



Wisconsin Institute  
for Healthy Aging

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## Conflict Styles

Conflict Style	Behavior	Uses	Limitations
<b>Avoidance:</b> Denying a problem Pretending nothing is wrong	Leaving a situation Holding back feelings and opinions	When confrontation seems dangerous When you need more time to prepare	The problem may never be resolved. Emotions may explode later.
<b>Confrontation:</b> Getting what you want no matter what Some people win, some lose	Interrupting or taking over Ignoring others' feelings and ideas Loud tone of voice Sometimes physical violence	When immediate action is needed When you believe in the absolute "rightness" of your action and don't see any other choice	This can make people defensive and make a conflict worse. Confrontation can make it hard for others to express how they feel.
<b>Accommodation:</b> Giving in to another person's point of view Paying attention to others' concerns, not your own	Apologizing or saying "yes" to end the conflict Letting others interrupt or ignore your feelings and/or ideas	When you think you've made a mistake or that you don't really understand the situation When "smoothing over" is important for keeping a relationship	You may work hard to please others but never be happy yourself. Being nice doesn't always solve the problem.
<b>Compromise:</b> Each person wins some and loses some	Interest is in solving the problem Shows desire to talk about the problem	When you need a fast decision on a small issue When nothing else works	You may fix the immediate conflict but not the bigger problem. Each person may not end up happy.
<b>Problem-Solving:</b> Finding a solution that makes everyone happy Looking closely at the sources of the conflict	Directly saying your feelings, needs, and wants	Can make someone who is stubborn move toward resolving a problem	This requires time and good communication skills