100th Anniversary of School Social Work Conference

From Charcoal to Diamonds: The Essentials of Managing Conflict and Negotiating Agreements

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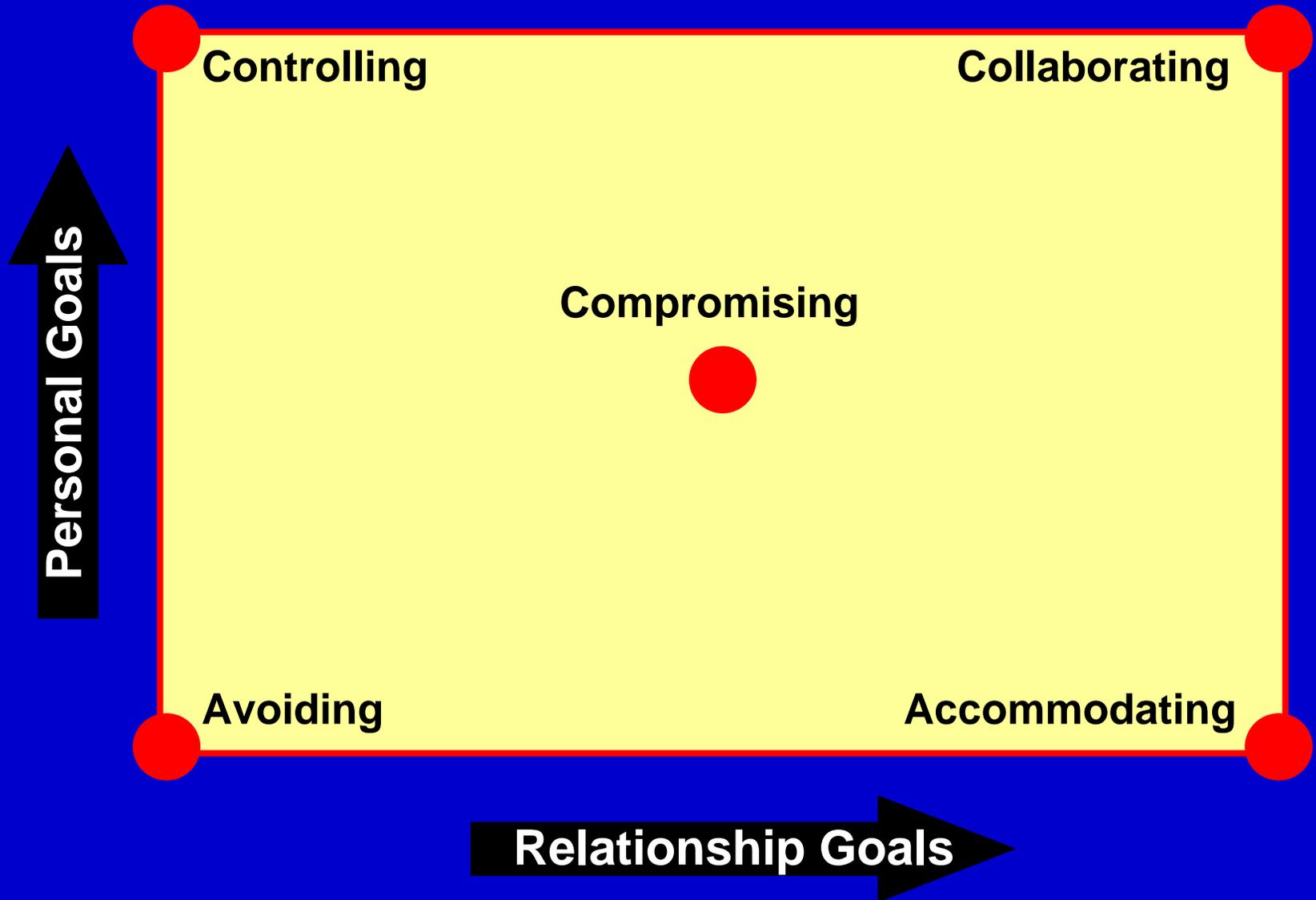
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Boston, MA

Coal, Graphite or Diamonds?

Let's find out...

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode
Assessment Instrument

The Five Conflict Handling Modes

CADRE/IDEA Partnerships

Personal Goals

Relationship Goals

Controlling

Collaborating

Compromising

Avoiding

Accommodating

Source: Thomas- Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Avoiding

Personal Goals

- Unassertive and uncooperative
- Do not pursue your own concerns or those of other(s)
- Don't address the conflict
- Sidestep, postpone, or withdraw from the issue for the present time

Relationship Goals

Avoiding – When to Use

Personal Goals

- When the potential danger or damage outweighs the benefits of resolution

- When more time is needed to collect information

- When emotions need to cool down

Relationship Goals

Accommodating

Personal Goals

- Focuses on relationship needs
- Sacrifice your own personal goals to satisfy the concerns of the other(s)
- Yield to another point of view

Relationship Goals

Accommodating – When to Use

Personal Goals

- To preserve harmony and avoid disruption
- To achieve temporary settlement
- To arrive at quick solutions under pressure
- When the relationship is the most important goal

Relationship Goals

Controlling

Personal Goals

- Power oriented
- Pursue own ends without agreement of others
- Achieving one's personal goals paramount
- Results in win-lose or lose-win

Relationship Goals

Controlling – When to Use

Personal Goals
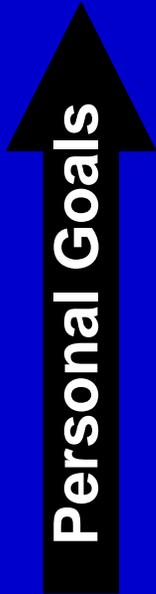
- In emergencies
- When unpopular actions must be implemented
- When your family or organization's welfare is at stake
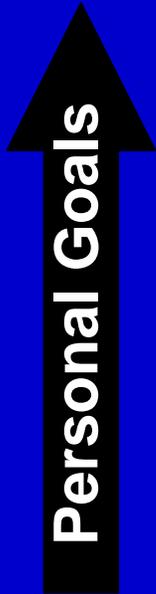- When your authority and responsibility are unquestionable

Relationship Goals

Compromising

Personal Goals

- Objective to find expedient, mutually acceptable alternative
- Both parties give up something
- Exchanging concessions – splitting the difference
- Quick middle position

Relationship Goals

Compromising – When to Use

Personal Goals
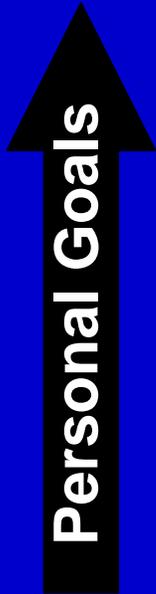
- When two parties of equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals
- To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues

- To arrive at quick solutions under pressure
- When the goals of each party are of moderate importance and collaboration isn't worth the time required

Relationship Goals

Collaborating

Personal Goals

- Personal goals and relationship goals are of equal importance/value
- Seeks win-win outcomes using advanced skills and strategies
- Want to find a solution that fully satisfies needs and concerns of both people
- Involves time commitment in identifying concerns of each person and finding alternatives that meet both sets of needs

Relationship Goals

Collaborating – When to Use

Personal Goals

- When both the issues at hand and the relationship are important
- When the parties are relatively equal in status and power – or the more equal or powerful party supports a win-win collaborative solution
- When the parties are inter-dependent upon one another to implement the solution
- When both sets of goals are too important to compromise
- You have enough time and are willing to take the time necessary
- When the quality of the decision is critical
- To gain commitment and acceptance through consensus

Relationship Goals

The Five Conflict Handling Modes

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Relationship Goals
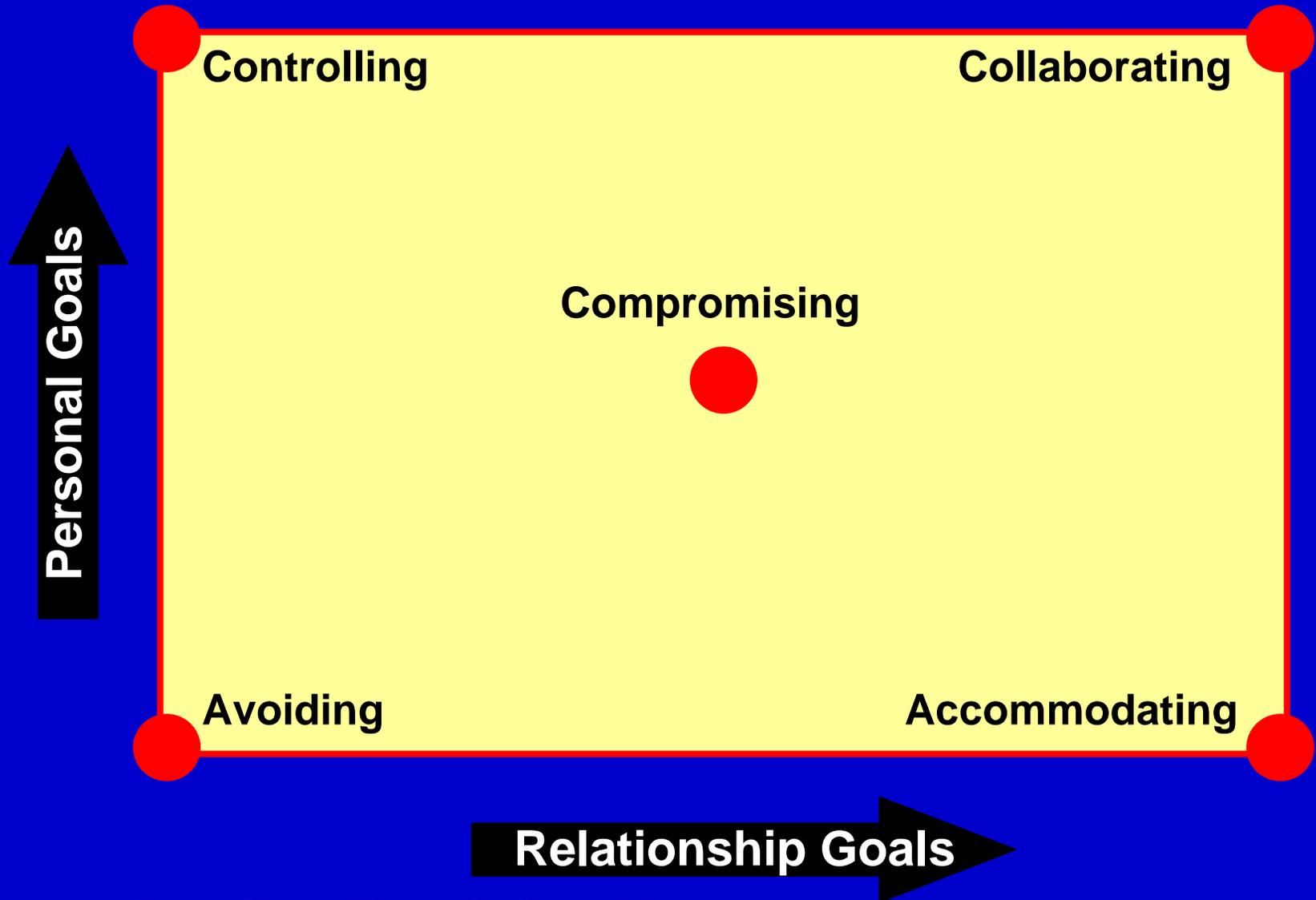
Source: Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Listening

"Listening is probably the most cost effective element of a conflict management system."

Mary Rowe

Characteristics of Good Listening

- Think of a time when someone listened to you.
- What did he/she do that made you feel he/she was listening?
- What was his/her attitude toward you?
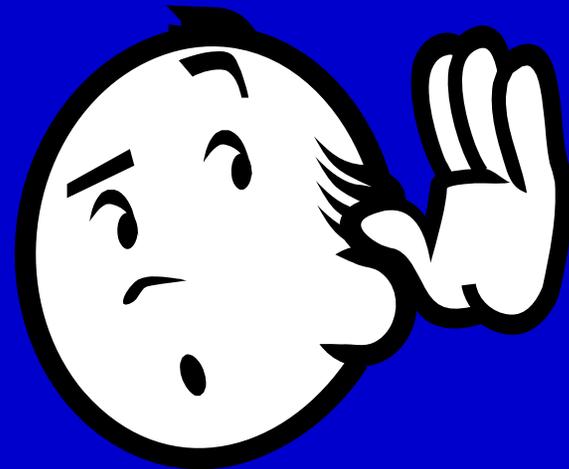
Listening

Following the thoughts and feelings of others to understand what they are saying from their perspective, frame of reference, or point of view.

Dignity and Respect

EARS

EYES

UNDIVIDED
ATTENTION

HEART

The Chinese characters that make up the verb "to listen" tell us something about this skill.

Listening ⟹ Problem Solving

- Sometimes speakers just need to be heard
- Sometimes listening clears up confusion
- Sometimes listening identifies a need for problem solving

Reflective Listening

- The HEART of listening is:
    - EMPATHY, CARING & RESPECT
- Main rule:
    - KEEP THE FOCUS ON THE OTHER

The Three Basic Skill Clusters for Reflective Listening Are:

Attending Skills

Following Skills

Responding Skills

Attending Skills:

- Posture
- Contact (distance, eyes, touch)
- Gestures
- Environment
- Interested Silence

Following Skills

- Door-Openers
- Acknowledgement Responses
- Open-Ended Questions

Responding Skills

- Reflecting Content
- Reflecting Feeling
- Reflecting Meaning
  (Content linked with feeling)
- Summarizing

Certain Responses …

- ❑ Derail the conversation
- ❑ Take the focus off the other
- ❑ Block the other from finding a solution
- ❑ Lower the other's self-esteem
- ❑ Distance your self from the other
- ❑ Diminish the other's motivation

High Risk Responses

Sending Solutions
- Ordering
- Threatening
- Moralizing
- Advising
- Logically Arguing
- Questioning

Evaluating
- Judging
- Praising
- Diagnosing
- Name-Calling

Withdrawing
- Reassuring
- Diverting

Takes the focus off the other person

Listening is a disciplined skill

You can't do two things at once if one of them is listening.

Positions & Interests

Positions & Interests

Position

Specific solution proposed to resolve problem - the "WHAT"

Interest

Underlying real need/desire that gives position its life (i.e., beliefs, expectations, values, fears, priorities, hopes, concerns) – the "WHY"

Three Kinds of Interests

Psychological

Substantive

Procedural

CADRE/IDEA Partnerships
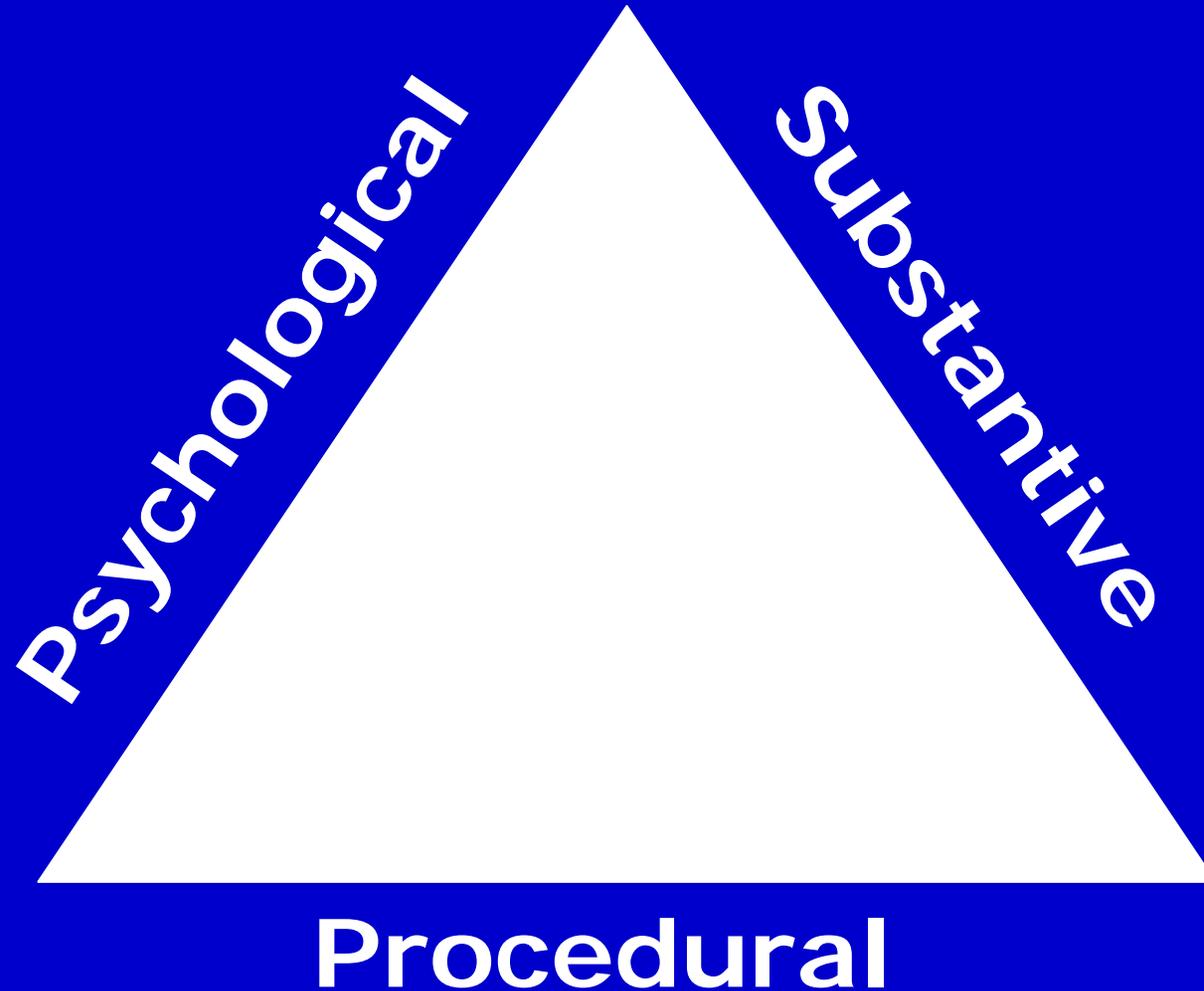
Sample Positions:

- *"The target level for appropriate interactions in my classroom must remain at 50%."*

- *"We want an ASL interpreter in that English Lit class."*

- *"I demand an apology now!"*

- *"Rob has a right to a full time instructional assistant next term"*

Finding the Interests

CADRE/IDEA Partnerships
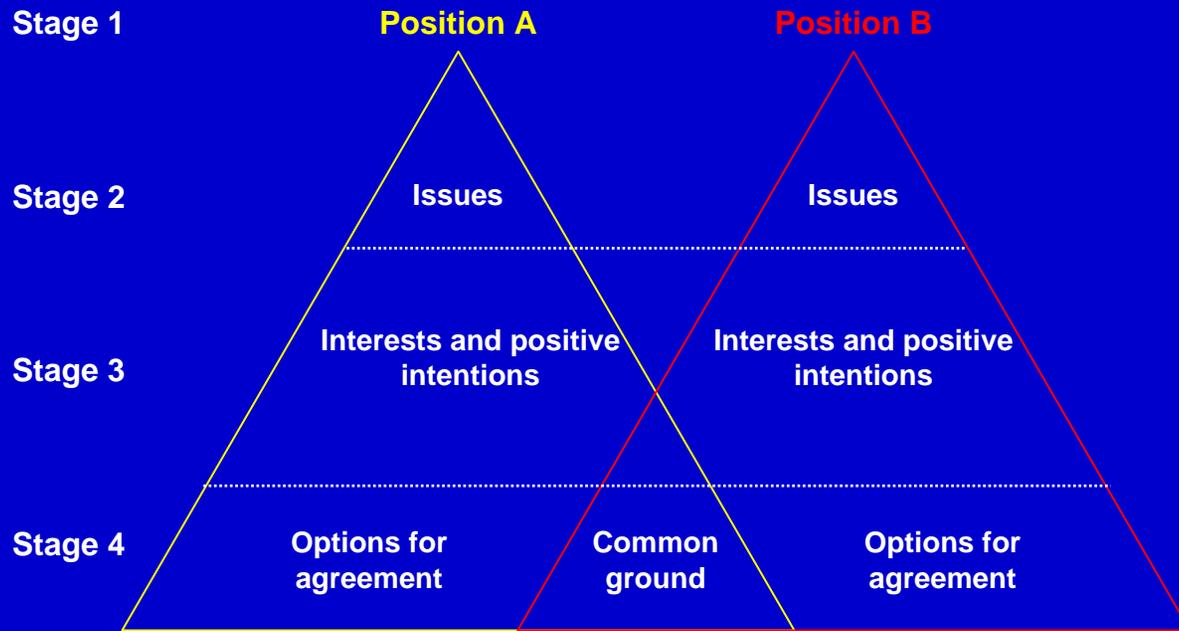
| Stage 1 | **Position A** | **Position B** |

| Stage 2 | **Issues** | **Issues** |

| Stage 3 | **Interests and positive intentions** | **Interests and positive intentions** |

| Stage 4 | **Options for agreement** | **Common ground** | **Options for agreement** |

Position:	One party's solution to the problem/ situation. Often a self-serving solution
Issue:	Elements or subject matter of the problem. Elements at issue between the parties that must be negotiated in order to reach agreement.
Interest:	Factors that motivate/ drive parties to reach agreement and take positions. Interests underlie positions in that the parties' positions are intended to meet and or address their interests (hopes, wants, needs, fears, concerns)

Adapted from Highnam, K. (2001). Interest-based negotiation, *CSSEA 2001 Fall Conference and AGM*. Surry B.C, Canada. CSSEA.

Finding the Interests

Question, question, question…

- *"Why is that solution so important for you?"*

- *Why are you suggesting…?*

- *"What would you accomplish in getting what you want?"*

- *"What if that did/didn't happen?"*

- *"How will you be affected by…?"*

- *"Imagine that you got _____; what would be taken care of?"*

Finding the Interests

- What need is the person taking this position attempting to satisfy?
- What is motivating the person?
- What is the person trying to accomplish?
- What is the person afraid will happen if a demand is not fulfilled?

Summary: Interest-based Negotiation

- ❑ Aims not to change the other person, but to change negotiation behavior
- ❑ Separates the people from the problem
- ❑ Soft on people, hard on problem
- ❑ Shifts from "your position versus mine" to "you and I versus the problem"
- ❑ Shifts from "position-taking" to "perspective-taking"
- ❑ Holds that Interests are a truer measure of negotiation goals than Positions.
- ❑ Involves a mutual exploration of interests to yield more creative options.
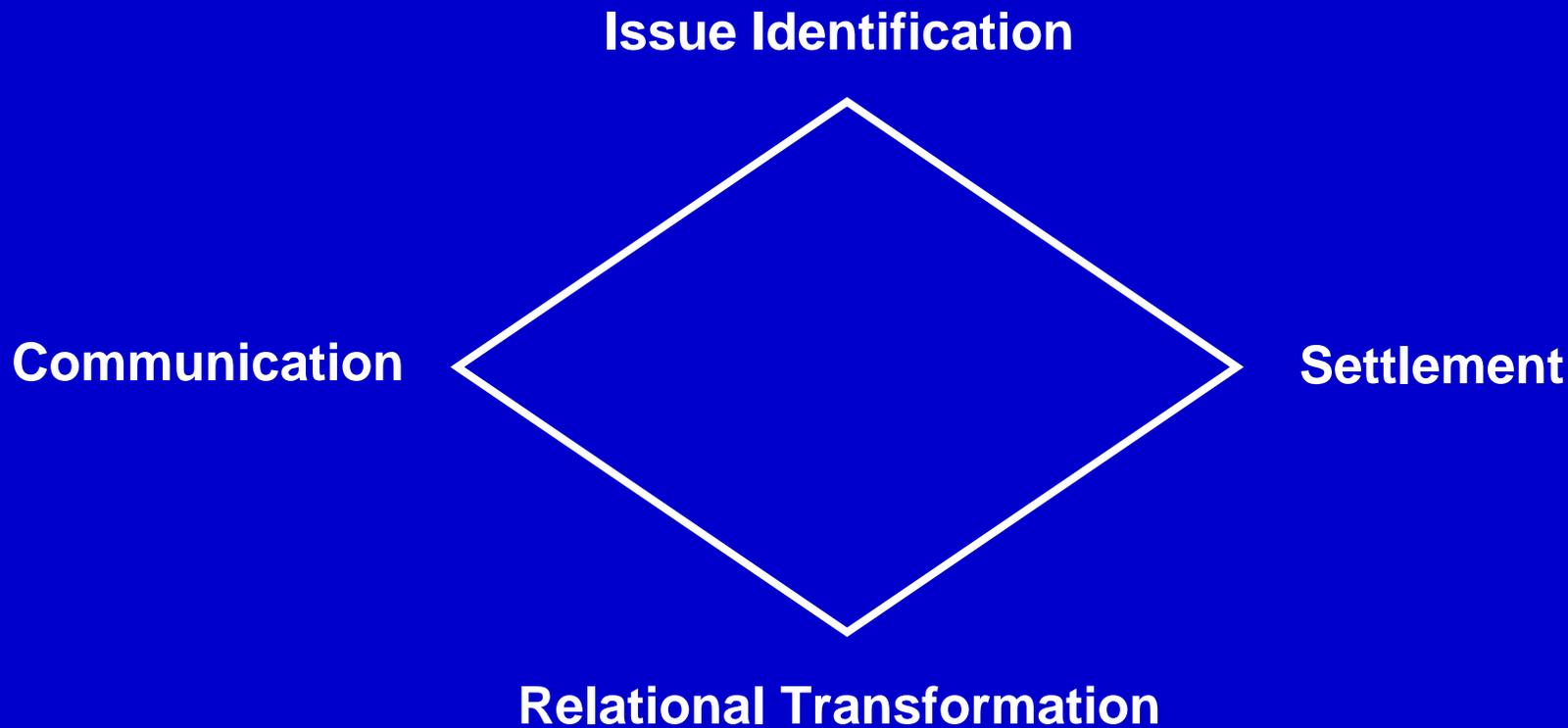- ❑ Uses objective criteria

Adapted from Highnam, K. (2001). Interest-based negotiation, *CSSEA 2001 Fall Conference and AGM*. Surry B.C, Canada. CSSEA; Fisher and Ury, *Getting to Yes*.

Facilitating IEP Meetings

Approaches to Facilitation
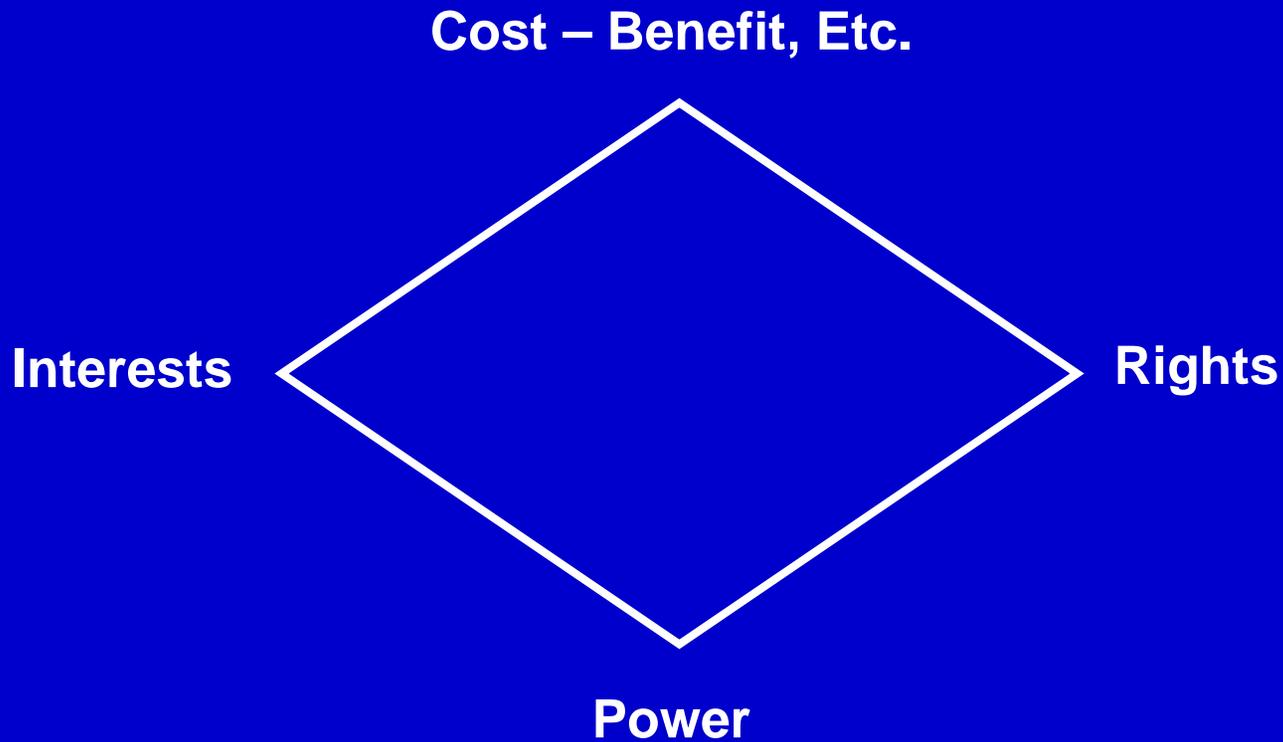## Goal of the Process

Issue Identification

Communication

Settlement

Relational Transformation
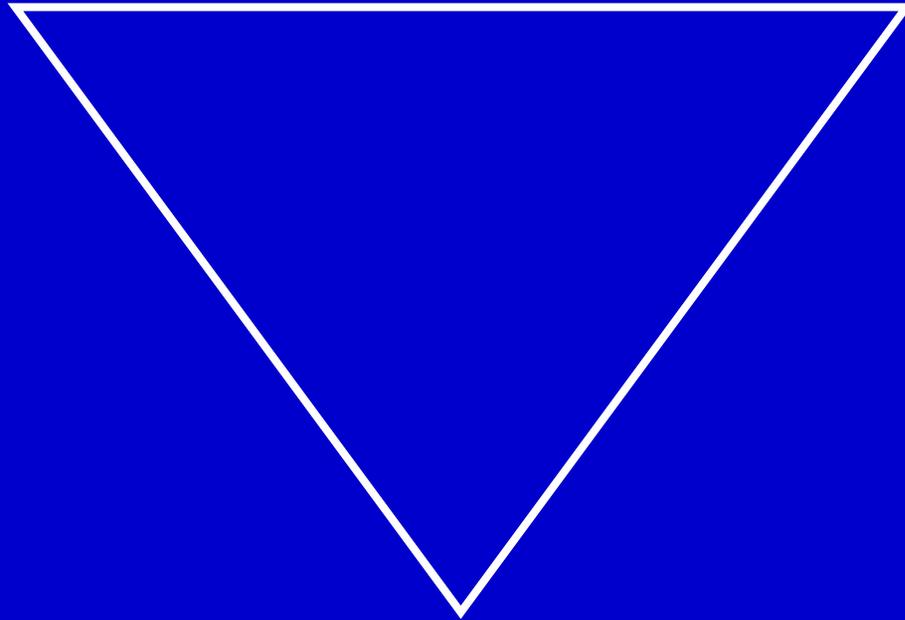
Approaches to Facilitation
Goal of the Process

Facilitator   **Evaluator**

Transformation

Meeting Functions

- Participation:
  - Contributing information, ideas and suggestions
  - Discussing the issues, asking questions and advocating

- Process Management:
  - Setting and following an agenda
  - Process agreements
  - Keeping people focused on the task
  - Encouraging participation

Adapted from JDL & Associates

Meeting Functions

- Information Management:
  - Organizing and recording information
  - Documenting agreements appropriately

- Decision Making:
  - Clarifying options
  - Analyzing possible solutions
  - Making decisions by consensus

Adapted from JDL & Associates

Some Prevention Activities

- At the beginning:
  - Getting agreement on outcomes, agenda, roles, decision-making (consensus), ground rules

- During the meeting:
  - Making process suggestions
  - Getting process agreements
  - Clarify information through listening
  - Providing feedback
  - Elicit interests
  - Generating participation
  - Managing conflict

Adapted from JDL & Associates

TESTED TIPS FOR IEP MEETINGS:

What IEP Conveners Can Do (Pre-Meeting)

- Explain crucial nature of each team member's involvement and what will happen at the meeting
- Schedule convenient time and location, and ample time for meeting
- Invite team members to review relevant documents prior to meeting and observe student

TESTED TIPS FOR IEP MEETINGS:
What IEP Conveners Can Do (During Meeting)

- Make team members feel welcome
  - Greet at door
  - Perhaps a cold or hot beverage?
  - Same size chairs for everyone
  - <u>Brief</u> pre-meeting chit-chat and acclimatization
- Everyone introduce themselves and explain why they are there
  - Everyone be addressed with the same degree of formality
- Speak in clear, plain language – avoid jargon and discipline-specific terminology
- Have copies of specific materials available that are referred to

TESTED TIPS FOR IEP MEETINGS:
What IEP Conveners Can Do (During Meeting)

- Focus on the child's individualized needs – not the program, classroom, or resource limitations
- Listen carefully
- Maintain confidentiality – don't discuss other students
- Don't hurry
- Be willing to say "I don't know"
- Involve student for at least a portion of the meeting if they can contribute and always if 18 or over

TESTED TIPS FOR IEP MEETINGS:
What IEP Conveners Can Do (Post-Meeting)

- Review and evaluate
  - What worked
  - What didn't
  - Incorporate improvements into future meetings
  - Consider building meeting tip file for each child – sources of anger, joy etc.
- Send home thank you note

For more information, contact

CADRE, the National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education
www.directionservice.org/cadre

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The IDEA Partnerships
www.ideapartnership.org