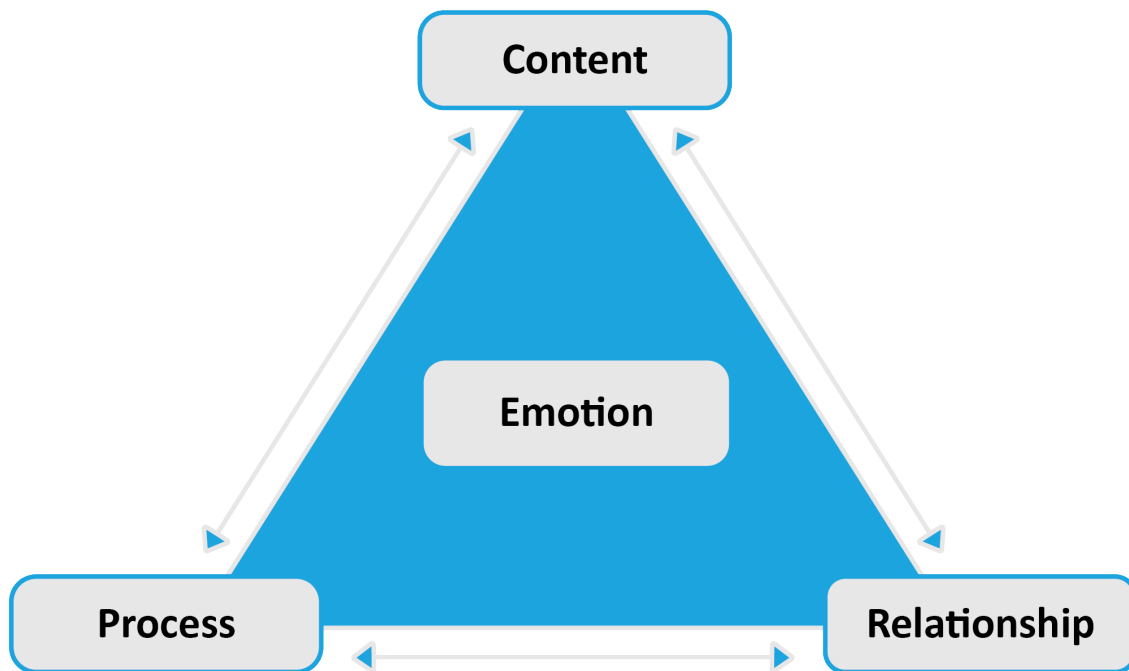
Glaser writes that:

The first rule of principled negotiation is separating relationship issues (or 'people problems') from substantive issues and dealing with them independently. One kind of 'people problem' they discuss is what we call framing problems. This refers to when people see or define a situation differently, depending on who they are and what their situation is. In the 1991 edition of *Getting to Yes*, the authors list seven ways for handling what they call 'problems of perception' or what we call 'framing problems'. These are as follows:

- First, try to see the situation from your opponent's perspective. While you do not have to agree with their perceptions of the situation, it is important to understand what they think and feel, and why they think and feel as they do.
- Second, do not deduce your opponent's intentions from your own fears. It is common to assume that your opponent plans to do just what you fear they will do. This sort of suspicious attitude makes it difficult to accurately perceive your opponent's real intentions; whatever they do, you will assume the worst.
- Third, avoid blaming your opponent for the problem. Blame, even if it is deserved, will only make your opponent defensive. Even worse, your opponent may attack you in response. Blame is generally counterproductive.
- Fourth, discuss each other's perceptions. Explicit discussion of each others' perceptions will help both sides to better understand each other (see the first point). In addition, discussion will help each side to avoid projecting their fears onto one another (see the third point). and may reveal shared perceptions. Acknowledging shared perceptions can strengthen the parties' relationship and facilitate productive negotiations.
- Fifth, seek opportunities to act inconsistently with your opponent's misperceptions. That is, try to disappoint your opponent's worst beliefs and expectations about you. Just as it is important for you to have an accurate perception of your opponent, it is also important for them to have an accurate perception of you. Disappointing your opponent's negative or inaccurate beliefs will help to change those beliefs.
- Sixth, give your opponent a stake in the outcome by making sure they participate in the negotiation process. If your opponent does not feel involved in the negotiation process, then they are unlikely to feel involved in its outcome. Conversely, if they feel that the process is also their process, then they are more likely to accept its conclusion as their conclusion.
- Seventh, make your proposals consistent with the principles and the self-image of your opponent. All parties in a negotiation need to be able to reconcile the agreement with their principles and self-image. That is, they need to feel the final agreement does not compromise their integrity. Proposals which are consistent with your opponent's principles, and which do not undermine their self-image, are more likely to be accepted.

Appendix J: Content Process Relationship Diagram

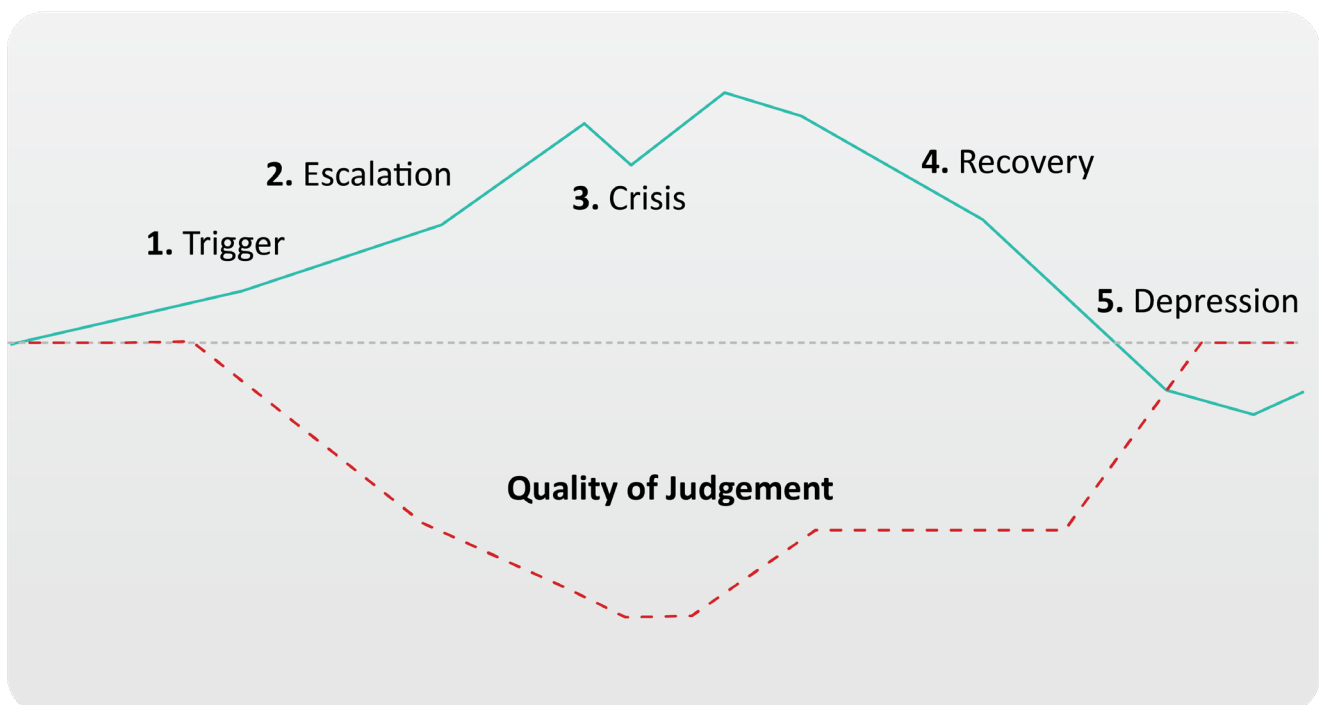
Conflict can contain a combination of three potential components: content, process, relationship. Our emotions can vary according to our perception of each of these components. When trying to resolve conflict, we often focus primarily on issues related to content, as they are often more substantive and easier to recognize. Unfortunately, the process and/or relationship components, which are more obscure and therefore harder to recognize, often get ignored. Likewise, the aspect of emotions, which is a core motivator, is often overlooked. By focusing only on content, we miss important information and, indeed, may be focusing on the wrong area of the problem. It is important to consider all of the potential layers of the conflict to resolve the dispute effectively and create lasting agreements.



Appendix K: Anger Arousal Cycle Diagram

What happens to our ability to have a rational conversation when we are angry, frustrated, or fearful?

1. **Trigger Phase:** This is the event that triggers the rest of the cycle. It activates the amygdala and sends a chemical surge through the body in preparation for acting on the survival impulse. The extent to which a person feels provoked enough to explode or flee is related to both internal factors (level of stress and subjective perception) and external factors (stimuli from the environment).
2. **Escalation Phase:** During this phase, the body's physiological arousal systems prepare for a crisis. The body prepares to attack or defend. Physiological responses include:
 - Muscle tension.
 - Increased respiration.
 - Increased heart rate and blood pressure.
 - Increase in voice volume and pitch.
3. **Crisis Phase:** This phase begins as the body reaches the fight, flight or freeze point. Since the body is at maximum stress, the we are compelled to attack, escape or *shut down*. Judgment is at its lowest and rational discussion is pointless. Short, simple, and non-provocative statements are best.
4. **Recovery Phase:** The crisis has passed, but the body must still recover from its high level of arousal. Provocative or threatening communication at this point may cause another crisis. It is helpful to create space and time during this phase to let the body dissipate the hormonal and neuro-chemical compounds.
5. **Post-Crisis Depression:** The body and judgment have now returned to normal. Physiological signs are normal or depressed. Individuals may become withdrawn, depressed, or self-destructive during this stage. This is an important time for talking through what happened with a counsellor or a trusted person.



Appendix L: Intent-Action-Effect Diagram

We tend to assume that our private intentions are understood by others through our public actions. We also tend to assume that we know the private intentions of others through the effect of their public actions on us. In other words, if person B experiences hurt because of person A's action or behaviour, B will tend to assume that A's intention was to be hurtful. However, person A's private intentions could have been quite different. Without clarification, the effect provokes an action that has yet another effect, and the process spirals.

