





SOURCES AND TYPES OF CONFLICT

Based on Moore, *The Mediation Process* Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1987.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AS AN EMERGING FIELD

Interpersonal-family mediation

Community dispute resolution

Labour and organizations

Environment

Public dispute resolution

Schools and education

Intra-State conflicts (minority-majority)

**International level (between States or
national movements)**

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION APPROACH

Different cultures have different assumptions and approaches to conflicts. The following assumptions about conflicts are based on Western perceptions of conflicts. However, many of the listed assumptions can be applicable to non-Western cultures or contexts.

1. Conflict is not necessarily evil or a failure of an existing system. On the contrary, conflict often is a creative force that generates new options, alternatives, and solutions for existing problems.
2. Conflict is a natural process that can have constructive or destructive outcomes.
3. Conflict is an intrinsic part of all important relationships.
4. Conflict is caused by many different kinds of specific events.
5. People are not problems.
6. Having clear and explicit expectations is a very crucial and essential part of any resolution process, for reaching an agreement or understanding the issues involved.
7. Conflict can be positive when:
 - a. It increases communication and trust
 - b. We can solve the problem
 - c. It results in development and growth
 - d. It releases feelings that were stored
 - e. It improves our work and performance.
8. Conflict can be negative when it:
 - a. Develops to war or violence
 - b. Prevents and blocks personal and group development
 - c. Prevents people from addressing the real issues
 - d. Motivates people to become uncooperative.
9. Conflicts can end in many ways. Often conflicts end with some kind of decision defining what will happen in the future. These can be classified by studying:

**BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION APPROACH
(Continued)**

"Who decides?"	and	"How?"
No one		Avoidance, denial, flight
One party		Force, threats, influence
Outside decisionmaker		Rights and standards
Parties together		Joint processes

10. Conflict can be managed/settled constructively through communication. However, not all conflict can be resolved by improving communication.
11. Not all conflicts lend themselves to joint or negotiated endings. But when mutually satisfactory outcomes can be found, they tend to be more self-enforcing, efficient, and durable.
12. Joint processes can be creative. They can lead to new or improved relationships and help identify new criteria, resources, and outcomes.
13. Joint processes can usually be structured to help everyone work together effectively.
14. Although there are many types of conflicts and many types of processes to resolve them, most people tend to approach a conflict with some expectation in mind, often based on previous experience.
15. It is always important, valuable, and useful to raise the question of whether a particular and specific approach to resolving a conflict is the most effective and appropriate method.
16. Conflict resolution skills include analyzing the conflict situation; bringing parties together; assisting parties to shift focus from win/lose competition to joint problem solving; building cooperation and trust; and communication skills of observing, listening, and speaking.
17. The basis of conflict resolution is problem solving, which attempts to move parties with genuine substantive differences toward a productive resolution.