

STEPS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. Set the stage. Agree to try to work together to find a solution peacefully, and establish ground rules (e.g., no name-calling, blaming, yelling, or interrupting).
2. Gather perspectives. Each person describes the dispute from his or her perspective, without interruption. Listeners pay close attention and then ask clarifying questions in a nonthreatening manner. They consider not only what the other participants say they want, but why they want it. For example, if someone insists that you pay for something they believe you broke, they may be doing so not because they really care about the object or the money, but because they feel that you don't respect them. Addressing the other person's need to feel respected may be key to resolving the conflict.
3. Find common interests. Establish which facts and issues all participants agree on and determine why different issues are important to each person. Identify common interests, which can be as simple as a mutual desire to resolve the problem without resorting to violence or a shared need to save face.
4. Create options. Take time for each teen to brainstorm about possible solutions to the problem. Come up with a list of options without immediately judging them or feeling committed to them. Try to think of solutions where both people gain something—think win-win! Too often we assume that for one person to win, the other person has to lose.

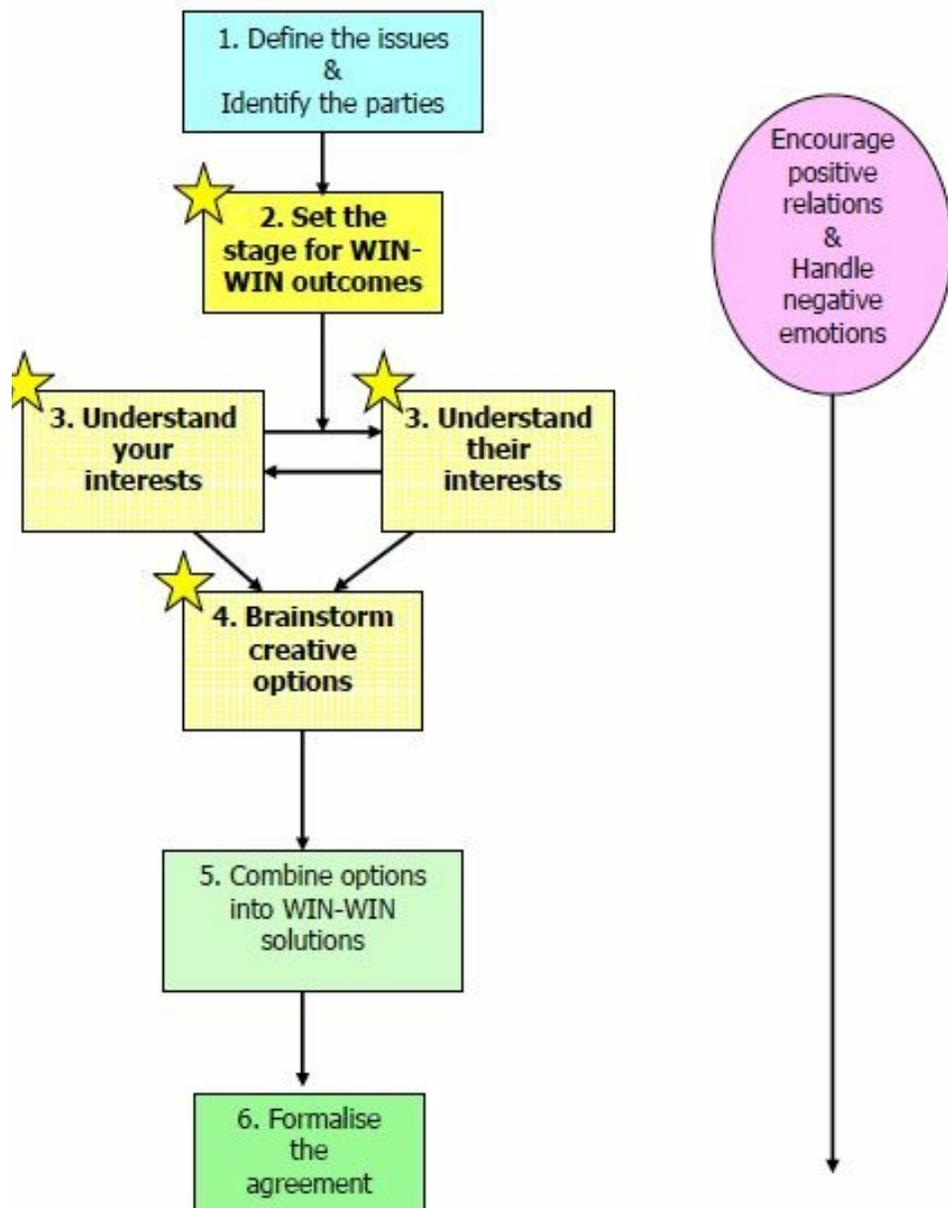
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In reality, it is often possible to think creatively and come up with a solution that both people feel good about, where both walk away feeling that their needs have been met.

5. Evaluate options. After a number of options are suggested, each teen discusses his or her feelings about each of the proposed solutions. Participants will negotiate and often will need to compromise in order to reach a conclusion that is acceptable to both. They may need to agree to disagree about some issues to reach an understanding.

b. create an agreement. The teens involved explicitly state their agreement and may even want to write it down. If necessary, they set up a time to check back to see how the agreement is working.



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