

CONFLICT SOLUTIONS PRESENTS:

# CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

PRESENTED TO

HOCKEY ALBERTA SUMMIT  
JUNE 2022



# PERCEPTIONS

- Do you consider yourself a bad driver?
- If so few of us are bad drivers, why are there so many terrible drivers on our roads?

- What date is this:

**03/02/97**



# YOUR PERCEPTION???



IS THIS A GOOD IDEA???



# BAD OR REALLY BAD IDEA?



# NOT ALWAYS AS IT APPEARS



# COMPONENTS OF EVERY CONFLICT

- The **ISSUE** is the **basis** for the conversation.
- The **POSITION** is the **stance** you and the other person take respecting a particular issue or point of discussion.
- The **INTERESTS** are the **reasons** or **motivations** a person holds that drives their behavior or supports their position.



# INTERESTS ARE DEFINED AS:

- Concerns, Hopes, Expectations, Assumptions, Perceptions, Beliefs, Fears, Values and Needs.
- Example of the apartment conversation.
- Interests are uncovered by the application of the questions “why?” “why not?” and “what else?”.





# “WHY” SUCH A BIG DEAL?

- For some “Why?” = Personal challenge.
- The “Why” question can be the most powerfully **constructive** or powerfully **destructive** word in our language.
- It represents an opportunity to bring clarity to those we interact with.



# tone; your best friend or worst enemy

- **tone** is the most powerful word in the English language. **Tone equals attitude** and attitude is the words **they** add to what **you** say.
- **emphasis** is the other aspect of communication that gets us in trouble.
- “I never said you weren’t good at your job”.



# MANAGING YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

- Anger is the most **misunderstood** and **overused** of the human emotions.
- Anger is a **response** to an inner emotion and not a **planned** action.
- Feelings that underlie that anger tend to make us feel **disempowered** and anger helps us feel **empowered**.



# MANAGING YOUR OWN EMOTIONS continued

- Many people use anger as the **default emotion**; regardless of the emotion, we label it anger.
- It is **safe** to tell people we are angry.
- Do you believe our human emotions are a “big deal?”



# I SEE YOUR POINT

- In conflict, always try to **acknowledge** the point the other person makes.
- One of the most basic **human needs**.
- Important to add some **“substance”** to this statement; some reference to what their point actually is.



# NICE, BUT...

- Connecting word versus cancelling word.
- “But” sets up an **adversarial** relationship.
- “But” is the great eraser.
- “But” often precedes a **negative message**.
- Use **“And”** to cover your **“But”**.





since  
1919

**It tastes awful. And it works.®**

# THREE LEVELS OF CONVERSATIONS

- The **INFORMATION LEVEL** conversation:
- The **EMOTIONAL LEVEL** conversation:
- The **IDENTITY LEVEL** conversation:





# ARE WE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS?

- Some of us have a misguided understanding if what “effective communication” truly means.
- In conflict, we have two choices for our communication strategy.....
- **ADVOCACY...Giving information**
- **INQUIRY...Seeking information**



# ORGAN DONATION EXAMPLE

- Two identical Donation Teams
- Team 1 experienced a **15% consent rate**

versus

- Team 2 experienced a **70% consent rate**



# THE SKILL OF DEFUSING

- Many different people use many different strategies.
- “Calm down” and “You had better relax”
- Other terms to avoid:
  - “Chill out”
  - “Simmer down”
  - “Take a pill”
  - “Let it go”
  - “Are you through yet?”
  - “What’s your problem?”
  - “Whatever”



# DEFUSING AND DE-ESCALATING

- Highly inflammatory.
  - Represents a **criticism** of the other person's behavior.
  - Implies they have **no right** to the feelings and emotions they are experiencing.
  - Creates multiple other problems.



# DEFUSING

- A series of strategic paraphrases, one or two exchanges.
- Move with the angry person, not against them as they would expect.
- Once emotion is calmed, reason returns.



**THANK YOU**

**FOR YOUR TIME AND  
ATTENTION**

**Gary McDougall  
Facilitator- Conflict Solutions**

