**DIGI SCHOOL 2020-1-SK01-KA226-SCH-094350**

**Conflicts – setting the boundaries**

**Definition:**

**Conflict** ([lat.](https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin%C4%8Dina) *conflictus* – *clash*) is an event where an individual or a group of people try to achieve their own goals (pleasing their needs, implementing their interests) by eliminating, destroying, or subordinating other individual or a group of people, who try to achieve similar or identical goals. It is a clash of two opposing views.

Division of conflicts:

**According to groups involved:**

Interpersonal conflicts – a conflict between two or more people,

intrapersonal conflicts – our personal, internal conflicts,

group conflicts - that occur within a given group of people,

conflicts between groups – conflicts between two groups of people.

**Interpersonal conflicts**

Conflict of interest – results from different needs of people

Conflict of information - results from different information sources

Structural conflict – conflict of institutions because of power

Conflict of values –results from recognition of different values

Relationship conflict – aversion towards another person

**Ways of conflict solving**

**1. Self-promoting oriented communication:**

* **The „old vinyl “technique** – is an assertive communication technique by which we persistently and calmly (without the increase of uncertainty, aggression, anger, anxiety, etc.) repeat what we want to achieve, without a need of prepared arguments or feeling of anger.
* **Free information technique** – is an assertive communication technique that teaches us to recognize those elements in conversation that are interesting and important for our partner and at the same time which offer free unsolicited information about us (so that the partner could reflect upon it in a conversation)
* **Self-opening technique** - is an assertive communication technique, that enables the opening of social communication and reduces possible manipulation. Its principle is open and clear (not ambiguous) expressing of personal thoughts, feelings, motives, preferences, and evaluations.
* **Question initiation technique** – we initiate questions in appropriate way, we try to get more information on how the other feels and why are we in conflict.

**2. Consensus oriented communication:**

* **Open door technique** – or assertive agreement, is one of the methods of assertive criticism management. The assumption is the acceptance of any, even partially true criticism without the attempt of denying it, defending against it or paying it back (on the contrary, rejection of consent in case the statement is humiliating or is of crucial importance)
* **Negative assertion technique** - is an assertive communication technique, that enables open admittance of one´s own mistakes and errors, with the acceptance of one´s own fallibility without consequent never-ending feelings of guilt and apologising or anger.
* **Negative questioning technique** - is an assertive communication technique, that enables closer specification of criticism, or converts general criticism to more specific through questioning by which we don´t react to criticism defensively, with vengeance or denial.
* **Compromises technique** - is an assertive communication technique, where the aim, in case of an interest conflict, is reaching a consensus.

The important way of communication in a conflict is the „I “STATEMENT.

**„I” statement -**  is the foundation of good assertive communication. The principle of this method is expressing of motives and feelings. The feedback to certain behaviour or communication can be positive or negative.

1. Name the feeling (what can be easily done with the help of these formulae):

* I feel…it bothers me…I feel unpleasant about…it angers me…I am sad… I am mad about...

1. Describe specific behaviour of the other person (your objection will be supported with a specific example from the past):

* When you did …when I…when it…

1. Describe how their behaviour affects you (can but also doesn´t have to trigger compassion)

* Because it causes me... because then…because I have to…because of that…

1. Suggest a solution (criticism is not enough!!!)*:*

* I would be glad if... it would be fine if you could…I kindly ask you to…

I would like you to…I suggest that we…

**EVERYBODY HAS TO SET THEIR BOUNDARIES ALONE!**

What are the boundaries in communication and in conflicts?

It is a limit that we set to ourselves. What we will tolerate from others and what we won´t.

When you feel disgust or anger, you find yourself crying or complaining, it is a good signal for setting yourself a boundary.

Under the term boundary we understand our personal zone, safety, our competences, rights in relation to other people and the world. Thanks to healthy boundaries we won´t get lost in the chaos of impressions, feelings and assumptions. We won´t meet the needs of others.

The boundaries can be physical or emotional.

Physical boundaries define who can touch us or approach us.

Emotional boundaries define where our feelings end and where the feelings of the other person begin.

Our physical and emotional boundaries together define how we deal in contact with others and how we allow others to deal with us. If we didn´t have boundaries, others would touch us as they would please, they would do what they wanted and would behave to us as they would please. We would be sure that other´s behaviour would be our fault, that we didn´t have any rights.

Setting the boundaries is always unpleasant for us as well as for the others. We are frequently influenced by the skills that we obtained in childhood.

**Do I need a better control over my boundaries? Find out how many of the following statements apply to you:**

* Often it happens that I do the work for my friends, family and colleagues.
* I get easily influenced and affected by the emotions of others.
* I often find myself doing something that I initially didn´t want to do at all.
* Other people often misuse my kindness and willingness.
* I have a problem to say no.
* I value the opinion of others more than my own.

If you answered YES at least once, you have to set the boundaries.

When you find out that you need to set the boundaries, do that conclusively, best without anger, with just a few words. Don´t explain and don´t apologize for it. Don´t argue. Just set the boundaries calmly, clearly and with respect.

Why to set the boundaries?

People with healthy boundaries are characterized by:

* They value their opinions and are not afraid to listen to opinions of others.
* They are not afraid to change their opinion, when they find it suitable.
* They know their values.
* They are not afraid to talk about their emotions.
* They do not overwhelm others with their needs.
* Vedia požiadať o láskavosť a vypýtať si pomoc.
* They are in contact with their needs and desires.
* They can communicate assertively.
* They can say “no”.
* They accept “no” from others without taking it as a personal assault.

While working on your boundaries you can use these instructions:

Step 1: Realise where the feelings of guilt and the thoughts full of uncertainty lie

Learn to sense your feelings. Know yourselves. Find out what you desire. When feelings of guilt, fear, and anger occur and with them come the thoughts that make you feel uncertain. These automatic thoughts have the following form and warn you of incorrectly set boundaries:

* „I shouldn´t have...“
* „They looked irritated...“
* „What if they think of me...“?

STEP 2: Answer yourself if it really is important to deal with these thoughts

Try to put up a question, whether your thoughts and feelings are really yours and whether they are important:

* „Do I have to deal with this right now?“
* „Is it really my problem?“
* „Can I even do anything about it?“
* „Is it really my responsibility?“

The answer is almost always “NO”.

STEP 3: Imagine your boundaries as a house with a fence and try to find out where you feel well

Sometimes setting healthy boundaries can seem impolite to us. In an unpleasant situation we don´t have to be unpleasant, it is enough if we are true and are truly communicate our feelings. We don´t have to protect all from pain, we have to protect ourselves. Working with metaphors helps. Imagine your boundaries as a house with a fence. The size of the property matches your imagination and gradually imagine the situations that test your boundaries. Feel where your boundary is safe and useful, where you would move your fence even further to protect yourself better. Thanks to that you will gain sensitivity to border setting – maybe you will find out that you have been overworking, that in your work you cross your imaginary property´s border of comfort, but you are still willing to help your grandma because it doesn´t threaten your boundaries.

STEP 4: Be patient and remind yourself that boundaries are your right

Repeat to yourself that you have the right to protect yourself and your peace. Don´t try to manipulate the situation so that everything is OK with everybody. I tis a high price to pay for maintaining the harmony.

YOU WILL NOT ALWAYS BE LOVED BY EVERYONE!

Conclusion:

Setting the boundaries needs some practice and determination. Don´t allow anxiety and low self-esteem prevent you from caring about yourself.

You are not responsible for the reaction of other people to your boundaries. You are only responsible for communicating the boundaries in a manner that shows people respect.

Majority of people is willing to respect your boundaries, but not all. Be ready to be uncompromising when it comes to your boundaries if they are not kept. If it is necessary build walls by terminating the relationship.  
Create a supporting system for people who respect your right to set the boundaries. Remove toxic people from your life – those who want to manipulate, misuse or control you.