Conflict Types
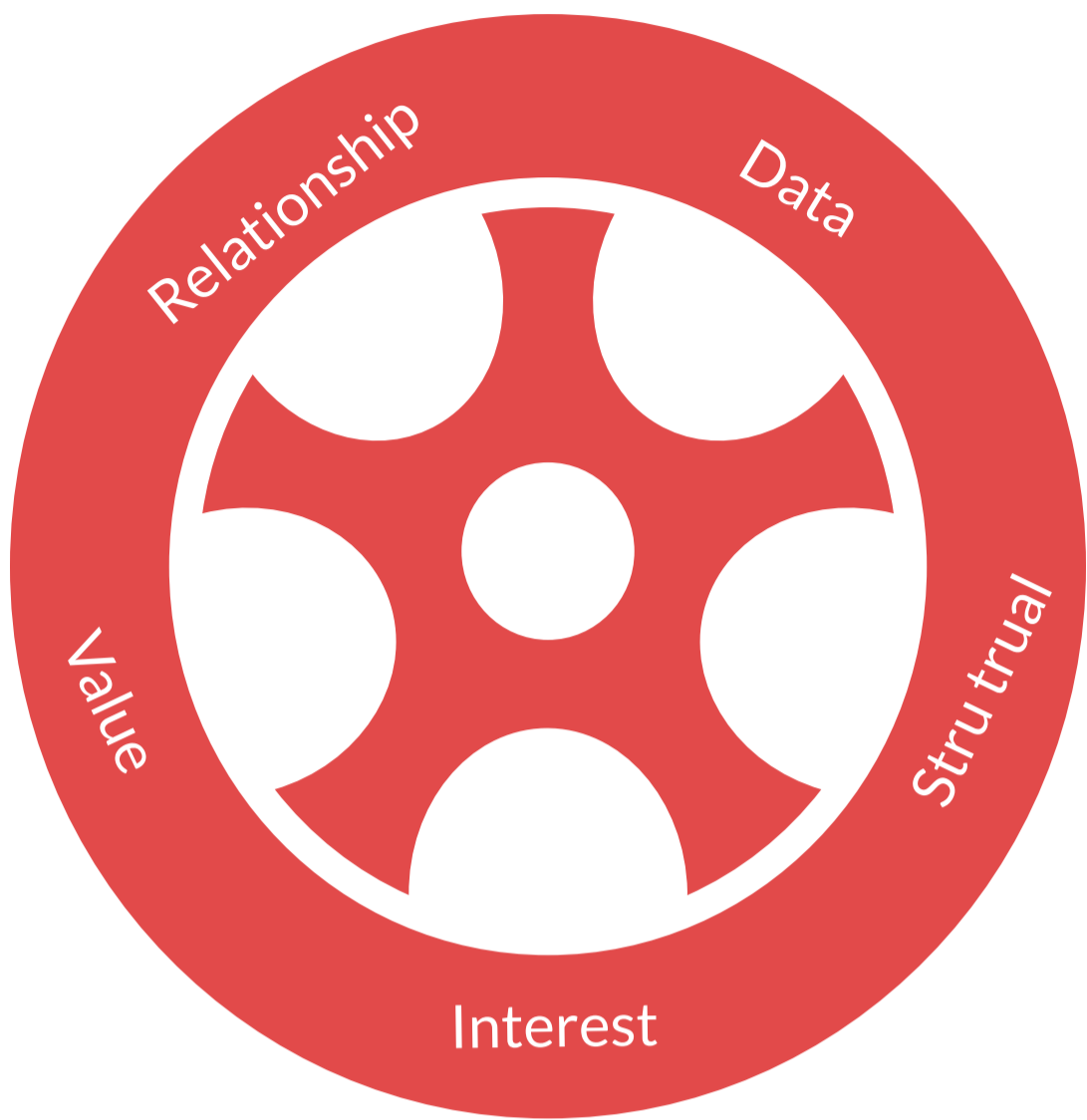
Relationship · Data · Structural · Interest · Value

Data Conflict

Caused by:
- Lack of, or different, information
- Different interpretations or access to information

Examples:
- Personal budget and vacation plans
- COVID-19 response/engagement

Resolved by:
- Agree on what information is important
- Distribute data with equity

Structural Conflict

Caused by:
- Unequal power or authority
- Patterns of destructive behavior
- External circumstances (time, space, etc.)

Examples:
- Hiring processes

Resolved by:
- Restructure roles and positions
- Identify, interrupt, and change destructive patterns
- Establish equitable decision making processes

Interest Conflict

Caused by:
- Perceived or real incompatible goals, needs
- When you believe your needs will be met at the expense of others' needs

Examples:
- Perceived limited resources (job, money, etc.)

Resolved by:
- Identify and focus on everyone's underlying interests
- How can we _____ AND _____ ?

Value Conflict

Caused by:
- Different morals/ethics/beliefs on what is important or how something should be done

Examples:
- COVID-19

Resolved by:
- It is OK to have different values/morals/etc
- Focus on goal/interest or value all share

Relationship Conflict

Caused by:
- Miscommunications, emotions
- Stereotypes, assumptions, stories
- Repeated destructive behavior

Examples:
- Conflict with co-worker, friend, family member

Resolved by:
- Heavily enforce ground rules
- Clarify miscommunications
- Provide space to name and validate feelings

Christopher Moore (2003). The Mediation Process: Practical strategies for resolving conflict. Jossey-Bass.