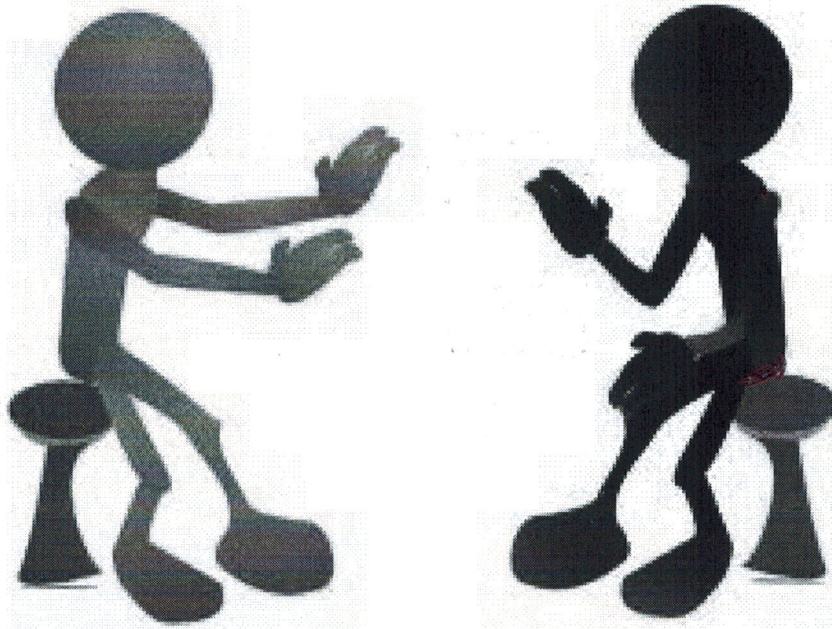


COMMUNICATION STYLES



Passive



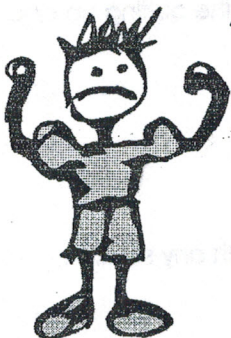
You're OK, I'm not OK
Respects others, doesn't respect self
Makes others happy to the expense of self
Closed, small posture
Avoids eye contact
Apologizes too often
Allows others to interrupt
Under reacts
Quiet, withdrawn
Denies that they want or need something
Often feels inferior, sad, anxious

ASSERTIVE



You're OK and I'm OK
Respects self and others
Works to make self and others happy
Respectful, balanced posture
Respectful, open eye contact
Apologizes when needed
Doesn't interrupt, or allow others to do so
Reacts appropriately
Direct, fair, respectful
Asks for what they want or need
Often feels confident, calm

Aggressive



I'm OK, you are not OK
Respects self, doesn't respect others
Makes self happy at the expense of others
Expansive, invasive posture
Glaring, staring eye contact
Never apologizes
Interrupts others
Over reacts
Loud, blaming, sarcastic, negative
Demands what they want or need
Often feels superior, angry

CONFLICT STYLES

EFFECTIVE STYLES:

ASSERTIVE STYLES

PARROT:



Listens carefully to everyone
Repeats what they've heard
to make sure they understand
what they've heard

OWL:



Wise and thoughtful.
Always stops to think.
Considers all the facts before
making a decision.

EAGLE:



Quiet and watchful
Stays above the conflict to get
the big picture.
Considers the short and long term.
Consequences before making
a decision.

GIRAFFE:

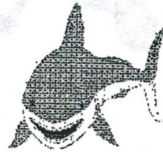


Willing to stick neck out
to consider all the reasons behind
choices and reach an agreement
Not afraid of being different
or not going with the crowd.

INEFFECTIVE STYLES:

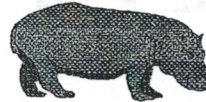
AGGRESSIVE STYLES

SHARK:



The "fighter" doesn't stop to think
Gets out of control
Rude and hurtful, attacks others

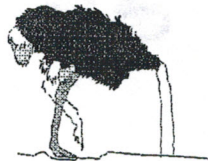
HIPPO:



Big mouth, the "gossiper"
Blames others
Doesn't accept responsibility
Complains

PASSIVE STYLES

OSTRICH:



Hides from the problem
Ignores own feelings and needs
"There's no problem!"
And if there IS a problem,
hopefully it will go away
by itself

HYENA:



Makes jokes and won't be serious.
Hides true thoughts and feelings
behind all the cutting up and
acting out.

SHEEP:



Follows others
Goes along with any solution.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO.....

- I have the right to choose how I think, act and feel.
- I have the right to decide if I like or dislike how I think, act and feel.
- I have the right to change my opinions and behaviors.
- I have the right not to explain my behavior to others as long as their rights are not violated.
- I have the right to have my opinions respected.
- I have the right to be respected for my personhood and capabilities.
- I have the right to meet my needs as long as I consider the needs of others.
- I have the right to offer help to others.
- I have the right to ask others for their help.
- I have the right to refuse offers of help.
- I have the right to ask others to change their behavior.
- I have the right to make mistakes and be responsible for them.
- I have the right not to know.
- I have the right not to care.
- I have the right to tell others "No" without feeling guilty.
- I have the right to decide how I would like to spend my time.

NEITHER YOU NOR I HAVE THE RIGHT.....

- To tell others how they feel.
- To demand others change their behavior.
- To tell others how to think or act.
- To assign to others the responsibility for my own behaviors, thoughts and feelings.
- To blame others for my mistakes.
- To attempt to make others feel guilty over how they think, feel or behave.
- To be assertive without consideration of the needs to people with whom I am assertive.
- To be assertive without considering the feelings of the person(s) with whom I am assertive.



To the Rescue ...

Fair Fighting!!!

Rules of Conduct for Constructive Conflict Resolution

At best, having fair fighting rules may seem like a contradiction in terms. At worst, it may seem utterly impossible. In fact, fair fighting provides a framework to resolve conflict, solve problems and help people get on with their lives.

Some of these fair fighting rules will seem utterly and ridiculously simple. And others will be just the opposite – unbelievably difficult to imagine accomplishing. And yet, thousands, perhaps millions of people have successfully applied these rules of fair fighting to their lives. Try them and see what you think.

Fair Fighting: Ground Rules

- Timing is everything. Find a time and place that will work for both of you. Blurting out your concern the moment you see the other person is definitely not a fair fighting technique. Scheduling a time to fight means that you must be in enough control of your emotions to be able to delay the discussion. This takes practice but is absolutely achievable. Pick a time when you aren't tired, hungry or rushed. (For some of us, sadly, that could mean a very long wait!) Never talk/fight in the presence of your children or others. Pick a location that is relatively neutral.
- Remain calm. Try not to overreact to difficult situations. By remaining calm it will be more likely that others will consider your viewpoint.
- Express feelings in words, not actions. Telling someone directly and honestly how you feel can be a very powerful form of communication. If you start to feel so angry or upset that you feel you may lose control, take a "time out" and do something to help yourself feel steadier – take a walk, do some deep breathing, pet the cat, play with the dog, do the dishes – whatever works for you.
- Be specific about what is bothering you. Vague complaints are hard to work on.
- Deal with one issue at a time. No fair piling several complaints into one session. Some people call this "kitchen-sinking" – talking about everything including the kitchen sink!
- No "hitting below the belt." Attacking areas of personal sensitivity creates an atmosphere of distrust, anger, and vulnerability.
- Avoid accusations. Accusations will cause others to defend themselves. Instead, talk about how someone's actions made you feel.
- Don't generalize. Avoid using statements such as "You always ..." or "You never ..." to describe a person's behavior. Such generalizations are usually inaccurate and will heighten tensions. Use "I Messages" instead ... such as "I think it would be better to _____," or, "I need to understand you, so give me more information."

- Don't stockpile. Storing up lots of anger and hurt feelings over time is counterproductive. It's almost impossible to deal with numerous old problems. Try to deal with problems as they arise.
- Avoid clamming up. When one person becomes silent and stops responding to the other, frustration and anger can result. Positive results can only be attained with two-way communication.
- Establish common ground rules. When parties accept positive common ground rules for managing a conflict, resolution becomes much more likely.

Sound Impossible?

Fair fighting rules help you switch from fighting and getting nowhere to actually solving problems. It takes time to learn a new behavior. So keep trying. Remember the old adage – practice makes perfect. Every time you avoid a down and dirty fight by problem solving instead, you will feel better. Not to mention the fact that you will actually get resolution to the problem. That's worth a lot.

When Nothing Seems to Work

Sometimes, despite our best fair fighting efforts, a disagreement or conflict seems insurmountable. When this occurs, talking with a trained professional can help. A trained mediator can help you communicate more effectively and eventually work your way through to a solution. Parkview's EAP provides short-term counseling for Parkview employees and their families who have difficulty managing conflict, as well as counseling about other concerns you might have. To schedule an appointment for counseling services call 584-4770. All calls are confidential.

A Final Word

Conflict is normal, inevitable, and even healthy in most cases. When managed well, it can be used to enhance and strengthen relationships with friends, family members, co-workers, and partners. Fair fighting provides the tools and techniques to help you achieve positive results when problems arise.