

# SUSTAINABLE LIFE SKILLS CAFÉ TOOLBOX

6 modules and 18 lesson templates of practical-based learning material

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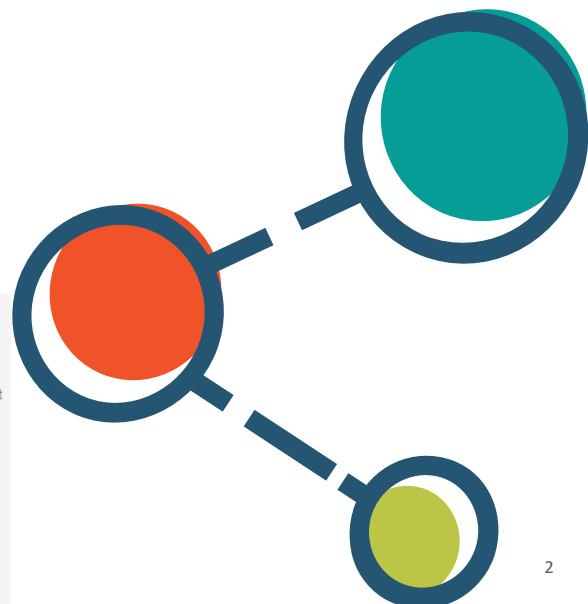
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## 01 | Guide to this Toolbox:

Within the Sustainable Life Skills Cafe PR1 toolbox, each part consists of several lessons. There are a total of **6** modules and **18** lesson templates included in this practical-based learning material. This publication contains a constructive structure including a logical sequence of lessons. Therefore, it is recommended not to change the sequence of the lessons. However, the trainers/tutors and practitioners might decide to leave out a specific lesson or activity or to extend another of the modules. And, for example, if there is not sufficient time to complete during Life Skills Cafe gatherings, it is also possible to apply the pick and choose approach.

This publication is written so that anybody, but specifically low-skilled/disadvantaged adults can benefit from it along with facilitation of tutors, mentors, coaches etc. In this way, we first pave the way on how to perform these tools in informal learning environments and then it enables peer education as well. This means that for example an adult participant can deliver a session to other participants. All the lessons include practical activities for the learners in the context of sustainable life skills mindset. The activities are closely related to practice and the real world. In this way the course encourages practical learning. Learners should be encouraged to ask questions, as many questions as they can think of.

## 02 | How to Use Lessons in the Training Material

In order to complete and facilitate the impact of the Training Material it is deemed important to provide a set of informal activities ready to be used by practitioners around the facilitators of Sustainable Life Skills Cafes. Activities should not be taken as isolated events but considered as a process contributing to the personal growth of the learner and its development in terms of life skills mindset.

Each lesson comes with a step-by-step instruction planning to guide some trainers/tutors/facilitators performing the activity. The following lessons will offer an opportunity to stimulate the learners'

reflections and skills through practical, participatory and dialogue-based experiences.

By following these lessons, participants will practice a list of competences which is based upon the European Competence Framework for better lives, also known as LifeComp. This Framework aims to build consensus around a common understanding of Life Skills Competence by defining **9** competence areas (see image below). These competences are linked to the lessons in this training course.

## 03 | Sustainable Life Skills Competence Framework

Empowering and supporting disadvantaged adults plays a key role in Europe’s Economy since these adults are in a vulnerable state in the labor market, many of them lacking the skills, work experience, job-search abilities and financial resources to find employment. The LifeComp Framework presented in this report proposes a concept of “Sustainable Life Skills” that can be explained in connection with internal capacities and behaviors that allow individuals to “build the needed competencies for human development and to adopt positive behaviors

that enable them to deal effectively with the challenges.

LifeComp is a conceptual framework that describes 9 competencies (P1-3, S1-3, L1-3) that can be learned by everyone in formal, informal and non-formal education. These Competencies are structured in 3 intertwined competence areas: Personal, Social, and Learning to learn. Each of the-areas is made up of 3 competencies, which, together, constitute the building blocks of Life Skills as a competence.

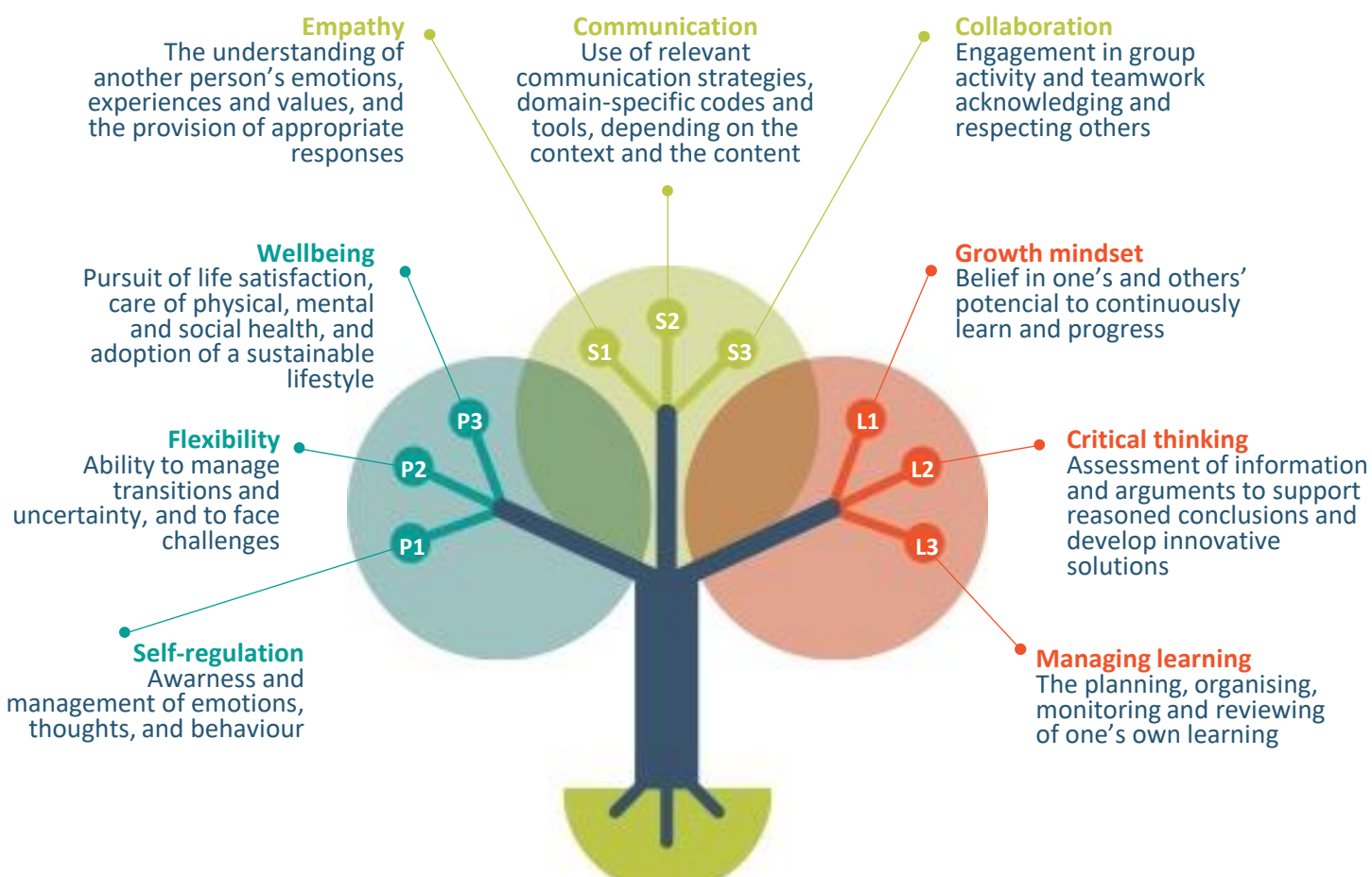


Figure 1: LifeComp Tree of competences describes nine competencies, organised in three areas: The “personal” area (P1, P2, P3), the “social” area (S1, S2, S3) and the “learning to learn” area (L1, L2, L3)  
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LifeComp can be used as a basis for the development of curricula and learning activities fostering personal, and social development, and learning to learn.

# 03

## RELATIONSHIPS

- 3.1 Change of Ideal Images
- 3.2 Positive Conflict Resolution
- 3.3 Creative Ways of Solving Conflict & Win-win Situation





## Relationships

Relationships are an essential part of our everyday life. Whether it's a relationship with your partner, best friend, family, coworker, or a neighbour. Some of them are easier, or more formal. Others are more intimate, and their quality has a large impact on our happiness.

Maintaining a strong relationship requires constant care and communication, and certain traits have been shown to be especially important for fostering healthy relationships. Each individual should, for starters, feel confident that their partner is willing to devote time and attention to the other. They must both also be committed to accommodating their differences, even as those change over time.

The relationship to oneself is equally important as all the other relationships with others in your life. If you are not in a good place, characterized by balance, compassion, and inner peace, you are likely in no position to do your best work or be the best partner, parent, or friend that you can be. You will benefit if you work on this relationship as well.

The activities in the sessions are formulated towards adults but can be adapted for different target groups if necessary.

# 3.1

## Change of Ideal Images

### Aim

- Re-evaluating one's own self-image
- Fostering a positive self-image
- Learning the mechanisms to regulate images



### Activities

- 30 minutes - Warm-up Activity: **Scrapbooking**
- 30 minutes - Body Activity: **Hope and Fears- Design Thinking**
- 40 minutes- Follow-up Activity: **Tree of Hope**



### Resources

- **Warm-up Activity:** Pen & paper
- **Body Activity:** Pen & paper
- **Follow-up Activity:** Pen & paper (optional)



### Lifecomp Competencies Covered

- **P3.1** Awareness that individual behaviour, personal characteristics and social and environmental factors influence health and wellbeing
- **P1.1** Awareness and expression of personal emotions, thoughts, values, and behaviour
- **P1.3** Nurturing optimism, hope, resilience, self-efficacy and a sense of purpose to support learning and action



### Duration

- 55 minutes



### Keywords

- Image, self-image, self-esteem



# Warm-Up

## Three Good People

Digital or non-digital  
tool: Non-digital

Suggested level of  
difficulty: Intermediate

### Instructions of the Activity:

Sit down in a quiet place, so you can focus. On a piece of paper, you will write 3 sections of text.

#### 1. Think about a Fictional Character

- Name an inspiring character from a book, or a TV show.
- Next list their strengths and describe how they use their strengths to overcome challenges, or in everyday life.

#### 2. Think about an Inspiring person you know

- Name an inspiring person you know.
- List their strengths and describe how they use their strengths to overcome challenges, or in everyday life.

#### 3. Think About Yourself

- List your strengths, describe how you use your strengths in everyday life.
- Describe how you have used your strengths to overcome a specific challenge.

It is important to think about the people and skills that you write down. Try to be as specific or particular, as possible. This will allow you to better understand the strengths you admire.

### Supplies Needed:

For this activity you will need a paper and pen only and a quiet place to sit down and reflect on your thoughts. Optionally, you can also write this activity on a laptop or tablet.





## Change of Ideal Images: Body Activity

Self-image is not permanently fixed. Part of our self-image is dynamic and changing. We can learn to develop a healthier and more accurate view of ourselves, thus challenging the distortions in the mirror.

Choose one or more activities from the list and write down the answers. The more precise you can be with your answers, the more impact will the exercise have.

You can also implement these steps by regular daily or weekly journaling, or whenever you feel overwhelmed, need a reminder or clear your head. Keep in mind that these changes don't happen overnight and there is no magical exercise or activity that can change it. However, with consistent and regular practice, they have the ability to change our self-image.

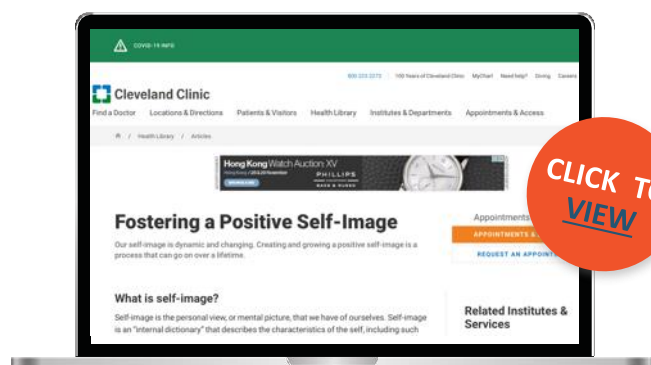
## Fostering a Positive Self-Image

### Description:

Self-image is the personal view, or mental picture, that we have of ourselves. Self-image is an "internal dictionary" that describes the characteristics of the self, including such things as intelligent, beautiful, ugly, talented, selfish, and kind.

### Specific steps to develop a positive self-image:

- Take a self-image inventory.
- Make a list of your positive qualities.
- Ask significant others to describe your positive qualities.
- Define personal goals and objectives that are reasonable and measurable.
- Confront thinking distortions.
- Identify and explore the impact of childhood labels.
- Refrain from comparing yourself to others.
- Develop your strengths.
- Learn to love yourself.
- Give positive affirmations.
- Remember that you are unique.
- Remember how far you have come.

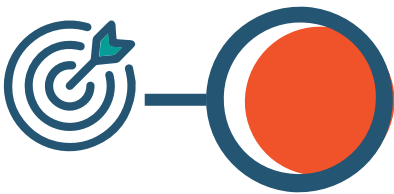


# Follow-Up

## Challenging Negative Thoughts



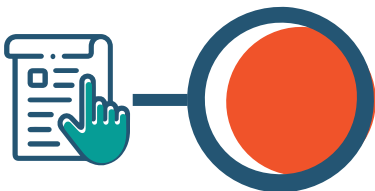
**Digital or non-digital tool: Non-digital**  
**Suggested level of difficulty: Intermediate**



### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Paper
- Pen

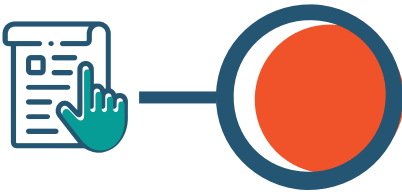
Often, we might find ourselves thinking a negative thought that feels like it just appeared out of nowhere. And while we cannot stop it from appearing, we can choose how we react to it. We are able to dictate how it affects us and what power it holds over us. If your negative thoughts overwhelm you, practice thinking about them in a different way.



Depression, poor self-esteem, and anxiety are often the result of irrational negative thoughts. Someone who regularly receives positive feedback at work might feel that they are horrible at their job because of one critical comment. Their irrational thoughts about job performance will dictate how they feel about themselves.

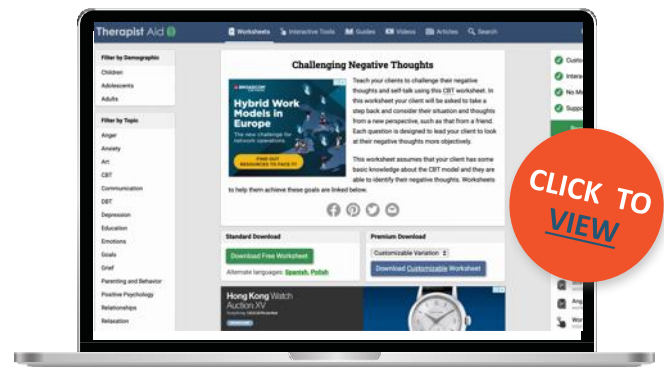
Irrational thoughts can often be untrue and challenging them can help us change these thoughts. However, this does not happen overnight, and it takes intention and practice to alter or replace them. One way of doing so is to look at your thoughts from a higher perspective. Try to look at them more objectively to gain a better understanding of if they have any rational basis or if you're just being too hard on yourself.

# Follow-Up: Challenging Negative Thoughts



- Is there substantial evidence for my thought?
- Is there evidence contrary to my thought?
- Am I attempting to interpret this situation without all the evidence?
- What would a friend think about this situation?
- If I look at the situation positively, how is it different?
- Will this matter a year from now?
- How about five years from now?

Afterwards open your eyes and reflect. Were you just overthinking or negatively framing a situation? Did these questions help you realise anything?



# 3.2

## Positive Conflict Resolution

### Aim



- Learn to reach an adequate compromise
- Create a more positive environment
- Develop teamwork and communication

### Activities



- 10 minutes - Warm-up Activity: **Say, hear, mean**
- 30 minutes - Body Activity: **How to Resolve Conflicts in Relationships**
- 30 minutes - Follow-up Activity: **Make-Believe Mediations**

### Resources



- **Warm-up Activity:** None
- **Body Activity:** Paper and pens (optional)
- **Follow-up Activity:** Paper and pens, video/picture material

### LifeComp Competencies Covered



- **S3.2** Understanding the importance of trust, respect for human dignity and equality, coping with conflicts and negotiating disagreements to build and sustain fair and respectful relationships
- **S2.2** Understanding and managing interactions and conversations in different socio-cultural contexts and domain-specific situations
- **S2.1** Awareness of the need for a variety of communication strategies, language registers, and tools that are adapted to context and content

### Duration



- 70 minutes

### Keywords



- Conflict, resolution, relationship, communication, active listening

# Positive Conflict Resolution:

## Warm-up Activity

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Intermediate

This is a simple warmup exercise, that utilises active listening and is suitable to use in almost any situation. It can be used in a professional setting, to clarify tasks, or in a personal setting to clear up a misunderstanding that might become a conflict later on.

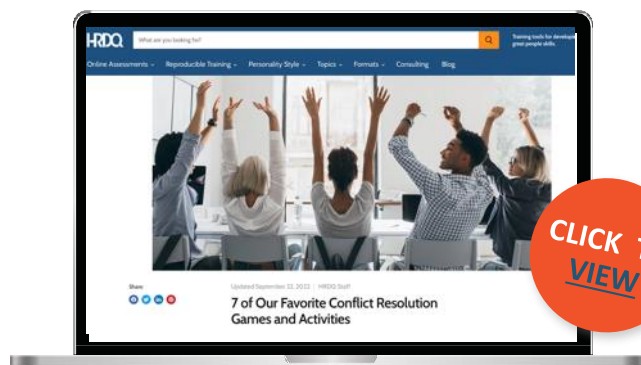
While extremely simple, such short clarification can have a big impact on your relationship and communication. We often perceive things from a slightly different angle or point of view as others. Therefore, we should aim to avoid conflicts that come from miscommunication a disconnect, but instead communicate our thoughts explicitly.

# Say, Hear, Mean

## Description:

This exercise works the best with two participants.

- The first person begins with a statement. The statement should be innocuous, like "When will you have X task completed?"
- The second person interprets this statement uncharitably, the way they might if they're looking for subtext. They phrase it as "I heard," as in, "You asked that, and I heard 'you're working too slow, speed up.'"
- The first speaker refutes this with an "I meant" statement. As in, "You heard 'you're working too slow,' but I meant 'I need to know a timeline so I can plan the rest of my day.'"



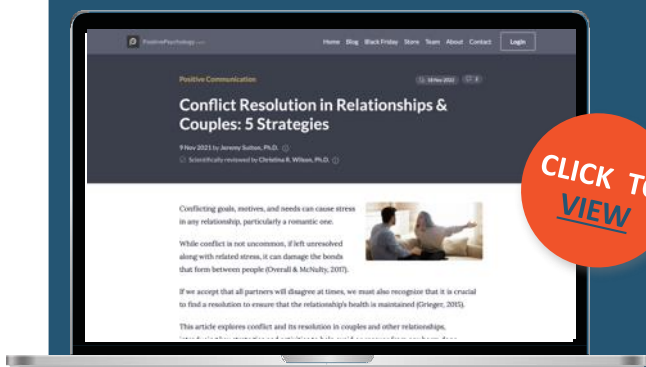
# Positive Conflict Resolution: Body Activity

Conflict and its resolution in couples and other relationships is key for a healthy partnership, introducing key strategies and activities to help avoid or recover from any harm done has great benefits in in harmonious everyday life.

## Supplies needed:

- Paper
- Pens

When encountering a conflict, think about these 4 steps before you try to resolve it. Keep in mind, that these steps can be applied to almost any type of conflict, regardless of the topic, as long as you are committed to solving the problem.



# How to Resolve Conflicts in Relationships

## Description:

### 4 steps: How to resolve conflicts in relationships

#### Step 1 – Eliminate relationship disturbances

Firstly, it is vital to remove or at least reduce emotions that will get in the way of conflict resolution, such as hurt, anger, and resentment. Otherwise, either side is unlikely to listen patiently and openly to what the other is saying.

#### Step 2 – Commit to a win-win posture

Each party must commit to finding a solution that works equally for both. One side winning while the other loses is not acceptable. The couple must remain motivated and open to change.

#### Step 3 – Adopt purposeful listening

A win-win solution is more likely when each partner is actively listening to the other. Each individual knows what a win looks like for themselves but now must purposefully listen to the other, avoiding censorship or judgment. Once both have a shared understanding, a win-win solution is possible.

#### Step 4 – Practice synergistic brainstorming

The couple can progress toward identifying a workable resolution, having removed any emotional contamination, adopted a win-win mindset, and fully committed to a win for both. The couple can share ideas, hopes, needs, goals, and concerns until finding a solution that satisfies both of them.

# 5 Helpful Strategies

Conflict can become an unhealthy habit, leading to a repeating pattern of one or both partners consistently feeling they have lost. It's important to consider what brought the couple together in the first place and what they can do more or less of to show their feelings and understand one another better going forward.

**1**

## Launching and landing rituals

Heading out to work, school, or the store is described as launching, a time when one partner leaves the relationship world for the non-relationship world. Launchings and landings (returning to the relationship) can be an opportunity for conflict or the perfect chance to build healthy relationship-building habits.

### Ask yourself:

- Do you run out the door?
- Do you give a lingering kiss and share a moment?
- Do you return, slamming the door as you come in and ask what's for dinner?
- Do you walk in with a smile and a funny story to tell?

What is right for one couple may not be for the next. It is essential to consider the message sent by each partner's behaviour. An enjoyable farewell and return can, in time, improve connections and reduce the risk of conflict.

**2**

## Blueprint for love

Conflict often arises from misunderstandings or a failure to consider the other's needs and wishes. Understanding what a loving relationship looks like to your partner may make it easier to recognise what upsets or frustrates them.

**3**

## Nothing swept under the rug

Conflict is often unavoidable and sometimes outside of our control. However, how we respond to disagreements, harsh words, and arguments is. Couples should adopt the "policy never to avoid anything, no matter how difficult." Not leaving things

to fester and returning at a later date requires paying attention to one another and recognising what is sensitive for the other person. Aim to discuss and agree on a mutually beneficial outcome as soon as possible after an issue occurs. If that's not possible, then agree when it can be discussed.

**4**

## Revisiting the past

Sometimes couples forget what they saw in each other when they first met. Instead, they become wrapped up in repeating patterns of arguing, disagreements, and conflict. Revisiting the past can serve as a helpful reminder of what is good about a couple and review why they are together.

### Consider and discuss the following relationship therapy questions:

- What made you fall in love with each other?
- What were your early years like together?
- How were things better then?
- How are things better now?
- How do you currently show your partner that you care?
- What does your partner do that makes you feel loved?
- What caring behaviours can you do more of or start?

**5**

## Focus on good communication

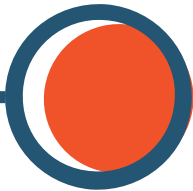
Clear, open, and complete dialogue is crucial to a successful relationship and reducing conflict. Sharing and understanding are best achieved when we are not projecting our own beliefs about a partner or what they are going to say but genuinely paying attention to verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Effective listening takes practice. Focus on your partner, what they have to say, and how they act; do not divide attention by looking at your phone or people passing by. Hear what they are saying and how they say it, rather than attending to your own thoughts. And crucially, be comfortable with moments of silence and practice nonjudgment.

# Follow-Up

## Make-Believe Mediations

Digital or non-digital  
tool: Digital

Suggested level of  
difficulty: Intermediate



### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Paper
- Pens
- Video/picture material

This activity builds skills in a low-risk setting. It utilises popular clips and figures that are generally known, to resolve a conflict in a more relaxed way.

For this activity you will need to show a clip from a movie or read a scene from a book. Alternatively, you can also pick a famous feud of people from real-life (as long as everyone is familiar with the feud).

- Challenge the participants to solve the spat. You can have them talk through the scenario or act it out.
- Let them pretend that they are the HR team for the Avengers, trying to settle the tension between Iron Man and Captain America from the Civil War film.
- Or they might be education representatives from the Ministry of Magic, visiting Hogwarts to help the faculty confront Dumbledore about his hiring choices for the Defence Against the Dark Arts position.
- Pick a pop culture reference that is well-known, or one that is summarized in a short clip, since this diffuses tension.

By incorporating a famous scene, the participants can distance themselves from the given conflict and they will be able to solve it more effectively and with a cool head. Due to the fact that it is not their personal conflict, it is likely that they will learn to systematically solve the problem, and later on use this skill in everyday life.



# 3.3

## Creative Ways of Solving Conflict & Win-win Situation

### Aim



- **S2.3** Listening to others and engaging in conversations with confidence, assertiveness, clarity and reciprocity, both in personal and social contexts
- **S3.2** Understanding the importance of trust, respect for human dignity and equality, coping with conflicts and negotiating disagreements to build and sustain fair and respectful relationships
- **S3.3** Fair sharing of tasks, resources and responsibility within a group taking into account its specific aim; eliciting the expression of different views and adopting a systemic approach

### Activities



- 10 minutes - Warm-up Activity: **The Handshake Exercise**
- 25 minutes - Body Activity: **How to Create a Win-Win Situation**
- 20 minutes - Follow-up Activity: **Island Survival Game**

### Resources



- **Warm-up Activity:** None
- **Body Activity:** Paper and pens (optional)
- **Follow-up Activity:** Paper and pens

### Lifecomp Competencies Covered



- Communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, active listening

### Duration



- 55 minutes

### Keywords



- Conflict, resolution, communication

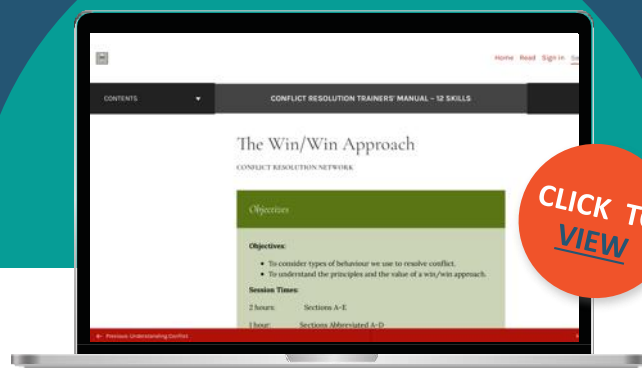
# Warm-Up

## The Handshake Exercises

The aim of the activity is to show how frequently the concept of winning is tied to the idea of someone else losing and how this influences our approach to a task. It is a relatively simple exercise, that can be used with all age groups and target groups and can be done anywhere.

This activity works best, what the participants have no background concepts before playing.

- To start, stand facing the other participant, put one arm forward and take the other person's hand, as if you were shaking it.
- Your job is to win as many points as you can. You score a point every time you get the other person's hand to your hip (this means getting both your arms, still in a handshake position, towards you, to your hip, e.g. next to you).
- The exercise is set up in as neutral a way as possible, so that people will project onto the instructions their natural inclination. Be sure to keep count of points.
- Each round should be between 30 seconds and 1 minute.
- Allow as many rounds as you see, but ideally 10 to 30 rounds (you can do more, if the activity is enjoyable).
- At the end count the scores and have a discussion about the differences in the number of points people achieved, and how they did it.



- Who scored more than 20?
- Less than 10?
- How did you/they do it?
- How did you interpret "you" in the instructions – as an individual, a pair?
- Did the idea of "winning" imply "losing" as well?
- For someone to win, did the other have to lose?
- Who discussed it with their partner?
- What was discussed?
- Who changed strategy during the exercise?
- Why?

When we're in conflict with someone else, do we frequently approach it thinking that one person will win and the other will lose? In conflict, are there times when we use the same approach as we did in the exercise? Are there other occasions when we use a different approach?

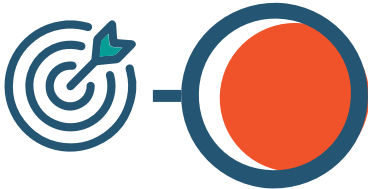
# Body activity

## How to Create a Win-Win Situation

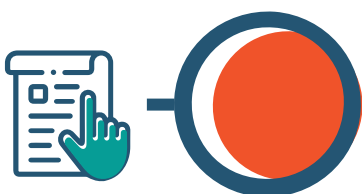


### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Paper
- Pens



A win-win negotiation is a careful exploration of both your own position, and that of your opposite number, in order to find a mutually acceptable outcome that gives you both as much of what you want as possible. If you both walk away happy with what you've gained from the deal, then that's a win-win!



### INSTRUCTIONS

Make a list of the current challenges or conflicts that you have with your partner or friend. After you have established your priorities, ask yourselves the following questions:

1. Who are the parties involved? (Acknowledge the conflict)
2. Where is the common ground? (Gain points of agreement common ground)
3. What is each party's viewpoint (seek to understand all sides of the issue)?
4. What are the potential solutions that would benefit everyone involved? (Attack the challenge, not the people)
5. What must we do to accomplish our goals? (Develop a specific, time-bound action plan.)

Remember, conflict can be beneficial. Seek to embrace conflict in a positive way to create a win-win situation in business that benefits everyone.



## Description:

01

### **If Conflict Exists, Acknowledge It.**

Although this step can be difficult, acknowledging the conflict will inspire a sense of relief. When individuals share a commitment to work jointly towards agreed-upon solutions, they will become partners in the process.

02

### **Find Common Ground Between the Parties Involved.**

View conflict from the perspective of the shared goal. What is the vision that unifies both individuals in the relationship, despite their differences? If you are both committed to the same thing and can find common ground, you should be willing to address any issue that threatens this.

03

### **Understand All Sides of the Issue.**

Gaining understanding does not mean gaining agreement. One person does not need to agree with a different point of view to understand another's perspective. The purpose of this step is to gain the information you need to be able to put yourself in the other person's shoes, try to comprehend and understand their points of view.



## 04

### **Attack the Issue, Not Each Other.**

When individuals are attacked, rather than attacking the issue at hand, everybody loses. Learning how to confront the issues will create an environment conducive to dialogue and conflict resolution and will result in relationships that function at a higher level. The goal is to reach a collaborative solution that allows each party involved in the conflict to achieve individual and common goals without violating any personal values.

## 05

### **Develop an Action Plan.**

The final step in this process is to outline what each individual is responsible for and how they will meet those obligations. This action plan should be formulated in writing so that each person is able to be accountable for their part of the plan.

## Creative Ways of Solving Conflict & Win-Win situation:

### Follow-Up Activity

This activity is geared towards couples and is meant to simulate conflict resolution in a gamified way. Since the conflict part is not directly tied to the couple, but is a simulation, they can solve it and later use this knowledge, and compromise skills in real life.

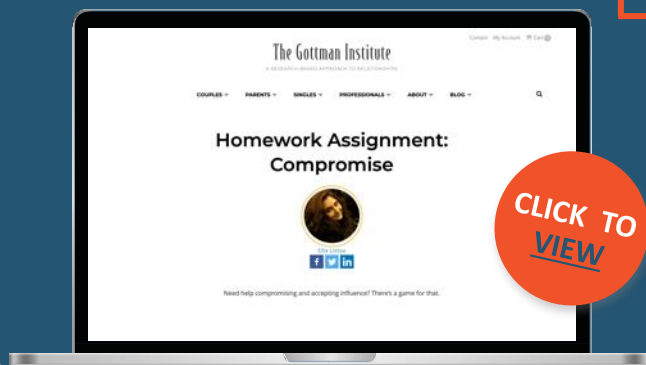
## Island Survival Game

### Description:

Imagine that your cruise ship just sank in the Caribbean, and you awaken to find yourselves on a tropical desert island. The two of you are the only survivors. You have no idea where you are. A storm appears to be on the way. You decide that you need to prepare to survive on this island for some time and make sure you will be spotted by a rescue party. There are a lot of items from the ship on the beach that could help you, but you can only carry ten items.

Each of you writes down on a separate piece of paper what you consider to be the ten most important items to keep from the inventory list below. Then rank-order these items based on their importance to you. Give the most crucial item a 1, the next most important item a 2, and so on.

01



# Creative Ways of Solving Conflict & Win-Win situation: Follow-Up Activity

## Island Survival Game

### Ship's Inventory:

- Two changes of clothing
- AM-FM and short-wave radio receiver
- Ten gallons of water
- Pots and pans
- Matches
- Shovel
- Backpack
- Toilet paper
- Two tents
- Two sleeping bags
- Knife
- Small life raft, with sail
- Sunblock lotion
- Cookstove and lantern
- Long rope
- Two walkie-talkie sender-receiver units
- Freeze-dried food for seven days
- One change of clothing
- One fifth of whiskey
- Flares
- Compass
- Regional aerial maps
- Gun with six bullets
- Fifty packages of condoms
- First-aid kit with penicillin
- Oxygen tanks

02

Share your list with your partner. Together come up with a consensus list of ten items. This means talking it over and working as a team to solve the problem. Both of you need to be influential in discussing your viewpoint and in making the final decisions.

03

Once you compromised on a third list, it's time to evaluate how the game went. Think about how effective you were at influencing your partner and how effective they were at influencing you. Did either of you try to dominate the other, or were you competitive with each other? Ask yourself if you had fun. Did you work well as a team and both felt included or did you sulk, withdraw, express irritability, and anger?

Acknowledge any problem areas and agree to work together on these issues with your partner. Changing bad habits does not happen overnight, but you can move forward if you take responsibility for the part you play in marital troubles caused by issues of compromise.



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