

Curriculum on Life Skills for  
**Adolescents and Youth**

Theme 2



Problem Solving And  
Managing Conflicts



## Theme 2

# Problem Solving and Managing Conflicts

### Lesson 19

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Dealing With Criticism and learning  
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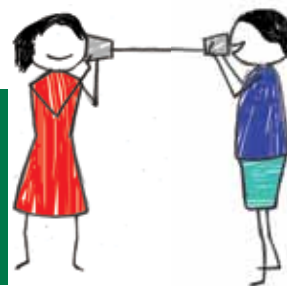






## Lesson 19

# Receiving and Giving Feedback Dealing With Criticism and learning to give Constructive Feedback



### Lesson objectives

- To help the learners to understand the importance of feedback,
- To encourage the learners to give constructive feedback,
- To develop communication skills among learners, and
- To enable the learners to look at criticism objectively.



**Duration: 95 minutes**

### Time break-up

15 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes
Activity 1	Discussions on Activity 1	Activity 2	Discussions on Activity 2	Case study and discussions



### Training materials required

Black board, chalk, sheets of A4 sized paper, colour pencils/sketch pens for participants, snakes and ladders along with dice and pegs

### Conceptual Note

We are all sensitive to our environment- both social and physical. We all have experienced moments of happiness, joy and peace when we get up in the morning while everyone around us is smiling or a nice song that we love is being played somewhere or someone compliments us about how nice we are looking or our teacher praises us for our behaviour. At the same time, we all have also had bad days or bad moments of anger, frustration, feeling low or feeling guilty, anxiety and sadness when people around us have criticized us or made negative remarks about our behaviour or been rude to us. We shuffle between these two extremes like a pendulum a lot of times without being able to control them. Most of the times we are reacting to our environment and not responding. As a result, we behave like a switch which responds to being switched on or off by other people.

We listen to their comments and react so any one in the outside world has the ability to control us and channelize our thoughts and feelings irrespective of how important or unimportant the person is, do we even know him, does the person even value what he or she is saying and various other factors.

The present lesson works on developing skills required to deal with criticism objectively and taking feedback in the right stride. The lesson also helps the learners develop communication skills so that they are able to give constructive feedback.

The facilitator should explain this lesson as a part of the lesson on communication skills for feedback forms an important part of communication process.



## Activity 1: Feedback Process



### Objectives

- To encourage the participants to look at criticism objectively, and
- To empower the learners to overcome feelings of hurt and anger.



The facilitator divides the participants in a group of 4-5 individuals. Each group is given a game of snakes and ladders to play. The only difference in the rules being that if they reach a ladder, two people in the group compliment them about their behaviour or personality and then they climb the ladder. Similarly, when they reach the mouth of the snake, two people will criticize them before they go down. After the groups have finished their game, the facilitator asks the group how they felt about the game.

### Review Questions

The facilitator may carry out a discussion around the following questions:

- How do you feel about the game?
- Which part of the game you liked or disliked and why?
- Can you share one positive and one negative comment that really affected you?
- Analyze the reasons for why this thing affected you as compared to other comments?
- How did you come up with the comments you made? Did you think a lot before making a compliment or a negative remark?
- Were your comments influenced by the way that individual or others commented about you?

### Pointers to be discussed The facilitator

- discusses how the game represents our life where we are busy going our way during different times in our life and where we keep meeting people who encourage us by their compliments or positive comments. As a result, we feel good about ourselves, our self-esteem improves, and we get motivated to carry out our tasks with more energy and alertness. In the same way, we meet people who will pull us down with their negative comments or criticism. These people may be our friends, our family members or someone in our community, who may not want to harm us but they want us to improve and do not know other ways of telling us how to improve. They may also be strangers who don't even know us and have made a comment without even thinking about it. They knowingly or unknowingly affect us.
- stresses how we forget that between their comments and our feelings is our interpretation of their comment. We have different options of how we want to react to the comment. We can just let go a comment feeling bad about it for a few seconds and then not even thinking about it. (Just like a dirty cup, once you have had tea at a dhaba, and if the tea was no good, you just leave the cup there and do not keep thinking about it).

- The other way is to analyze a comment before letting it affect us, such as whether the person really meant it? Does the person even know us? Was the person in the right frame of mind? What was the intention of the comment - was it merely to pull us down or to help us improve? What is in it that i should take and do i believe i need to change that thing? The facilitator discusses how it is important for us to think about all these questions before getting affected by any negative comment.
- Discusses how our views about ourselves affect the way we get influenced such as person with high self esteem, maturity level , optimistic attitude will get less affected by criticism and will be able to look at it more objectively than a person with low self esteem, feeling low, pessimistic attitude, lack of knowledge or self-belief.
- Encourages the participant to draw out one thing they will like to change about themselves based on the comments made by the group members. She stresses on how separating feelings from thoughts will help them in dealing with criticism objectively.



*The facilitator may also point out to the feedback wall, where the learners can be asked to put in their feedback about the sessions held so far. They can be asked to give their feedback based on these three questions:*

- 1. Did you like the sessions you have attended?*
- 2. Write one thing you liked the most?*
- 3. Write one thing you will like to change in the sessions.*

*The facilitator may start by reading out the comments on the wall and discussing the importance of feedback with the learners. She can discuss how their comments can help her improve her behaviour and her sessions making them more interactive and interesting for the learners.*



## Activity 2: Giving and Receiving Feedback



### Objectives

- To enable the learners to differentiate between reaction and response, and
- To help the learners give constructive feedback to others around them.



The facilitator writes different situations on chits of paper. Some of the situations which can be used are:

- You want to tell your friend that she wastes a lot of time talking on phone.
- Tell your friend that a particular colour doesn't suit her at all and she doesn't look good in it.
- Tell your brother how you find one of his behaviours such as pointing out other people's faults openly demeaning and may not be appreciated when he goes for work.
- Tell your sister how you don't like when she leaves everything and doesn't wrap up her things after doing her work.
- Tell your friend how he/she shows disrespect for others and should be corrected.
- Tell your mother how she needs to speak up for her rights and being quite may not be helpful for her.
- Tell your father about his drinking habit and how much you hate it.
- Tell your friend about how you dislike his habit of talking loudly.
- Tell your friend about how you hate it when he/she keeps you waiting.



The participants are made to stand in a circle. Each person is asked to come and pick up a chit. They go to another person in the group who plays the role of the person in the chit. The participant is asked to present an impromptu role play and tell the person without thinking about anything. They have to present it the way they would actually present it.

After half the members of the group have finished, the facilitator encourages the group to think about how they could have presented their feedback or thought to the person in a constructive manner. The facilitator should stress on making the comment very objective, clear and suggesting a positive change in the behaviour rather than criticism. The group can now frame constructive feedbacks to the situations discussed and how they change the course of communication.

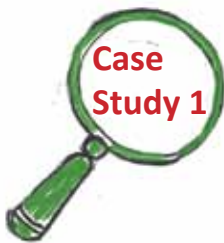


### Pointers to be discussed The facilitator

- Highlights how it is important to give constructive feedback rather than merely criticize the person for that only leads to negative feelings and no positive outcome.
- Can discuss the importance of “I” statements, such as instead of saying, “you don’t know how to behave. You are always trying to bring me down and keep making fun of me in front of others.” You can also say, “I feel hurt when you make fun of me in front of others and are insensitive to me. No one likes to be made fun of. It will be nice if you are more sensitive to other people’s feelings. It will help people be more comfortable in talking to you.”
- Should help them give feedback more objectively and differentiate between their thoughts, feelings and actual problems, so that correct and clear feedback reaches the other person rather than mixed up statements which only lead to anger and resentment.

### Tasks for the learner

The learners are asked to write any three things they will take care of while giving comments or feedback to anyone. The facilitator may ask them to come back with one incident in the coming month where they gave positive feedback to any person, who could be their friend, family member or someone in the community.



### Case Study 1

Harish is 19 years old and is a student of 10th standard. He lives in Manpur village, Jhadol block, Udaipur district, Rajasthan. He wants to become a doctor or a police officer and loves to spend his time, listening to music and reading books. He wants the poverty of his family to come to an end. His father is an alcoholic and regularly beats them and his mother. Most of the income of the family is spent in his alcohol. Earlier when they were young, they couldn’t even afford food. He wants to tell his father to stop drinking and his mother how she should stand up against her husband’s violence. Even though he is tried telling his father or mother that they have always landed up in a fight.

### Questions to be asked

(after reading the case study)

Why do you think Harish lands up getting in a fight with his parents?

Can you suggest some ways to Harish to help him improve his communication with his parents and make some positive changes?

Is giving constructive feedback in this situation similar to giving it to your friend? What are the differences? How do they affect the communication in the family?

What are the other steps Harish will have to take along with communicating positively to improve the condition of his family?

Should Harish ask other people to talk to his parents?



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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Stress Management



## Lesson objectives:

- To encourage the adolescents to identify various stressors in their life,
- To understand effect of stressors on an individual's life,
- To enable adolescents to deal with various stressors in their life, and
- To help adolescents understand the power of positive attitude in their life.



**Duration: 120 minutes**

## Time break-up

25 minutes	20 minutes	35 minutes	20 minutes	20 minutes
Activity 1	Discussion for Activity 1	Activity 2	Discussion for Activity 2	Case study and discussions



## Training Materials required

Black board, chalk, sheets of A4 sized paper, and colour pencils/sketch pens for participants, newspaper, fevicol or gum, any decorative material that can be provided easily to the group, such as glitters.

## Conceptual Note

*Stress is a common word used by everyone now a days. Even a 5 year old child can tell you he is under lot of stress due to her parents. Lots of people are suffering from various health problems such as heart problems, high blood pressure, and diabetes due to stress. Various health units, hospitals and international agencies are working towards helping people develop skills that help them deal with stress. Though stressors and their effects may vary according to the situation we are in, none of us can claim that our life is untouched by the word stress. In order to deal with this most common ailment, conflict or problem 'stress', we need to first understand what stress is.*



*Imagine a situation where you have to study for your exams, you have to earn for your daily living and someone is not well in your family, being an elder child you will have to run around to take him to the hospital. What will be your responses to the situation? How do you think your body will cope with it? Will you feel everything is crumbling down and you need to take charge of the situation? How will you react emotionally to such a situation? All your responses to such a situation which goes beyond your coping ability is called 'stress'.*

*Stress is both a cause and effect. It can be caused due to various demands such as being under pressure due to exams and choosing a career. At the same time it can affect our performance in both our exams and entrance tests, thus, adding to more stress. As a result, it becomes a vicious cycle which needs to be broken at some level by an individual.*

*While we are talking about stress being caused by too many demands, high self expectations of oneself and various other factors. Can you imagine stress being caused by doing nothing?*

## Activity 1: Aspects of Stress



### Objectives

- To encourage the participants to have a goal-oriented life,
- To help the participants understand the concept of stress and various factors causing it, and
- To elaborate on the positive effects of stress.



The facilitator asks the learners to sit quietly for ten minutes and do nothing. They are not allowed to move around or talk to anyone. They cannot use their phone or read anything. They just have to sit quietly. Do not allow them to write anything either. The facilitator keeps walking around the room observing everyone. You will find people fiddling with their things, looking at their watch, doodling on the note pad, looking at each other and trying to talk.

Once the time is over, the facilitator now asks them how they felt in those past ten minutes, where they just had to sit free, not do anything. Were they able to enjoy these ten minutes? Will they like to live like this?

Extension: After discussion, the facilitator may tell them that now all of them have to sing a song. They will be asked to walk in the middle of the group and sing a song. Responses of each individual may be noted by the facilitator. The facilitator stresses how unexpected demand from the environment, however small may influence their behavior and cause stress.

### Pointers to be discussed The facilitator

- Discusses the concept of stress by talking about their verbal and non-verbal reactions to both the situations, how did they feel and act, were they under any kind of pressure and who created that pressure. She tells them that how all their responses are a part of stress.
- Shares how we get stressed even by doing nothing in our lives, such as some adolescents sit around and waste their time doing nothing. They will not study or will generally keep talking to their friends the whole day. This also adds to a lot of stress for when you want to do something, suddenly you realize that lot of time has gone waste and you are left with very limited



time, may be because your exams are approaching or you don't have time to prepare for your college or you have lot of household work left.

- Analyses the positive effects of stress such as how some amount of stress is good for a person to work hard. She can give examples of how we all have people around us who sit and do nothing. They have no aspirations or goals and they don't want to achieve anything. They don't want to rise higher in life and improve their standard of living. These people do not undergo any kind of stress and therefore, make no effort in their life to improve it. The right amount of stress required to make us work hard is explained through the figure given below. This amount of stress helps us work towards our goal and do something in life. It doesn't interfere with our performance, rather motivates us to work hard and improve our life conditions.
- Should conduct a brainstorming session with the group to come out with various factors that cause stress in their life. She may also include factors such as, high self expectation of oneself, unrealistic body image so we are trying to look thin (especially in case of girls) or muscular (especially in case of boys), high expectations of parents, wish to achieve a lot in short period of time, peer pressure and so on. She should also point out the role of adverse physical environment, such as living in unhealthy and unhygienic conditions, overcrowding, bad weather, etc. She can list out all the causes of stress on the board under different categories, such as self, family, friends, physical environment.



### Conceptual Note

*Stress affects an individual's well being and functioning in different ways. It affects our:*

- *Thoughts, we tend to have more negative thoughts and would look for blaming others, etc.*
- *Health, we are more susceptible to diseases such as high blood pressure, heart diseases, etc. or immunity gets lowered and we become more vulnerable to catching infections.*
- *Emotions, we feel sadder, depressed, angry, irritated, frustrated, when we are under stress.*
- *Behaviour, we react more easily and aggressively towards others, we will generally like to sit quietly or do nothing, and we may also keep brooding about same thoughts and keep saying the same thing again and again.*

*These are just some of the examples of how an individual's behavioural, emotional, physiological and social aspects may be affected by stress.*

*However, how each individual gets affected is dependent on*

- *person's - personality, temperament, attitude, health conditions, physical immunity, such as if the person has positive attitude, his chances of getting affected by the stressor are much lower as compared to a person who has a pessimistic attitude. Similarly, if the person keeps poor health, he will find it more difficult to cope with stress.*
- *Environment - kind of support available from family and friends, resources available such as good teacher or books being available to study better.*
- *stressor- whether the individual feel any control over the stressor or not, whether it is a predictable or an unpredictable stressor, whether stressor is going to stay for long term or will get over easily such as short term illness, etc*

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Thus, the affect of stressor on an individual is dependent on all these factors

While we analysed all these factors, it is imperative to know that the affect of stressor is highly dependent on the way we look at it. such as if we are stressed about choosing our career and taking admission in a college, and we think we can ask lot of people, get information about the colleges available and we have enough time to choose our career, we are likely to get less stressed as compared to a situation where we feel nothing is in our favour.

### **Coping with stress**

While we all suffer from stress, some of us are able to cope better with it because we do regular exercises, eat healthy food, have positive thoughts, spend quality time with our family and friends, live in a positive and hygienic environment. Coping with stress involves coping at two levels:

**Level 1:** Coping with emotional effects of stress by talking to your friends or family members, crying it out, going out in the field and spending some time alone, meditating, watching television, counting your blessings, listening to your favourite song, singing to yourself, helping others, etc.

**Level 2:** Coping with the stressor. This step involves clearly finding out the stressor and the results objectively. Lot of times, we tend to see the effects negatively and would multiply them, such as if a person has got late, we would presume all kinds of negative outcomes, rather than being realistic about it. The first step is to identify the stressor and its effects objectively. The second step will include thinking about the ways of dealing with it. You should try to list out all the ways rather than just take the first solution that comes to your mind. Such as, if you need money, the first thought that may come your way is o go to the money lender. However, you should remember how people suffer in the hands of the money lender. Therefore, you should think of other places from where you can borrow money easily, such as bank. The third step involves making and following an action plan. Lot of times, we just sit back and do nothing about the stressor. Once you have made an action plan, you need to act upon it. If the action plan doesn't work, keep the other alternatives in mind.

These coping mechanisms work better in a healthy body, mind and environment.

## **Activity 2: Coping Strategies of Stress**



### **Objectives**

- To empower the adolescents to come up with various coping strategies,
- To encourage the learners to think of ways to apply these coping strategies in their lives, and
- To develop positive thought among adolescents.



The facilitator hands over an empty box to each participant. They can even be asked to get it from their house. Each participant is told that they have twenty minutes. They need to go around the room and outside and put anything they will like to in their box. They can put anything they want to and it's completely their choice. After 20 minutes are over, they are asked to get back in the group and share what did they get and why.



### **Pointers to be discussed** **The facilitator**

- Highlights how the box acts like their own life. Some things are given such as the kind of box, space available in the box were already pre-decided. These resemble things like where you are born, your family, etc. All these things you cannot change, but what you put inside your box is your decision. So when you have filled your box too much, you may be trying too much in your life in very little time. While, if you haven't filled your box at all or you have kept in very few things, may be its time to rethink and fill it up to the optimum level, using your talents to their optimum level.
- Stresses on how it helps to be conscious of your decisions and thoughts in life. She also discusses how we should try and take charge of our life.
- Discusses various coping mechanisms with the adolescents using situations from their life. She can take any one situation as an example and discuss step-by-step ways of how the person can deal with the stressor at both the levels.
- May also conduct a meditation session with the group, where the group is asked to sit with their eyes closed and soft music is played in the room. They are asked to let go of any thoughts and relax completely focusing their mind on any object. The object could be a candle flame, a dot or any idol, whatever they feel comfortable with. They are asked to not pay attention to the thoughts that are coming and simply observe them.

### **Tasks for the learner**

- The learners are asked to think about any one situation that causes stress in their life. They are asked to think of ways they would use to deal with it now. They can come back and share with the group their stressor and coping mechanism.
- The group can be encouraged to think of creative ways of dealing with stress and each one is asked to come up with at least 2 different and unique ways of dealing with stress in their own or friend's life.





Padmini is 14 years old and is studying in 9th standard. She has 11 family members with seven sisters, two brothers. She is closest to her elder sister as she is caring. Her elder sister takes family decisions in consultation with her parents. She helps her family in household chores and agricultural work. She dropped out of school after she passed 8th standard due to poverty. She stayed for one year and did agricultural work. This year again she enrolled in class 9th standard due to her parents' pressure. She has to go back home and take care of household chores.

She considers herself to be simple and helpful to her friends. She wants to study further and get a job. She considers her school teacher as her role model as she admires her struggle to become a teacher.



**Reflections: (to be written by the facilitator about the session)**

[illegible]

**My Learnings: (to be written by the facilitator about what did he/she learn from the session)**

[illegible]



## Lesson 21

# Solving Problems



### Lesson objectives

- To help the adolescents look at problems as challenges which help the individuals grow stronger,
- To empower adolescents to be able to deal with the challenges they face in life,
- To develop problem solving capacities of the participants,
- To enhance application of critical thinking and creative thinking of the adolescents, and
- To encourage adolescents to identify the right problem and find a solution to their problems.



**Duration: 90 minutes**

### Time break-up

15 minutes	25 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes	10 minutes
Activity 1	Discussions on Activity 1	Activity 2	Discussions on Activity 2	Case study and discussions



### Training Materials required

Black board, chalk, sheets of A4 sized paper, and colour pencils/sketch pens for participants, any electronic device to play music

### Conceptual Note

*The word 'problem' is a word no one likes to hear. All of us are very good counsellors and problem solvers but for others. As soon as we hear our friend's problems, we all have solutions. How many of us have seen our neighbours and relatives trying to advise us about how should we deal with problems we are facing. The saddest part is when it comes to solving our own problems, we look towards others and keep taking our decisions based on what others have to suggest.*

*Problem solving is an effective skill that needs to be developed, so that we can find the best possible, rational solution to our challenges. Problem solving can be seen as a step-by-step thought process which aims at finding a path to the goal where none seems possible.*

*The first step in problem solving is identifying the real problem. Most of the times, we look for solutions without identifying the real problem. Such as - when you start going to school and studying regularly, your parents feel that you have become independent and have stopped listening to them. Though the real problem may be that you have gained some more information which your parents are not aware of and you are acting from that perspective. Therefore, the problem is that your parents are unaware of your world and do not feel a part of it.*

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*The second step is to look for as many solutions as possible and evaluate each solution. Such as: for the problem given above, different solutions could be discussed with your parents like telling them what you learn at school, talking and listening to your parent's perspective, etc.*

*The third step will be to evaluate various solutions and check which solution works most for you and your parents. After you have found the most feasible solution and applied it, it would be a good idea to review it.*

## Activity: Dealing with Challenges

### Objectives

- To help the participants see problems as challenges and opportunities in life, and
- To develop positive attitude towards various problems.



1

Each participant is asked to pair up with another participant. The group stands in two concentric circles where one participant stands behind the paired participant.

2

The group is told that the person standing behind them is their problem in life and is going to follow them like a shadow. It is once in a life time chance for them to make their problem do what they want them to do. They can run, jump, dance, skip and do whatever they want to do and their problem has to follow them. The person standing behind has to do whatever the person does and follow the person in the same way. After they have understood, the facilitator gives all of them a go ahead and observes all of them. She may have to encourage some in case she feels some people are not challenging their partners. The facilitator asks them to stop after 3-4 minutes.

3

Then the roles are changed. The person standing behind is asked to move in front and now the other person becomes their problem. They have to follow the same instructions. The facilitator lets them carry out the activity for 3-4 minutes.

### Review Questions

- How did you feel when you were making your problem dance on your fingers?
- Were the ideas coming easily or it took you some time to work around it?
- Can we have a similar attitude in our daily life?
- Why do we have problems?
- How do problems help us?



### Pointers to be discussed

- The facilitator discusses how they enjoyed this exercise because they felt that they had control over their lives. They could make the problem do what they wanted them to do. The biggest difference was their attitude which was positive and was looking at ways of making things tough for their problems.
- The facilitator stresses how problems are important and make us work towards better things in life. Most of the inventions were a result of someone realizing that there is a problem and working on it.
- The group is told how their attitude plays a major role in dealing with the problem, for when they see them as challenges and opportunities; they do not get highly stressed and can look for better solutions.

### Helpers for problem solving

- 1 Remember, every problem has a solution, otherwise it is not a problem. You might not be able to see the solution immediately, but thinking creatively and critically, helps in finding one
  - 2 Try to gain more and more information about the world around you
  - 3 Encourage yourself while applying the solution. Though things may not seem right immediately, if you have thought of the solution, and gone through the process, then trust yourself
  - 4 Review the solution
- Always look for an objective solution.  
Sometimes, seeing your problem as someone else's problem helps you deal with the emotional aspect
- 6 Analyse the realistic effects of the problem and not the exaggerated ones that strike immediately or due to thinking about the same issue over and over again

### Inhibitors in problem solving

- 1 Think beyond past experiences, and other people's ideas
- 2 Not having enough information about different solutions available, such as policies or facilities made available by the government may lead us to applying for more expensive loans from money lenders to tide over difficult times
- 3 Letting emotions effect your decisions. It is good to be realistic and rational while finding a solution
- 4 Being rigid and fixed while looking for solutions. Being flexible helps
- 5 It is good to be ethical while thinking of solutions, but applying extreme irrational ethics affects the process







## Activity 2: Process of Problem Solving

### Objectives

- To help participants think creatively about different solutions,
- To develop empathy among participants, and
- To encourage the participants to get involved in a step by step process of problem solving.



The facilitator distributes one chit of paper to each participant. Each participant is asked to write any one problem they are facing or have faced in the past. The participants are asked not to write their names on the chits. All the chits are collected and put in a box. The facilitator asks any 5 participants to pick up any one chit and read the problem given on that chit. The group needs to go through the process of

- identifying the real problem,
- brainstorming on as many solutions possible, and
- finding one rational solution they think should be applied

The other members of the group also follow the same process. The group which follows the process, defines the real problem and comes up with maximum number of realistic solutions is appreciated and given a title of the “**problem solvers**”.

The facilitator encourages the groups to think beyond immediate solutions and come up with as many solutions as possible.

### Review questions

- How difficult was it to go through the whole process?
- How many of you tried to find the real problem?
- Could you come up with a lot of solutions easily?
- What were the factors that helped you in finding a solution?
- Think of the factors that stopped you from finding a solution.
- List the areas where you can use this process in your life or someone else’s life.

### Learning to be carried forward

- Highlight the importance of identifying the correct solution. The facilitator should encourage the participants to look at different aspects of the problem the way it looks like and then, try to identify the real problem. They should also be told that sometimes the real problem is very different from the way the problem appears to be.
- The facilitator stresses on the helpers and inhibitors that influence the problem solving process. She can talk about how they may work at the unconscious level when you are stuck and cannot think beyond the solution that came first. This is the time when inhibitors are working.



- The group is encouraged to think about creative ways of handling the same solution, such as the facilitator can give them examples of how people have started using solar energy or cow dung to light their houses or how self help groups were formed. All these were the result of creative ideas where people thought beyond past and didn't sit cribbing about their present.
- The process needs to be stressed and the facilitator can pick up a few other chits and go through the whole process to help the individuals get comfortable with the process and its application.

### Tasks for the learner

The remaining chits in the box are divided among the participants and each one is asked to go through the process on their own and bring their work for discussion.



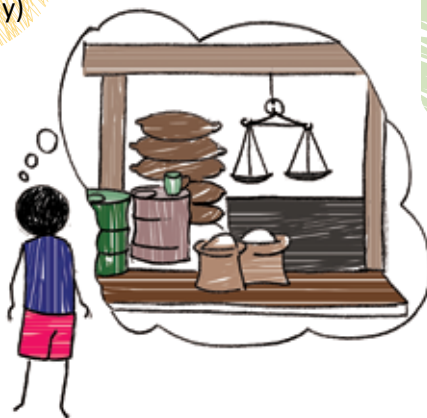
Rajeev is 17 years old and is a student of 9th standard. He is a resident of Khedar village of Jhadol block, Udaipur. He has three brothers, two sisters and his parents. He loves to play games, study and spend time with his friends. In order to discuss his problems, he goes to educated people in the community or to his teachers. He is shy and less assertive. He spends some time alone before he goes to sleep. He helps his family members in agricultural work and give his earnings as an agricultural laborer to his family.

He wants to become a teacher since he likes to teach. He also wants to start a grocery shop in the local market.

According to him, community is not supportive and acts as deterrent in his work. His community comprises of mostly people who are uneducated and unaware of things happening in the world around them. There is a strong ban against inter-caste marriages. Adolescents are beaten up and even killed in case they marry someone outside their caste. He lost his sister due to this practice. She was banished from the village and is not allowed to come to the village or talk to anyone in the family. Rajeev wants to stand up against this practice.

### Questions for discussions (after reading the case study)

How can Rajeev help the youth of the community in dealing with the issue?



If you were in place of Rajeev, what are the steps you would have taken in dealing with such a problem?

What are the solutions that can help in bringing about a change in the community?

Provide participants with A4 sheets of paper to note down their thoughts. Write down the discussions on the blackboard.

**Reflections: (to be written by the facilitator about the session)**

[illegible]

**My Learnings: (to be written by the facilitator about what did he/she learn from the session)**

[illegible]

## Lesson 22

# Handling conflicts



### Lesson objectives

- To help the learners understand 'conflict' and ways to deal with it,
- To develop the communication skills of the adolescents,
- To enable the learners to understand the art of resolving conflicts, and
- To develop creative and critical thinking skills amongst learners.



**Duration: 100 minutes**

### Time break-up

35 minutes	20 minutes	25 minutes	20 minutes
Activity 1	Discussion for Activity 1	Activity 2	Discussion for Activity 2

### Training Materials required

Black board, chalk, sheets of A4 sized paper, colour pencils/sketch pens for participants, any material that can be used as props by the group.

### Conceptual Note

Conflicts are a part of our everyday living. We all have experienced conflicts at different stages of our lives. They may be internal i.e. with our selves or external i.e. with the world around. Internal conflict is a conflict resented within an individual when he is unable to choose between various options life brings to him/her. The external conflict may occur at different levels- between individuals, between groups, between countries. The first type of conflict that we will be talking about is internal conflict.

**Internal conflict** can primarily be of three types:

- The first type of conflict is when you have to choose between two options and both the options are attractive, such as going to a friend's house to meet her or to go to a relative's place. They can be very simple options or something on which your life depends, such as becoming a teacher or taking up a job as a nurse.
- The second type of conflict is when you have to choose between two undesirable things, such as leaving school and working as daily wage labourer or going to school and being beaten by teacher and not having enough food to eat. This is difficult to choose an option here and one should always keep the long-term goal in mind, while choosing an option. It's a good idea to look for other options than the options visible to get the correct picture.



- The third type of conflict is where there is only one option i.e. you have both pros and cons to the same option, such as you want to have a girlfriend. Having a girlfriend may give you happiness or you might be able to boast about her amongst your friends so you might like to go for it. On the other hand, you might land up wasting a lot of time and money while talking to her or buying gifts for her and you have to study for your examinations or college entrances. So, you have to make a choice keeping the long-term goal in mind.



Should I get married?	
Pros	Cons
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

These are various types of internal conflicts that an individual may experience at different times of their life. Sometimes making these choices becomes very difficult and they may also affect our interaction with our social world. Such as, when we have a fight with our friend, we undergo an internal conflict while trying to decide whether we want to talk to her or not because she has hurt us by her remarks but at the same time, she is a good friend and you don't want to let her go. While resolving these internal conflicts, five tips given below may be helpful:

- Always keep the larger goal in mind. Such as whether you should drop out of school or not, should be decided keeping in mind your larger goal and what is going to benefit you and your family in long term.
- Explore all the options. Sometimes we are unable to see beyond the immediate options. You should always try to explore different options possible. Think critically and creatively of all the options possible.
- Measure the pros and cons of all the options before choosing an option objectively.
- Be realistic about the consequences of different choices. We tend to exaggerate the negative consequences much more than the positive consequences. Our mind is conditioned to do that. Beware!
- Look at conflicts as challenges that help you grow. Keeping a positive attitude helps in looking at things in positive light. Though it may be difficult in the first attempt, if you cultivate this attitude, it may help you deal with challenges you face in life much more easily.



**External conflicts** are conflicts you may have with people outside. There may be conflicts with other people such as your family, friends or stranger, or within groups such as conflict among family members or friends, or between two groups such as communal riots, clashes amongst people of two castes or wars between countries. They are an important part of our life and most of our time is spent in dealing with them.

The facilitator may introduce the concept of external conflicts and ways of dealing with it through the activities given below.





## Activity 1: Conflict Concepts



### Objectives

- To enable the participants to understand conflicts and its different types,
- To develop a positive attitude towards conflicts and ways of resolving it, and
- To develop the communication skills of the participants.



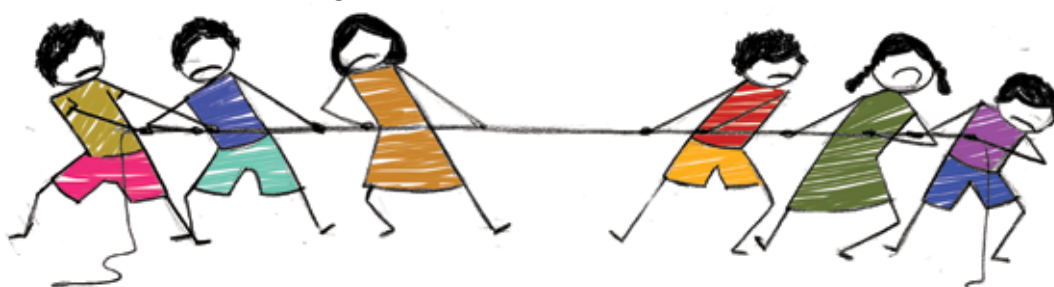
The facilitator divides the participants in small groups of 4-5 individuals. Each group is asked to list out the conflicts that they have faced in their life, their family, friends and community. The groups are asked to do a brain storming session to come up with as many conflicts as possible.

Each group is then asked to present a role play of 5-7 minutes trying to show as many conflicts as possible in the play. They are supposed to show the conflicts along with their consequences. They should also try to show both the sides of the story. The facilitator gives them around 15 minutes of preparation time. Once all the groups are ready, the facilitator begins the role plays. While the group is presenting, other groups will list out the conflicts they are presenting and whether it is a good or bad conflict.

The facilitator then discusses with the groups various conflicts that were presented by different groups.

### Review Questions

- Were the groups able to present both sides of the story?
- When you face conflicts, what are the thoughts and feelings you experience?
- Are you able to understand the other person's perspective?
- How was the verbal and non-verbal communication amongst the members involved in conflict?
- Was all the conflict bad or negative?
- Were the strategies used to resolve conflict effective or ineffective?



### *Pointers to be discussed The facilitator*

- Discusses the concept of conflict and various types of conflict as suggested in the conceptual note.
- Asks individuals to give examples from their lives about any one conflict which they think brought about a lot of change in their life. Such as it could be related to their studies, where they wanted to study further but their parents were asking them to drop out due to pressure from other community members. She encourages them to critically analyze how such a conflict was positive in nature and how lot of things change because of conflicts. Conflict is generally not positive or negative but the way it is handled and its consequences decide on whether we see the conflict as positive or negative.
- Talks about how conflicts are also important for they help in changing the course of the events.
- Can provide examples of how even our freedom fight was an example of a conflict but how it was required for our country to be free. She can also site examples of how people are trying to work for gender equality or child rights or how if we stop beating a women in a family because she has been able to raise her voice against it or members of the community have stood up for her. These conflicts have helped in changing the situations. Thus, conflicts are not always bad, but they become negative because of the way they are resolved such as getting involved in violence as a way to resolve the conflict, for e.g. terrorism.
- May also discuss social issues such as communal riots as examples of conflict. A brain storming session can be held to find out the reasons for these inter-group conflicts and how they can be resolved. Various reasons such as feeling of hurt or disrespect by the other group or feeling of injustice can be discussed.
- Stresses on how more than the action our perception of the action is responsible for our consequent behaviour. Such as, we had invited our friends for a party, two of my friends turn up very late. Now depending on how we judge their actions, we will respond to it. So, if we feel they did it deliberately and they don't value me as a friend, we will respond negatively and might behave rudely with them. At the same time, if we feel they had a genuine reason for getting late, we might forgive them and start enjoying our party.



## Activity 2: Conflict Resolution



### Objectives

- To discuss various conflict resolution strategies with the participants,
- To help the learners to apply these strategies in their lives and community, and
- To develop the communication skills of the learners,



The facilitator pairs up the participants. They are asked to hold hands facing each other. Now, each one needs to get into the other person's space where that person is standing. Most of the times, they will be pushing each other to get into the other person's space. It starts a game of tug-of-war amongst participants. The participants may try to get into the other person's space first. The facilitator just observes everyone's behaviour and after 2 minutes, tells them to stop.

She then asks them to reflect back on the past 2 minutes and see whether there were other ways to get into each other's space. She talks about how they could have just spoken to each other and shifted places, rather than engaging in a tug of war. She stresses on how we should always try to find solutions which benefit everyone and are fair, rather than resorting to means which would lead to more conflicts.



The facilitator reads different news articles published in the news paper about different forms of conflicts happening in the society and how they were resolved:

- Five boys of the upper caste raped a 45 year old women belonging to the lower caste. They were arrested by the police and the reason cited by them for such an act was that people from the lower caste had started taking water from their well which was unacceptable. This action was done to teach the people from lower caste a lesson.
- Two neighbours had a problem regarding the holding of free space close to their fields. The free space was just being used as a dustbin ground by the villagers and was leading to lot of diseases and foul smell near their houses. They decided to join hands together to stop all the villagers from throwing the waste there. They spoke to the villagers about finding ways to throw away the garbage at a place far away from the village. During the discussions and negotiations, some people came up with the idea of a bio-gas plant which can be used to bring electricity. They took help from the government official and tried to put up a bio-gas plant to bring electricity for the village.
- Recently, the panchayat decided to punish a couple for falling in love and getting married by ostracizing their families from the village. They along with their families were cut-out and were not allowed any support by the villagers.



She tells the participants to now think about the solutions given in these news items and how they would like to change the way these conflicts were resolved depending on the discussions they had after the activity. She may further write out the strategies suggested and whether they agree or disagree with the use of a particular strategy on the basis of how damaging it may be, how helpful it can be for both the parties.

**Extension:** She can carry forward the role plays done in the first activity and now ask the participants to enact the resolution that they think will be the best for the conflict presented in the play.

### *Pointers to be discussed The facilitator*

- Highlights the importance of being non-violent in all circumstances for resolving any kind of conflict, for violence begets violence.
- May suggest strategies such as compromise or finding creative solutions so that both parties get in a win-win position. She also needs to stress that an effective solution can be found only if both the parties are interested in finding a solution which is beneficial to both and keep their negative emotions such as anger, hurt aside.
- Talks about importance of positive attitude in resolving conflicts, such as active listening, giving positive feedback, appreciating each other's positives, looking at the situation objectively. She needs to stress how if the people don't listen to each other openly, no conflict can be resolved. We can even have a fair person who can help in resolving the conflict and is unbiased and open to listening to both the parties.



Devika is studying in class X. Her family includes her mother, father, two brothers and one sister. She is good in her studies and wants to go out to pursue her education further. She wants to do college from a proper city and wants to work in office. Her parents are not very comfortable sending her outside the village. There is a constant argument between Devika and her parents about her further studies and going out of the village.

### *Questions for discussions (after reading the case study)*

Should she agree to her parent's wishes and not study further?



How can Devika approach her parents to resolve this conflict?

How can you help her resolve these conflicts?



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[illegible]



## Identifying and Responding to Threatening Social Situations



### Lesson objectives

- To help adolescents develop skills to assess and identify threatening social situations,
- To be aware of various possible actions they can take to deal with such a situation, and
- To enable adolescents to think and act in a challenging situation.



**Duration:** 75 minutes

### Time break-up

25 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes	15 minutes
Activity 1	Discussions on Activity 1	Activity 2	Discussions on Activity 2



### Training Materials required

Black board, chalk, sheets of paper, stones and chairs

### Activity 1: Critical Thinking and Decision Making

*The facilitator introduces the concept by conducting the following activity.*

### Objectives

- To encourage the adolescents to be alert and aware of different situations they might face,
- To develop critical thinking and decision making skills of the adolescents, and
- To help them identify various threats an individual might face at different times.



The facilitator makes a big square within the training classroom. On one side of the square, a chair is kept with goal written on it. The participants are divided in groups of 4-5 members. Each group chooses a member who would be blindfolded and would have to reach the other side and touch the goal chair.



The game will be divided in 2 stages:

**Stage 1-** The participant is just asked to move from one side to the other side. The participant will be blindfolded. Once all the groups have chosen their members. The facilitator says start and the members start at the same time. The group members can help their chosen member to reach the other position.

Once the group members have reached the final goal, they all move to the next level.

**Stage 2-** The participants again have to choose someone who will cross the square. The only difference being that in this level the facilitator puts some chairs, stones or other things available which act as barriers for the person to reach the other goal. The members can help their member by directing their way. If they touch any of the barriers, they are moved back to their beginning position. Once all the chosen team members have been blindfolded, the facilitator keeps the barriers in the square and starts the game. The facilitator may keep the barriers stationery or keep moving them in the middle of the activity. The group is free to help the chosen member by giving him instructions to how to proceed.

**Stage 3 –** The third stage is similar to stage 2 except that the group cannot give any verbal instructions to the chosen member. They can only create signals which they will use to help the chosen member. For e.g. Clap or double clap or bell. Each group needs to have different signals. Other members have to stay quiet. Now, the participant will be moved back, if any of the other members talk or try to give any help except the signal.



After the members have finished the exercise, the group is asked to settle down and a discussion is held around the given review questions.



### *Review questions*

- Did you enjoy this activity?
- Which part of the activity did you enjoy the most?
- The facilitators may ask the blindfolded participants about how was their experience?
- If that square was like their life, what are the similarities between their life and the square?

## Learnings to be drawn

- The square is like your life. When you walk around blind folded i.e. unaware of things happening around you, the chances are high that you would be unable to deal with a threatening situation. Your friend and family may try and help you but at the end it is your journey, so you have to be alert and aware.
- The group is also asked to think about various threatening situations they have come across or may come across in life. The facilitator may give examples such as:
  - Eve teasing
  - While going out at night
  - Being abused by a friend or family memberAs the group comes up with various situations, the facilitator can write it on the black board.
- The group is asked to discuss the difference in their emotions when they face these situations in real life and when they were a part of the game. The facilitator explains that how negative emotions like anxiety, fear, etc. tend to influence their thoughts and they are unable to think properly and clearly. They start living the role of a victim even without being one. The participants need to learn to think on their feet and clearly aim at how to deal with the situation rather than accept it as fate and give up even before dealing with these situations.
- The facilitator talks to the group about how they can identify various threats around them by being alert.
- The participants are also encouraged to be more prepared for any new situation by using the given strategies:
  - Talking to people who already stay there or have been dealing with it,
  - Reading about the new place,
  - Thinking before you act, such as never reveal your complete information to any stranger,
  - Beware of people who are extra helpful,
  - Always keep yourself cool and calm.
  - Above all, be confident of yourself and trust your instincts.
- The facilitator moves to the next activity to help the group to understand how to apply these strategies and think about various other strategies to deal with such situations.



## Activity 2:

### Objective



- To help the participants to identify the threats they may face when they move to new places.
- To empower them to look at those threats as challenges which they can overcome.
- To develop observation and analytical skills of the adolescent.



The facilitator divides the participants in small groups of 4-5 participants each. Then, the facilitator reads the following case study to the group.

Reena was very excited. She was going to Udaipur to pursue nursing in a college. Though she had visited Udaipur earlier, they were all short visits and she was always accompanied with her parents. This time it was a little different. This was the first time she was travelling alone and was going to stay away from her parents in a big city. Her father had some urgent work in the village and could not accompany her. Her neighbor was going to accompany her and had been given the responsibility of helping her with the admission process in the college. For a few days she would have to stay outside in a rented accommodation before she could get the hostel. She may also have to work to support her education. She was very excited but was feeling a little nervous also.

The group is asked to draw out the threats she might face starting from leaving her house to settling down in the new city. Each group needs to find out the kind of threats she might face, how she can identify them and what can she do to deal with them.



After each group has completed their task, they are reshuffled and new groups are formed. Each group is asked to come up with ways in which they can avoid these situations and ways in which they can deal with them, in case they face them.

All the groups are asked to share their views. The facilitator can write the threats they have come up with, ways to avoid them and ways to deal with them.

### Pointers to be discussed

- The facilitator should always ask the group to think beyond and challenge their ideas in a non-threatening situation.
- The facilitator can discuss various threats faced by people who move to new situations, such as
  - ➔ Loneliness or Home sickness – They can try and make friends at their work place. Trying to develop your knowledge base by reading books or the newspaper will also help you get acquainted in a new place. The participants can stay in touch with their family members. They should also realize that after some time they will get acquainted with the place and will not feel homesick. Learning to make home-cooked food will also help them feel less lonely.

- ➔ Harassment at work place – Finding out the policy at your work place for dealing with abuse will help you feel more secure. You can also keep important numbers such as police, whom to report to in case of abuse with you, nearby good hospital, some known people in the city with you, so that you don't have to look for help in case of emergency.
  - ➔ Language barrier – When people move to new places, one of the biggest barrier they face is language. It is always good to know a common language through which you can have some basic level of communication with the localites. You can buy a dictionary or take help from the localites and learn basic words which help you deal with your daily life. Try learning 4-5 new words everyday and use them. This will help you improve your vocabulary and build up your confidence.
  - ➔ Lot of young men get drawn to lot of negative habits such as alcohol, drugs, etc. due to feelings of loneliness and bad company. Make sure you remember the negative effects these substances can have on you and why you are there in the city. Ensure you develop a good friend circle with whom you can feel comfortable with.
  - ➔ Try making yourself aware of the new place by talking to people who stay there or have been there and, reading about the new place – about the transport facilities available, language spoken, important facilities available, etc.
  - ➔ Explore the new place but at a safe time. It is good to analyze the risks of the new place before visiting it. Trust the local people but always cross check with other people so that you know you are not being fooled. It is good to trust but do not blindly trust anyone.
- The facilitator needs to encourage the group to take a leap but while keeping their eyes and ears open. They should remember their goal in life and why they are moving to a new city.
  - Learning from experiences will build their confidence and should be taken in their stride if they feel it is not something that needs to be reported, like forgetting the way. Always being prepared for new experiences will help you stay positive and understand new things more easily.

### Task for the Learner

The learners need to find out one person from their community who has gone out for work and interview them to find out how did they settle in the new place, what are the problems or challenges they faced and how did they deal with them. If the person is not here, they can call him up and ask him.

They need to get the responses to their questions for discussion.



**Reflections: (to be written by the facilitator about the session)**

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**My Learnings: (to be written by the facilitator about what did he/she learn from the session)**

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