5 Things to Keep In Mind When There Is Conflict

Working in groups isn’t always easy. Sometimes situations that work at the beginning become more difficult as time goes on, or situations become more stressful.

Many people say they do not like conflict, however conflict is a part of our daily lives, and it is perfectly normal to have conflicts. In fact, there is a great deal to be learned from handling a difficult situation maturely, respectfully, and creatively.

The Office of Residential Life offers a number of resources to students facing roommate conflicts. Please read through the information below. If you feel you need further advice on how to proceed with the situation, you should speak with your Resident Advisor.

1. **Respect**
   Both you and the other person should be respectful and feel respected at all times. A respectful conversation should take place in a private at a neutral location, at a time that works for all parties. Be direct in your communication, and use “I statements” (“I feel...”, “This impacts me because...”) In order to effectively communicate and avoid either party feeling defensive, focus on behaviors rather than personality traits. Remember: Seek to Understand and Honor Others

2. **Establish the real issue**
   Try to uncover what the problem really is. If one of your group members always mentions that you are late to meetings, the underlying issue might be that they feel you disrespect their time.

3. **Communication Is both talking and **Listening**
   Remember that there are multiple sides to every store. Each person in a conflict should be given an opportunity to present what they feel the problem really is.

4. **Work Together**
   Sometimes we complicate out by trying to compromise, meaning we try to find a middle ground. Instead of compromise, try to work together, or collaborate to create a win-win situation, then the conflict is more likely to be resolved. Evaluate the needs of both sides before a solution is proposed, and make sure the solution is acceptable to both parties.

5. **Choose your Battles**
   You can’t agree on everything. Focus on what matters, and let the small things go. Ask yourself if you are compromising your beliefs or morals. If year, it’s important that you effectively and respectfully explain why you think your values are impacted, and how this makes you feel. Also, consider why the other person has a different view of the situation and outcomes. Why are they upset? What does the issues look like from their point of view?