



International WAGR Syndrome Association Conflict Resolution Policy

Adopted October 17, 2010

The purpose of this policy is to enable the board members, officers, leaders and volunteers of the International WAGR Syndrome Association to resolve differences of opinion in a positive and constructive manner which will benefit both the organization and its members.

It is the policy of the IWSA that conflicts shall be resolved via phone or in person with the IWSA Board of Directors.

Suggestions for Resolving Conflict

1. The goal of any fight should be to resolve a conflict rather than to win or "come out on top". If one person feels like a loser that will create resentment and distance. Rather everybody should feel like they've won.
2. Express your resentments as soon as you are aware of them rather than letting them build up into an explosion.
3. Nothing is more important in conflict resolution than the ability to compromise. Are you really standing on principle or are you just being stubborn?
4. Communication should be as clear, direct and as open as possible. Make sure you aren't expecting people to read your mind.
5. Be sure to ask for feedback and reflect on what you think the other person is saying. Often people will be fighting about different issues without being aware of it.
6. Argue only one point at a time. Resist temptations to get off the subject. Even issues that seem related can be distracting.

7. Are you overreacting and making a big deal about a trivial issue? If you do this frequently it might mean that there is a more important issue that is not being talked about.
8. Avoid ganging up. Fights are best fought between two people at a time.
9. Don't get in the middle of a fight you don't belong in.
10. A sense of humor is important. Don't let your fights be any more deadly than necessary. On the other hand, don't make light of a subject that should be taken seriously, or use jokes to put the other person down.
11. Be sure to admit when you are in the wrong. Sometimes an apology is all that is necessary to end an argument.

Examples of Constructive messages include:

1. "I want" statements.
2. "I feel" statements
3. "I like/don't like" statements.
4. Giving feedback.
5. Asking for feedback.
6. Agreeing with criticism or part of a criticism.
7. Asking for more specific criticism.
8. Bargaining and compromising.
9. Expressing ambivalence.
10. Praise.
11. Nonverbal supportive messages.

Examples of Destructive messages include:

1. Communication cutoff.
2. Overlong statements.
3. Put downs.
4. You should/shouldn't statements.
5. Unfair comparisons.
6. Reacting defensively.
7. Sarcasm.
8. Commanding.
9. Threatening.
10. Unnecessary apologizing or self-effacing.
11. Unclear, overly general and nonspecific statements.
12. Double messages.
13. Ignoring important messages or feelings of the other person.
14. Unnecessary interruptions.
15. Giving in.

An Outline of Problem Solving

1. Define the Problem

- o Make sure the problem is clear, concise and specific. Can it be defined in terms of specific behaviors?
 - o Do both parties agree what the nature of the problem is?
- 2. Express facts and feelings regarding the problem.
 - o Make sure that both parties have an equal chance to speak.
 - o All feelings are appropriate if expressed constructively (see examples)
- 3. List possible solutions.
 - o Be as creative as possible in coming up with possibilities.
 - o All solutions should be considered even if they sound silly.
 - o Both parties should have an equal opportunity to contribute.
- 4. Evaluate each proposed solution individually.
 - o Can the solution be realistically implemented?
 - o Will it solve the problem that has been defined in step #1?
 - o Will it be fair to both parties?
 - o Will implementing the solution create new problems?
- 5. Decide on a mutually acceptable solution.
- 6. Make specific plans to implement the solution. Decide WHO, WHEN, HOW, WHERE.
- 7. Evaluate the solution. Are both parties satisfied with the outcome?
- 8. If the problem remains unsolved, decide on the reason.
 - o Perhaps you were trying to solve the wrong problem. If so, go back to step #1 and start over.
 - o Perhaps a different solution would have worked better. If so, go back to step #2 or step #3 and start from there.
 - o Perhaps the solution was inadequately implemented. If so, go back to step #6.