

I. Aims

“Yes, but not today” is how people usually think about addressing challenging situations or conflicts. Not surprisingly, we feel that we need to prepare to handle disagreements as we often associate them with uncomfortable and threatening emotions.

When there is no open conflict we can carry on as though things are all right - even if we know they aren't. Without resolution, conflict merely becomes an opportunity to recycle old arguments, destroys relationships and negatively impacts cooperation and productivity.

Many people dread negotiation, not recognizing that they negotiate on a regular, even daily basis if „negotiation“ is defined as a “back-and-forth communication designed to reach an agreement when you and the other side have some interests that are shared and others that are opposed.”

With resolution, conflict can be rewarding and exciting and can move things forward. This course is designed to help participants to constructively engage with conflicts rather than avoid or escalate them unnecessarily. It will offer applicable, relevant and confidence building tools to handle this difficult arena more effectively.

II. Contents

Communication and Negotiation in Difficult Situations

Causes and Sources of Conflicts

... what are we really fighting about?

- *Conflicts within ourselves – inner plurality*
- *Different values, goals and how-to's*

The Psychology of Conflict

... why they have a “bad reputation”

- *Handling strong, uncomfortable emotions*
- *The “difficult” other*

Effects of unsolved Conflicts

... how we see, hear, feel them

- *Warning signs and consequences*
- *A Conflict Escalation Model*

Assertive Communication

... how to handle Conflict Situations

- *Communication Axioms*
- *Non-Violent Communication*
- *Active Listening – Part 1*

Negotiation & Mediation

... success factors

- *Philosophy and attitude*
- *Principled Negotiation (Harvard)*
- *Stages and structure of the process*
- *The Tool: Active Listening – Part 2*