

CONFLICT STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

How do you act in conflicts?

The proverbs listed below can be thought of as some of the different strategies for resolving conflict. Read each of the proverbs and using the following scale score how typical each is of your actions when in conflict.

1 - never do this, 2 - seldom do this, 3 - sometimes do this, 4 - frequently do this, 5 - usually do this

SCORE

1. It is easier to refrain than to retreat from a quarrel	1.
2. If you cannot make a person think as you do, make him or her do as you think	2.
3. Soft words win hard hearts	3.
4. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours	4.
5. Come now and let us reason together	5.
6. When two quarrel, the person who keeps silent first is the most praiseworthy	6.
7. Might overcomes right	7.
8. Smooth words make smooth ways	8.
9. Better half a loaf than no bread at all	9.
10. Truth lies in knowledge, not in majority opinion	10.
11. He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day	11.
12. He hath conquered well that hath made his enemies flee	12.
13. Kill your enemies with kindness	13.
14. A fair exchange brings no quarrel	14.
15. No person has the final answer but every person has a piece to contribute	15.
16. Stay away from people who disagree with you	16.
17. Fields are won by those who believe in winning	17.
18. Kind words are worth much and cost little	18.
19. Tit for tat is fair play	19.
20. Only the person who is willing to give up their monopoly on truth can profit from the truths that others hold	20.
21. Avoid quarrelsome people as they will only make your life miserable	21.
22. A person who will not flee will make others flee	22.
23. Soft words ensure harmony	23.
24. One gift for another makes good friends	24.
25. Bring your conflicts into the open and face them directly; only then will the best solution be discovered	25.
26. The best way of handling conflicts is to avoid them	26.
27. Put your foot down where you mean to stand	27.
28. Gentleness will triumph over anger	28.
29. Getting part of what you want is better than not getting anything at all	29.
30. Frankness, honesty and trust will move mountains	30.
31. There is nothing so important you have to fight for it	31.
32. There are two kinds of people in the world, the winners and the losers	32.
33. When one hits you with a stone, hit him or her with a piece of cotton	33.
34. When both give in halfway, a fair settlement is achieved	34.
35. By digging and digging, the truth is discovered	35.

SCORING

Copy your scorings from the questionnaire into the table below.

Total the columns.

The higher the total score for each strategy, the more frequently you tend to use that approach.

WITHDRAWING		FORCING		SMOOTHING		COMPROMISING		CONFRONTING	
1		2		3		4		5	
6		7		8		9		10	
11		12		13		14		15	
16		17		18		19		20	
21		22		23		24		25	
26		27		28		29		30	
31		32		33		34		35	
TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL	

CONFLICT STRATEGIES: WHAT ARE YOU LIKE?

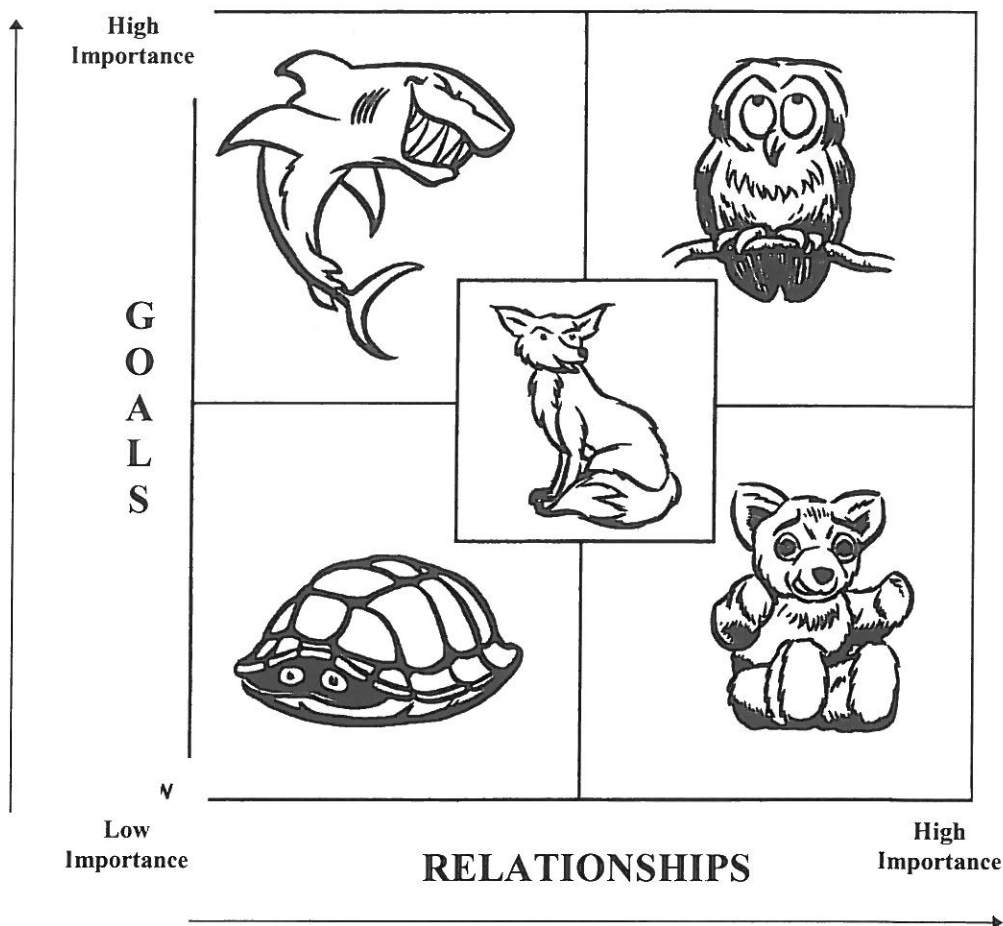
Different people use different strategies for managing conflicts. These strategies are learned, usually in childhood, and seem to function automatically. Usually we are not aware at the time of how we act in conflict situations. We do whatever seems to come naturally. But we do have a personal strategy; and because it was learned, we can always change it by learning new and more effective ways of managing conflicts.

When you become engaged in a conflict, there are two major concerns you have to take into account:

1. Achieving your personal goals - you are in conflict because you have a goal that conflicts with another person's goal. Your goal may be highly important to you, or it may be of little importance.
2. Keeping good relationship with the other person - you may need to be able to interact effectively with the other person in the future. The relationship may be very important to you, or it may be of little importance.

The importance of these two areas will affect the ways in which you act in any given conflict.

From these two concerns it is possible to identify five styles of conflict management:



CONFLICT STYLES

The Turtle (WITHDRAWING)

Turtles withdraw into their shells to avoid conflicts. They give up their personal goals and relationships. They stay away from the issues over which the conflict is taking place and from the persons they are in conflict with. Turtles believe it is hopeless to try and resolve conflicts. They feel helpless. They believe it is easier to withdraw (physically and psychologically) from a conflict than to face it.

The Shark (FORCING)

Sharks try to overpower opponents by forcing them to accept their solutions to the conflict. Their goals are highly important to them and relationships of minor importance. They seek to achieve their goals at all costs. They are not concerned with the needs of others. They do not care if others like or accept them. Sharks assume that conflicts are either won or lost and they want to be the winner. This gives them a sense of pride and achievement. Losing gives them a sense of weakness, inadequacy and failure. They try and win by attacking, overpowering, overwhelming and intimidating others.

The Teddy Bear (SMOOTHING)

To teddy bears the relationship is of great importance while their own goals are of little importance. Teddies want to be accepted and liked by other people. They think that conflict should be avoided in favour of harmony and that people cannot discuss conflicts without damaging relationships. They are afraid that if a conflict continues, someone will get hurt and that could ruin the relationship. They give up their goals to preserve the relationship. They like to smooth things over.

The Fox (COMPROMISING)

Foxes are moderately concerned with their own goals and their relationships with others. They give up part of their own goals and persuade others in a conflict to give up part of theirs. They seek a conflict solution in which both sides gain something - the middle ground between two extreme positions. They compromise; they will give up a part of their goal and relationship in order to find agreement for the common good.

The Owl (CONFRONTING)

Owls highly value their own goals and relationships. They view conflicts as problems to be solved and seek a solution that achieves both their own and the other person's goals. Owls see conflicts as a means of improving relationships by reducing tension between two people. They try to begin a discussion that identifies the conflict as a problem to be solved. By seeking solutions that satisfy everyone, owls maintain the relationship. They are not happy until a solution is found that both satisfies everyone's goals and resolves the tensions and negative feelings that may have been present.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

