

Intro: Conflict Resilience Resources

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This section of resources focuses on conflict resilience; other sections focus on personal resilience, communication and group culture. Many of these topics overlap; some topics, as noted, are addressed in more depth in a separate resource.

What is Conflict Resilience?

In these documents, resilience means the ability to cope with disturbing situations or adversity, and to regain balance afterward. Navigating uncomfortable situations is a common and important challenge for most people. Individuals can learn to cope with and respond to disturbances or adversity in ways that facilitate integrity and harmony, deepening and strengthening relationships, leading to breakthroughs rather than breakdowns.

Humans are social creatures, neurobiologically oriented to cultivate strong relationships to assist individual well-being and survival in groups. Investing in harmonious relationships is a common way for individuals to maintain a sense of belonging in a group.

A natural part of group dynamics is navigating tensions and conflicts, both large and small. An individual's resilience reflects their ability to address conflicts skillfully and maintain their membership in a group. A group's resilience reflects its ability to prioritise members' well-being by providing times and spaces for addressing small tensions before they grow into larger conflicts. Both individual and group conflict resilience contribute to groups remaining intact while navigating disturbance and adversity.

Daily interactions between individuals can affect relationships, strengthening or weakening them. Relationships typically benefit from investments of quality time, positive energy, and authentic attention. While relationships that are strong and deep can supply individuals and groups with positive energy, relationships can also require energy.

Part of individual and group well-being relies on having relationships strong and deep enough that they supply more energy than they require. Relationships that overall feel enlivening, enriching, and supportive are an indicator of individual and group well-being. The number and kind of relationships in a group may vary; so in some groups, individuals may need to invest in some relationships more than others.

Conflict resilience involves strengthening and deepening relationships before tensions arise. So that when tensions do arise, individuals can make choices that support each other's well-being.

Conflict resilience is about individuals:

- building strong and deep foundations for relationships
- noticing when there is a tension in a relationship
- investing time in addressing the tension
- knowing each other's preferences and what specifically helps someone to address tensions
- practicing specific ways to address tensions in relationships.

Conflict resilience & personal resilience

Personal resilience can enhance and support conflict resilience. Organisational mediator Alison Love (see reference below) suggests more personally resilient individuals are likely to try to manage conflict in positive ways and learn from it. Less resilient individuals are likely to avoid conflict, which is not a helpful long-term strategy in most situations.

Individuals with personal resilience may be supported by:

- Prioritising well-being and self-care; maintaining healthy routines; getting enough rest, time to release stress, and an adequate amount of sleep
- Maintaining a positive self-image, and confidence in their strengths and abilities
- Identifying support people, regularly seeking their support, and allowing them to give support
- Keeping a journal or diary about their experiences, or sharing with others about their experiences
- Increasing their capacity to make realistic plans and taking steps to carry them out.

All of these can be helpful when navigating a tension or conflict. For more information, see Transition Network's resources on Personal Resilience here.

<https://transitionnetwork.org/do-transition/inner/personal-resilience-resources/>

Conflict resilience & conflict resolution

Organisational mediator Alison Love describes some of the differences and similarities.

Conflict Resilience	Conflict Resolution
Relies on effective communication: the ability to identify thoughts and emotions, express them, and listen attentively.	Assumes skills in communication and problem-solving.

Conflict Resilience	Conflict Resolution
Relies on the capacity to feel a wide range of emotions and manage strong emotions. Choosing how to respond rather than reacting emotionally. Processing emotions with a trusted support person.	Requires acknowledging, understanding, and managing emotions.
Accepts the inevitability of tensions and conflict. Welcomes the challenge to positively address conflict. Re-frames conflict as: an opportunity to learn from a difficult or challenging situation; an important collaborative skill; a way to strengthen relationships and group culture.	Relies on managing expectations; understanding the reality of the situation; realising what is in one's own control; having the confidence to take steps towards resolution. Mediation can help individuals to better understand their differences, how each person has contributed to a conflict, and how to better manage such situations in the future.
Inequalities are considered widespread and likely to persist. Addressing conflict is part of a transition in both group culture and the wider society.	Assumes equality: two rational beings are equal and prepared to negotiate for an agreement.
Occurs before, as a form of prevention, accepting that tensions will arise. Focuses on reducing the extent of tension before it escalates into a conflict. Factors that may increase or decrease the escalation of a conflict are considered and prioritised.	Occurs after, as a form of treatment. Focuses on addressing the conflict event, after the conflict has already occurred. Factors leading up to it may be considered during the mediation process, and may not be systematically addressed.

Conflict Resilience Documents: Overview

The resources in this section include several types of documents:

Inquiries: longer explorations of several aspects of a topic; some include activities.

Guides: shorter explorations of a few aspects of a topic.

Intros: short introductions to a large topic, with a list of resources for more information.

Activities: directions for specific exercises, practices, or activities.

- [Inquiry - Re-Framing Conflict](#)
- [Guide - Feedback Culture](#)
- [Guide - Offering & Receiving Feedback](#)
- [Guide - Clearing Procedure](#)
- [Guide - 8 Shields Peace Principles](#)
- [Activity - Conflict Styles](#)
- [Activity - Sharing & Celebrating Failings](#)
- [Intro - Compassionate Communication + Resources](#)

References

Love, Alison. (2020). "[Conflict and Resilience - What's the Link?](https://www.resolution-at-work.co.uk/blog/2020/02/conflict-and-resilience-whats-the-link/)"
<https://www.resolution-at-work.co.uk/blog/2020/02/conflict-and-resilience-whats-the-link/>