

Arlington County - CPHD
Housing Division

**Don't Let Conflict Ruin Your
Culture: *Recognize it, Plan for it, Manage it!***

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Introductions.

Please check in:

- Name
- Organization
- What you'd like to explore today

Today's Objective

- Culture - Why we have conflict
- Forms of Conflict
- Managing Through Conflict
- Preventing Destructive Conflict
- Wrap up, Q&A



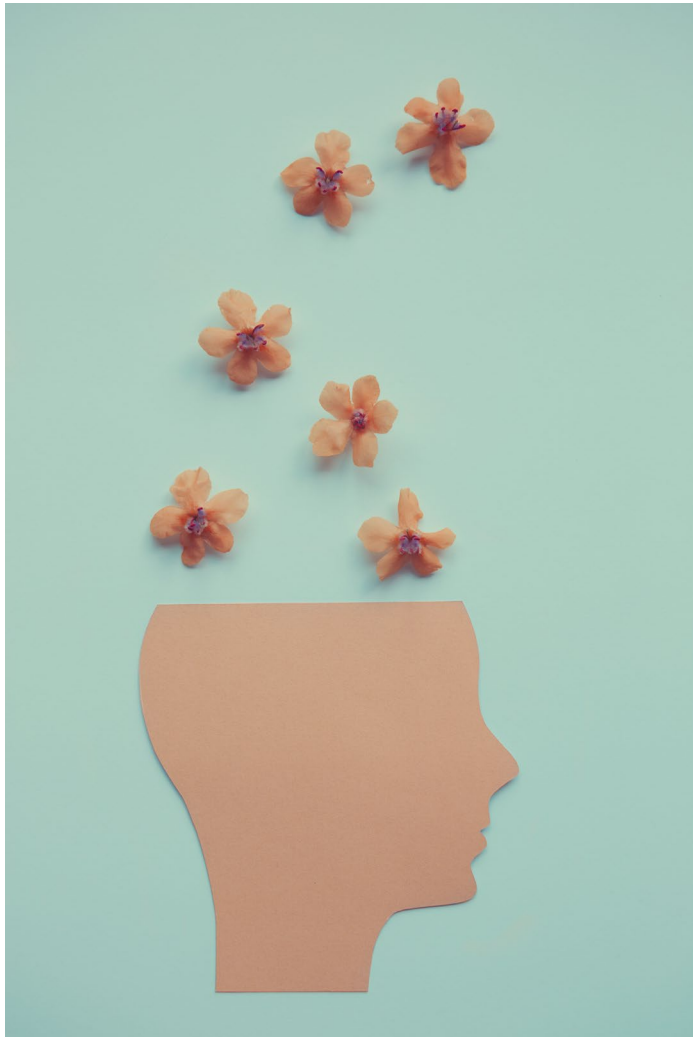
We are all
programmed early how
to handle conflict

How were you taught
to handle conflict?



Our new world...

- Technology advancements – AI, fast enhancements, projects, integrations+
- Post-Pandemic Organizational Discovery – *who are we?*
- Rapid pace and ambiguity of work (VUCA) – too much change
- Hyper-empowered, employee-centric shift in employee expectations
- The concept of team is eroding – too much turnover to establish sound norms



Our Mind...

- 80% of our thoughts are negative
- 95% are repetitive thoughts
- ANTS: Automatic Negative Thoughts

Conflict is

“Any situation in which people have apparently incompatible goals, interests, principles or feelings”

Task or Person related

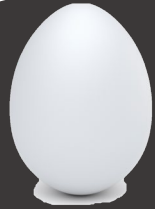
Source: Center for Conflict Dynamics





Can
conflict be
positive?

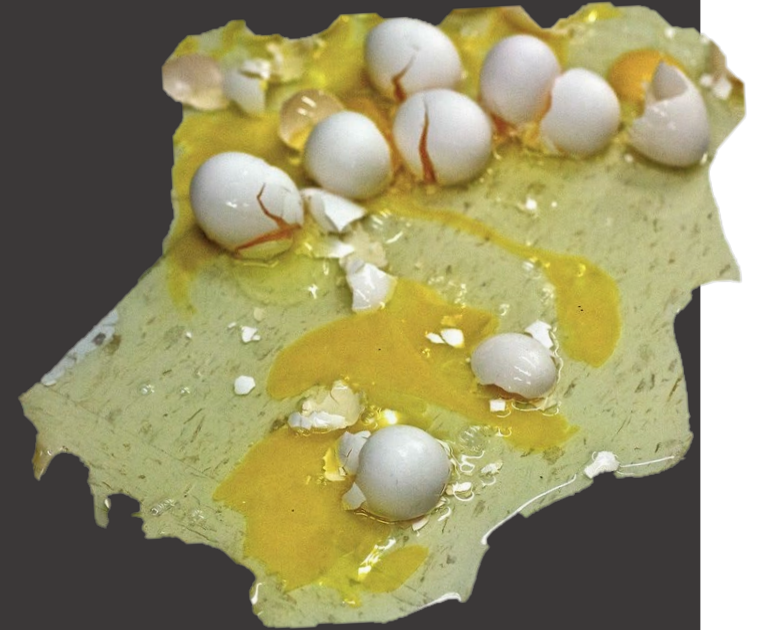
The Right Amount



- Group Think
- No Discussion
- Silence
- Mediocrity



- Collaboration
- Problem Solving
- Involvement
- Growth
- Inclusion



- Confusion
- Aggressive Behavior
- Chaos & Dysfunction



This is easy - fluff on top

This is busy work - the substance of work

This is crusty - where we learn

We use **Constructive** and
Destructive Behaviors, and
we are **Triggered**

Precipitating Event and/or Hot Buttons

Initiate Conflict

Constructive
Responses

Destructive
Responses

Cognitive Conflict
(Task-focused Conflict)

Emotional Conflict
(Person-focused Conflict)

**CONFLICT
DE-ESCALATES**

**CONFLICT
ESCALATES**

Sample - Constructive Strategies

- Reaching out
- Taking Perspective
- Adapting
- Delaying Response



Discussion

- Where do you have conflict in your organization now – *among staff? Partners? Leadership team?*
- What **conflict management strategies** might be useful to use right now with your team and with partners??
- What is a potential positive outcome from this conflict?



Preparing for Future Conflicts

For your Teams:

- Focus on organizational values and civil workplace policies
- Create a way for employee voices to be heard
- Employee training on differences, conflict, change
- Designate a mediator

For Partners:

- Contract well in advance, have mediation process
- Handle miscommunication and conflicts early
- Get to know players



Questions

I'll stay for any questions!

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