Learning to be Conflict Positive

OMBUDS

Virtual Communication Lunch and Learn Series
Guest Speaker, Donna Douglass Williams

Framework

Conflict Positive Framework

- Mindset
- Self-awareness
- Listening
- Choosing our words (communicating through conflict)
- Problem solving; pursuing solutions

Mindset

Mindset

"We don't see the world as it is, we see it as we are."
~Anais Nin

Self Awareness

Self Awareness

- Who am I in conflict?
- What am I feeling?
- What do I need?
- What is being triggered?
- What comes up consistently?
- What is my approach to conflict?

Emotions experienced when our needs are being met

- Optimistic
- Comfortable
- Amused
- Fulfilled
- Exuberant
- Inspired
- Pleased
- Grateful
- Empowered
- Satisfied
- Peaceful
- Safe
- Accomplished
- Happy

Emotions experienced when our needs are not being met

- Discouraged
- Uncomfortable
- Reluctant
- Alienated
- Hurt
- Insecure
- Disappointed
- Frustrated
- Miserable
- Disheartened
- Angry
- Anguished
- Embarrassed

Listening

How we Listen

- Listen for understanding
- ("Seek first to understand… then to be understood.")
- Listening for emotions of other person(s)
- Listening for needs/values of other person
- What are the underlying interests? What is important to them?
- Removing judgement
- Listening with empathy

Chinese verb for "to listen"

Choosing our words

Communicating through conflict

- Summarize what you hear from other person
- Demonstrating empathy; letting others know what emotions/needs you hear from them
- Express

Choosing our words

Articulating own **emotions** and **needs to** others

Choosing words carefully- ones that both **clearly assert** our positions, requests, but also are **respectful and diplomatic**

Upregulating language (release of positive hormones; **inspiring hope and constructive resolution**)

Suggesting ways that **both sets of interests** can be met

Phrases that inspire resolution

- What can we both learn?
- How can we find a solution that addresses what is important to both of us?
- What is best for the team?
- How can we increase morale, productivity
- How do we work to restore trust
- How can we make sure we are aligned with our values?
- How do we collaborate towards constructive resolution?
- Let's brainstorm possible solutions
- Let's talk about the "center" of our conversations and not "sides"

Problem solving; pursuing solutions

Deciding/pursuing what you want

- "Nothing happens until you decide"
- Analyzing the conflict, ourselves and others is important first step, but we usually want something – how do we get it?
- Clarify and envision what we want, and work backwards to decide the best path
- Who can help me? What has the information? Who can make the decision? How do I frame this in a way that also becomes important to the person I'm in conflict with?
- Courage and creativity to start over, do an about face, pursue a completely new strategy (Einstein quote- "conflict insanity")

Choices and self-care in conflict

- Taking a pause
- Making a choice on whether to engage/when/how
- Self-care

Future

Conflict Positive Outcomes

- Quality listening
- Creativity
- Trust, respect, strengthened relationships
- Greater understandings for ourselves and others
- Collaboration
- Learning, innovation, adaptations
- De-escalation of conflict
- Problem-solving
- Courage, resilience
- Respectful communication
- Constructive resolutions

Resources:

- Nonviolent Communication
- **Judith Glaser,** Conversational Intelligence
- **Stephen Covey,** Seven Habits of Highly Effective People
- **William Isaacs,** Dialogue: The Art of Thinking Together