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# RESOLVING CONFLICT CREATIVELY (IN THE CLASSROOM)

Marina Tanasoska  
Darko Taleski

Friends of Education

**Usak - First teachers' training**



## ProSocial Values

2017-1-IT02-KA201-036860

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Exploring two different points of view in a conflict
- Learning how to take the perspective of another person/side involved in the conflict
- Raising the participants' awareness of different points of view in a conflict
- Promoting the Healthy Expression of Feelings
- Encouraging compassion and cooperation
- Creating an Anti-Bias Classroom



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# TRAINING CONTENTS

The starting frame of this workshop is prosocial view of the nature of human development. It is considered that through the activities it is possible to gain a sense of competence and ability for articulation and processing important interior contents.

The workshop will help educators in resolving conflicts, become aware of stereotypes and prejudices, and develop empathy for all students regardless their differences.

Prosocial learning with its values raises the level of teaching, and also the influence on student's ability to recognize and use empathy in their lives.



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# TRAINING CONTENTS

The workshop and games are link between everyday life and the process of learning. We describe the role of learning based on traditional children's games in the teaching process, the role of ICT in "playing and learning" as well as the benefits of communication student-student, teacher-student, parent-student, teacher-mentor. But the main goal is to analyse the social activities of the students and to influence on decreasing the number of conflicts through developing human characteristics and values.



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Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.

*William James*

**William James** (1842–1910) was an American philosopher and psychologist, and the first educator to offer a psychology course in the United States. James was a leading thinker of the late nineteenth century, one of the most influential U.S. philosophers, and has been labelled the "Father of American psychology."





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## What is conflict?

- **Conflict is a daily occurrence in interpersonal relations** a part of life, in particular.
- One of the widespread definitions of the term says that **conflict is a state of disagreement, opposition or incompatibility between two or more persons.**
- In the other hand, the **ability to solve conflict situations** is essential if we want to fulfill our potential (and who does not want it?). These situations make us more closely analyze what is happening around us, as well as opportunities for creative responses and solutions.



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# CREATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

- Pausing and distancing
- **Looking at the wider picture**
- Paying attention to nonverbal communication
- **Empathy**
- Accepting responsibility
- Communicating assertively
- Focusing on what's up to you



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# Pausing and distancing

**By engaging in the pause a person gives themselves the power to choose to either step into or away from the issues in conflict.** Not every verbal assault or pointed comment needs or should be dignified with a response.

**Every person should be given the opportunity to clarify what they are saying.** It is at this juncture that the power of the pause comes into play. A simple request for clarity of what was just said, such as " I beg your pardon ...?" or " Please could you explain what you are saying" is often the mercy moment which ends what could have become an unfortunate and avoidable breakdown of relations.

*„The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause,,.*

MARK TWAIN







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## Looking at the wider picture

- Imagine following the conflict from a long distance and a neutral position. You should consider is the reason of your anxiety really what you are talking about at the moment or have you redirected you anger from some other situation?  
(Similar to the accumulated anger that most of us throw out in traffic).
- **The positive approach to finding solution with this technique is to try to identify the problem but also the person with whom you need to solve that problem together. Bypass the trifles, try to find answers to the big questions that need to be untangled.**



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# Paying attention to nonverbal communication

Your nonverbal communication cues - **the way you listen, look, move, and react** - tell the person you're communicating with, **whether or not you care, if you're being truthful**, and **how well you're listening**.

When your nonverbal signals match up with the words you're saying, they increase **trust, clarity, and rapport**. When they don't, they can generate **tension, mistrust, and confusion**.

If you want to become a **better communicator**, it's important to **become more sensitive** not only to the body language and nonverbal cues of others, but also to your own.



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# Empathy

- **Show that you hear** and understand what the other side is telling you.
- **Try to understand** which is it's angle, which is it's point of view. We all say that we do it, but in fact, we usually only try to put what is important to us to the forefront.
- **You do not have to agree and justify**, just try to understand how the other person feels in that moment. This doesn't make you weak person. On the contrary, this will help you to become understanding, compassionate, strong person.



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## Accepting responsibility

- When you accept responsibility, you **find solutions** quicker and in a manner which allows you to correct others **without causing rifts in your relationships.**
- Conflicts are the byproduct of **irresponsibility.**
- **Irresponsibility results in blame.** Pointing a finger at the other party rather than at yourself. Criticizing others to deflect attention from gaps in your behavior. Judging the actions of another to avoid focusing on your own.





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## Communicating assertively

- Communicating assertively is communicating in a clear manner.
- Communicating that **expresses your opinions** and needs while **respecting the opinions** and needs of the other person.
- Assertive communication can strengthen your relationships, reducing stress from conflict and providing you with social support when facing difficult times.



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## Focusing on what's up to you

- **We can't control anyone else's behavior**, and we can't make another person want to or be able to change.
- **We can't change people**, but we try to change their behavior - slowly, lovingly, compassionately.
- **Help them change the narrative.** Instead of giving them advice on changing the behavior (the symptom) try helping them see the narrative (the cause).
- **Let go.** Some people cannot be helped.



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## **Guidelines on teaching creative conflict resolution**

- **Promoting** the Healthy Expression of feelings
- **Encouraging** Caring, Compassion, and Cooperation
- **Creating** an Anti-Bias Classroom



## Promoting the Healthy Expression of feelings

- **Keep group sizes small:** Children will find it easier to cooperate if groups are small.
- **Match pairs and groups:** When forming pairs or small groups, try to match children with strong cooperation skills with others whose skills are just emerging.
- **Help a child who is left out:** If there's a child who no one wants to be partners with, set the stage for inclusion by saying, "We are all learning how to take turns and listen. Jerry is, too."
- **Provide conducive space:** You can modify the physical environment to support and promote cooperative activities.





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## **OBJECTIVES of the WORKSHOP**

- Participants will explore two different points of view in a conflict
- Participants will learn to take the perspective of another person/side involved in the conflict
- Participants will rise their awareness of different points of view in a conflict



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## Warm Up activity - **Gather Together** **Birthday Line Up NONVERBAL** exercise

- 2 minutes to finish the activity.
- Form a single straight line, according to your birthdays (dates).
- Persons with January birthdays will be at the beginning of the line, (earliest January dates first, followed in order by later dates).
- The line progresses by months and days with December birthdays at the end.
- Persons with the same birthday share the same place in line.



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## Warm Up activity - Questions

- Was it difficult to you to do this activity?
- Why?
- Would it be easier for you if you can communicate with each other?
- Was there any misunderstanding between you while you were trying to do this activity?
- Can we draw the conclusion for this activity?



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## Warm Up activity - **Gather Together** **Birthday Line Up VERBAL exercise**

- 2 minutes to finish the activity.
- Form a single straight line, according to your birthdays (dates).
- Persons with January birthdays will be at the beginning of the line, (earliest January dates first, followed in order by later dates).
- The line progresses by months and days with December birthdays at the end.
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## Warm Up activity - **Conclusions**

- Communication has a big role to play in conflict management.
- Poor communication always results in misunderstandings and eventually conflicts.
- Our **communication** has to be **clear**, **precise** and **honest**, if we want to avoid conflicts.



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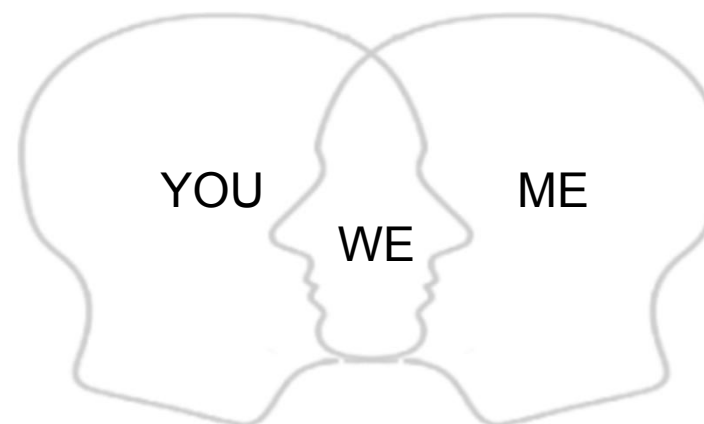


# Main activity **CREATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT**

## **Looking at the wider picture**



## **Empathy**





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## Main activity - Focus

- Learn and apply some techniques for creative responses and solutions of the conflict situation.
- We will focus on two techniques: **Looking at the wider picture** and **Empathy**.
- We will going to think about what does it means to **“Look at the wider picture”** or to **“See with Another’s Eyes”** by **telling a stories**.



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# Sleeping Beauty - Film Story







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## Main activity - Questions

- Were there some kind of **conflict** in the story?
- Could you define the **parties involved in the conflict**?
- What do you think which are **positive characters** and which are **negative characters** in this story?
- **Why?**



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# Maleficent - Film Story





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## Main activity - Questions

- **In what ways are the two stories different?**
- What are your feelings toward Maleficent in the original story?
- What are your feelings toward the king Stefan and the fairies in the original story?
- Why do you think you felt that way about main characters in the original story?
- Have your feelings toward the main characters have changed since you first heard the original story, and after you heard and watched the other story?
- **Why or why not?**



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## Main activity -**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

- Most literature presents an opportunity to explore point of view and its relationship to conflict. Fairy tales present a wonderful opportunity.
- Example: „The Real Story of the Three Little Pigs” by John Sceiszka, humorously explores the story of the Three Little Pigs (Puffin, 1996) from the wolf’s perspective. (This book is also available in Spanish, La Verdadera Historia de los Tres Cerditos, Viking, 1991.)
- Example: „ Red Riding Hood,,



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## Main activity - **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**Language Arts:** Have children do creative writing activities around point of view. Look for conflicts between two characters where students can role-play the two different points of view. Have children write or dramatize a version of Jack and the Bean Stalk or another fairy tale from the perspective of the giant.

**Arts:** Have children do creative drawing activities around point of view.

**Social Studies and History:** Look at historical events from the points of view of all the players. For example have students think about the point of view of Columbus arriving in the "new world" and the point of view of the Native Americans seeing him arrive in their world.

**Computer science/ IT Classes:** Have children to make some video montages, animations, comics, posters, presentations, games, to present a story about some conflict situation (it can be also a real life story) or about creative conflict resolution, using computer.





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## Main activity - **Participants activity**

- What is something that you and a friend (or some other important person for you) have different points of view about?
- Share a time when you had a different point of view about something from your friends or another important person in your life.