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A Tale of Two Conversations

Communication Skills for Parents Who Are New to Special Education

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Parents of Children with Disabilities will:

OBJECTIVES:

- Improve their communication skills to develop and maintain partnerships
- Learn about barriers to communication & personal conflict management styles
- Acquire basic leadership skills to advocate more effectively

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Topics for Today

1. Conflict management styles
2. Types of conflict resolution
3. Case studies
4. Parent leadership skills: The Tale of Two Conversations
5. Steps to Success

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1. Conflict Management Styles

THOMAS - KILMANN MODEL

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THE OWL
(COLLABORATING)

Value goals & relationships
Identifies the conflict as a problem
Strive to reduce tensions between two persons
Seek solutions that satisfy themselves & others

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THE TURTLE
(AVOIDING)

Value to avoid confrontation
Find it easier to withdraw from a conflict than to face it
Sometimes give up relationships or goals that are associated with the conflict

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**THE SHARK
(COMPETING)**

- Value goals over relationships
- Seek goals even at the cost of the relationship involved
- Concerned with their goals than with being liked by others
- Try to force opponents to accept their solution



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**THE TEDDY BEAR
(ACCOMMODATING)**

- Value relationships over goals
- Sacrifice goals to maintain relationships
- Avoid conflict – want to be liked by others
- Smooth over conflict – prevent damaging the relationship



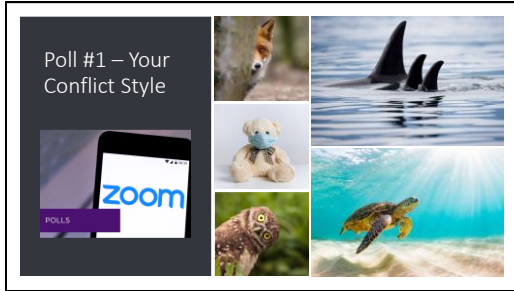
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**THE FOX
(COMPROMISING)**

- Concerned w/ goals & relationships
- Seek a compromise – persuade
- Conflict solutions – both sides gain
- Search for middle ground
- Sacrifice goals to find agreement
- Seek common good

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Scoring the Conflict Management Styles Assessment

As stated, the 15 statements correspond to the five conflict management styles. To find your most preferred style, total the points for each style. The style with the highest score indicates your most commonly used strategy. The one with the lowest score preferred strategy. However, all styles have pros and cons, so it's the most appropriate style for each conflict situation.

Conflict Management Styles Assessment

Please CIRCLE ONE response that best describes you. Be honest, this survey is designed to help you learn about your conflict management style. There are no right or wrong answers!

Name _____ Date _____

| | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| 1. I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I try to meet the expectations of others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and base the basis of communication upon it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. When I find myself in an argument, I usually try very little and try to leave as soon as possible. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Style Corresponding Statements: Total:

Collaborating (questions 1, 5, 7): **9**

Competing (questions 4, 9, 12): _____

Avoiding (questions 6, 10, 13): _____

Accommodating (questions 3, 11, 14): _____

Compromising (questions 2, 8, 11): _____

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2. Types of Conflict Resolution

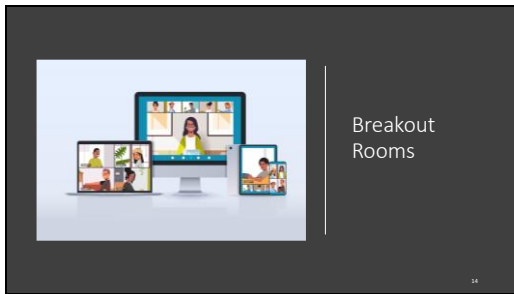
| STRATEGIES | RESOLUTIONS | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| | WIN-WIN | LOSE-LOSE | WIN-LOSE |
| Accommodating | | Both parties ignore the issue | |
| Avoiding | | | Only 1 party wins |
| Collaborating | Meet the needs of all involved | | |
| Competing | | | One party meet needs of others at own expense |
| Compromising | | Both parties give up something | |

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