

DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS, NEGOTIATION SKILLS AND COUNSELLING IN RELATIONSHIPS

PROF. OLUJIDE A. ADEKEYE
DIRECTOR, AFRICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
{ALDC}, COVENANT UNIVERSITY, OTA

PROTOCOLS & SALUTATIONS



INTRODUCTION

Relationships, whether they be between family members, friends, romantic partners, or work colleagues, are a cornerstone of human life.

Disagreements, conflicts, and disputes are natural aspects of any relationship



THREE CRITICAL PILLARS

Dispute resolution, negotiation skills, and counselling are **three** critical pillars

Manage conflict, Promote empathy, Active listening, and Mutual understanding

Transform tension into growth and strengthen the emotional fabric of their relationships

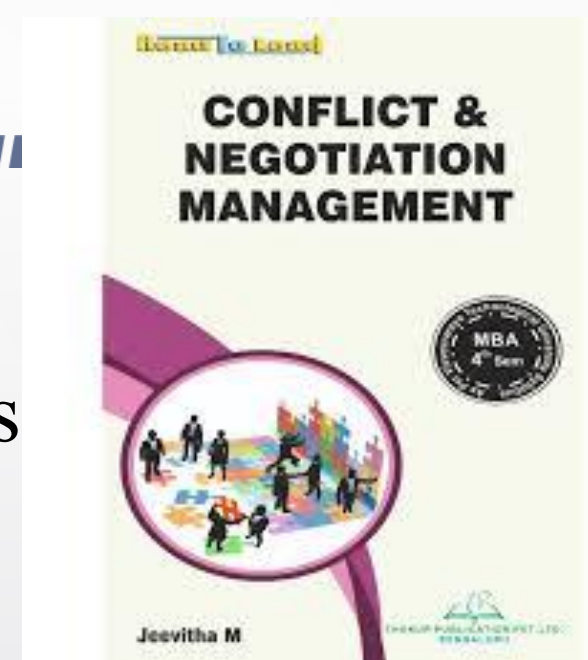


Rationale for Counselling

Disagreements, misunderstandings, and differences in expectations are natural

How these conflicts are managed profoundly impacts the relationship's overall health and longevity

This is where **counselling** for dispute resolution and negotiation becomes essential.





Negotiation

Negotiation in relationships is not just about "winning" but about finding a middle ground where both parties feel heard, respected, and understood

Counselling = effective communication, regulated emotions, and engaging in difficult conversations in a way that fosters mutual respect and compromise



Goals of Counselling

Transform conflict from a destructive force into an opportunity for: Growth, Deeper understanding, and Stronger, resilient relationship

Counselling leads to:

Stronger foundation for future challenges

Leading to healthier and more fulfilling connections

KEY Considerations for Counsellors in Dispute Resolution and Negotiation

The Role of Communication

Understanding the Root Causes of Conflict

Neutral Third-Party Mediation

Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Negotiation Skills

Building Trust and Safety

The Importance of Timing

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Emphasis on Cooperation Over Competition

Establishing Boundaries

Long-Term Relationship Skills

Behavioural Changes

Cultural Sensitivity

Conflict as an Opportunity for Growth

////// Negotiation Techniques

Compromise

Collaboration

Win-win solutions

Active listening

Patience and emotional control

Clarifying and Reframing



The Nature of Disputes and Negotiation in Relationships

Types of Disputes

- Interpersonal conflict in romantic relationships
- Family dynamics and generational differences
- Workplace-related relational disputes
- Miscommunication and lack of understanding

Key Negotiation Skills for Counsellors

1. Active Listening
2. Empathy and Emotional Intelligence
3. Assertive Communication
4. Problem-Solving Orientation
5. Conflict Analysis
6. Mediation Techniques
7. Boundary Setting
8. Cultural Competence
9. Patience and Timing
10. Goal Clarity and Flexibility

PSYCHOLOGICAL BEDROCKS OF CONFLICT

Emotional triggers and unmet needs

Attachment styles and their influence
on conflict resolution

Stress and external pressures as
contributors to disputes:

Effective Communication

Empowers individuals to navigate disagreements with **empathy, respect, and emotional intelligence**

Nonviolent Communication, and de-escalation techniques create the foundation for **peaceful conflict resolution**

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY INTERVENTION

By addressing minor disagreements before they escalate, organisations, friends, couples and families can prevent long-standing resentment and emotional distance



CASE STUDIES AND REAL-LIFE APPLICATIONS

A Couple Seeking Therapy After an Affair

- In this case study, a married couple sought therapy following the revelation of an extramarital affair.
- The goal was to explore whether reconciliation was possible and to facilitate emotional healing.

COUNSELLING IN RELATIONSHIPS

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- ❖ Promoting Emotional Intelligence
 - ❖ Breaking Down Communication Barriers
 - ❖ Providing a Neutral Perspective
 - ❖ Identifying Root Causes
 - ❖ Conflict Resolution Strategies

THE COUNSELLOR'S ROLE IN DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- **Facilitator**: Encourages constructive dialogue and mutual understanding
- **Mediator**: Offers a neutral perspective to resolve impasses
- **Educator**: Teaches emotional regulation and communication skills
- **Advocate**: Ensures each voice is heard fairly and without judgment
- **Coach**: Guides clients toward realistic, shared goals and outcomes

STAGES OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND NEGOTIATION IN COUNSELLING

1. Preparation and Assessment
2. Opening and Setting Ground Rules
3. Issue Identification and Expression
4. Exploration and Understanding
5. Negotiation and Problem-Solving
6. Agreement and Commitment
7. Closure and Follow-Up

STAGES OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND NEGOTIATION



CHALLENGES COUNSELLORS FACE

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- Clients' emotional volatility
- Parties resistant to change
- Escalating abuse
- Issues of neutrality
- Ethical dilemmas

WHY DISPUTES ESCALATE

Poor emotional regulation

Power imbalances

Lack of negotiation skills

Accumulated resentment or trauma

Misinterpretation of intentions

Conflict is inevitable in relationships, but how it is handled defines their strength.

Counselling fosters empathy, emotional intelligence, and effective communication, turning disputes into growth opportunities.

Through guided dialogue and understanding, partners build resilience, deepen connection, and transform tension into healing, promoting lasting harmony, respect, and mutual care.



