



Authentic Relationships

Having a good fight

Whether you're struggling with workplace politics or want more harmony in your personal relationships, it's time to shed light on:

- How your mind works when you feel under siege
- What's helpful to know about conflict, and
- Strategies and tools for resolving disputes.

Humans are hardwired to avoid loss or failure

From an evolutionary perspective, you should probably know that we're up against it.

As human beings, we are creatures of habit, some of them not so helpful. From the perspective of managing conflict, our deeply entrenched predisposition to overestimate threats and underestimate opportunities is a touch unfortunate. It's a phenomenon called negativity bias.

Oftentimes we take differences in opinions about what needs to be done (task conflict) or controversies about how the job should be done (process conflict)

as personal slights. These disagreements can fester and quickly escalate into relationship conflict that triggers the vicious circle of further undermining trust, cohesion, morale and performance.

Simply being aware of our innate motivation to 'take things the wrong way' is a crucial first step in restoring objectivity and combatting our naturally critical reactions.

Take in the good

Detecting and neutralising the negative emotions we feel towards someone that's causing us some distress is easy to say, but like so many personal change endeavours, hard to achieve. By forcing ourselves to 'take in the good,' we lay down new neural pathways in our brains, strengthening our chances of experiencing more of the positive emotions that reduce our inborn negativity bias.

Here are some ways to prevent simple disagreements escalating into personalising:

- Focus on what others bring to the relationship, rather than on what they don't, won't or can't do
- Articulate what you most value and appreciate in the other person when they aren't their best
- Force yourself to pick out the '3 positives' from each experience, no matter how much negativity is required
- Remember to savour good experiences, to soothe and replace the negatives.

The starting point in conflict resolution

When you feel stressed, tense or in conflict with another person, it can be hard to respond in helpful and constructive ways. Whether at work or with your family, once things have become

To get the 10 Ground rules for resolving conflict, you will have to purchase the e-book!