

Preventing Conflict

Naturally, if you see conflict brewing, you want to find a way to prevent it. But the best time to think about preventing conflict is when things are peaceful. You can help prevent conflict by being clear in your communications and expectations, by encouraging trust and by striving to establish common goals.



Causes of Conflict

The causes of conflict fall into three main categories:

- Different expectations, values, needs or objectives
- Differences in how we perceive motives, words, actions and situations
- Unwillingness to compromise, collaborate or work through problems

Skills That Help Prevent Conflict

- Use listening skills to keep the lines of communication open.
- Clearly state expectations and keep them reasonable.
- Ask others to clearly state their expectations of you.
- Make promises only when you can keep them.
- Compliment people when expectations are fulfilled.
- Avoid punishment tactics.
- Steer conversations away from bickering.
- Adopt a problem-solving attitude – demonstrate openness to suggestions.
- Focus on common goals.
- Build trust.
- Show respect for everyone.
- Resolve problems without blame.
- Remove sources of repeated conflict.
- Work together to make a wish list of actions to prevent future conflicts. Act on that list as much as possible.

Our dedicated staff of consultants is available **24 hours everyday** to address your needs. Appointments can normally be scheduled within **two working days**. **After hours** and **weekend** sessions can be arranged, if needed. Crisis calls are always handled immediately. Services are **confidential** to the extent permitted by law.

To access these services call First Sun EAP at **800-968-8143** or in Greater Columbia **803-376-2668**. For more information on this topic as well as the other services you receive from First Sun EAP, please see our website.