

High Conflict Theory, (copyright Bill Eddy, with permission)

FOUR KEY ISSUES

Bonding

Structure

Reality Testing

Consequences

12 HIGH CONFLICT TIPS

1. Recognize and understand their fear based logic
2. Lower your expectations for change
3. Maintain appropriate boundaries
4. Remain skeptical, & listen to highly insistent emotions without getting hooked
5. EAR: Empathy, Attention & Respect
6. Emphasize their strengths, give positive statements
7. Confront indirectly, and save face
8. Focus on tasks and make lists to engage both brains
9. Engage positive advocates
10. Get third party recommendations
11. Educate about consequences
12. Give choices

COMMON ISSUES

Rigid & uncompromising thoughts and behaviors

Chaotic emotions dominate thinking; feelings are facts

Inability to reflect on their own behavior; feedback is counterproductive

Cognitive distortions; facts are exaggerated, omitted, cherry picked

Deceitful, especially the antisocial types

Difficulty accepting and healing loss

Difficulty empathizing with (and understanding) others needs

Difficulty controlling impulses

Avoids responsibility (for problem or solution)

Preoccupied with blaming others

Depends on and recruits others to solve problems

Interpersonal dysfunction

HIGH CONFLICT PERSONALITY TYPES

Narcissistic

Borderline

Histrionic

Antisocial

Paranoid

IPNB INFORMED COUNSELING ELEMENTS

1. Understand safety/danger drives of self-protective strategies
 - a. Such as cognitive (rigid, left brain, type A) and affective (chaotic, right brain, Type C) self-protective relationship strategies
 - b. Fight-Flight-Freeze vs Social Engagement System
 - c. Accept and adjust to lower expectations for change
 - d. Maintain appropriate boundaries, while engaging in maximum relationship (rejection begets aggression)
2. Facilitate relationship being Calm, Understanding, and Present (CUP)
3. Listen with COCOA -RNUV (Caring, Observing, Curiosity, Openness, Acceptance, while Reflecting on them and yourself, with awareness of NonVerbal and unverbilized communication)
 - a. Power O to focus: Intentionally Center Attention Now (ICAN)
4. To promote neural integration, facilitate Safety, Mastery, Autonomy with relationship linking and differentiating
 - a. Step1: Link by deeply understanding the person (safety)
 - b. Step 2: Link by providing a safe & positive place to explore (faux mastery)
 - i. Try out emotion based solutions
 - ii. Affective experientials leading to a sense of mastery, i.e., write the letter they want)
 - c. Step 3: Differentiate by safely providing logical feedback (true mastery)
 - i. Reality testing, and appealing to transcendent purpose, from a professionally distant stance
 - ii. Cognitive experientials, such as *kind* Socratic questioning, leading to better mastery, i.e., “how do you think they might react to the letter?” “Let’s write another letter”)
 - d. Step 4: Integrate by facilitating choices (autonomy)
 - i. Move client to autonomous decision making

SELF-PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES (*attachment/hemisphere/personality perspective*)

A. Insecure, rigid, dismissive, very rational, sequential but decontextualized orientation, verbal communication, narrowly focused on what is already “known,” emotion/relationship avoidant, possibly very self absorbed, entitled and superior, emotional displays are superficial and subsequently ignored, fearful of being dismissed or controlled.

B. Secure, combined functional style, flexible, cooperative, integrates rationality and emotion for creative solutions, shares information freely, self reflective, accepts criticism, has sense of mastery, autonomous

C. Insecure, chaotic, enmeshed, very emotional and relational oriented, little rationality, contextual but non-linear orientation, nonverbal communication, focused overly broad, may have difficulty regulating emotion and see things as all good or all bad, see feelings as facts, fearful of being alone or abandoned.

A/C. Combined or alternating dysfunctional style with clear antisocial behaviors (doesn’t follow rules), highly deceitful, fearful of being dominated

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Share a CUP of COCOA in Reno, NV
THE ELEMENTS OF LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

CUP

Calm

Staying balanced, neurally integrated, neutral and professionally distant, while being passionately engaged; not taking things personally; managing your own emotions and helping others manage theirs.

Understanding

Deeply, patiently, discovering what matters to the other.

Present

Giving your full attention; a way of being open, receptive, and ever emerging in our states of being as we connect with others and with our inner world; being with the other without fear, prejudice.

COCOA

Caring

Empathy, sympathy, compassion, altruism, warmth, kindness, delight in the other, relational bonding, loving presence, spirituality, neuro/psycho education.

Observing

Presence, attention, intention, fully experiencing the moment, description, labeling feelings with words, of the other, of oneself, authentic.

Curious

Interest, playful, lean into the emotion and feeling, explore.

Openness

Nonjudgmental, non-attached, to someone else's experience, free from one's own internal evaluation, transparent, sharing your experience.

Accepting

Non-evaluative, unconditional positive regard, of what is, validation, being affected with awareness and/or reduction of reactivity, accept thoughts and feelings without being "hooked."

Reflections

Reflecting other back, micro-reflections, large and small summaries, reflecting on oneself and one's own feelings.

NonVerbal and unverbalized awareness

Non-threatening, prosody, facial & body gestures, implicit (unknown and unstated) childhood &/or trauma memories, (most communication is nonverbal).