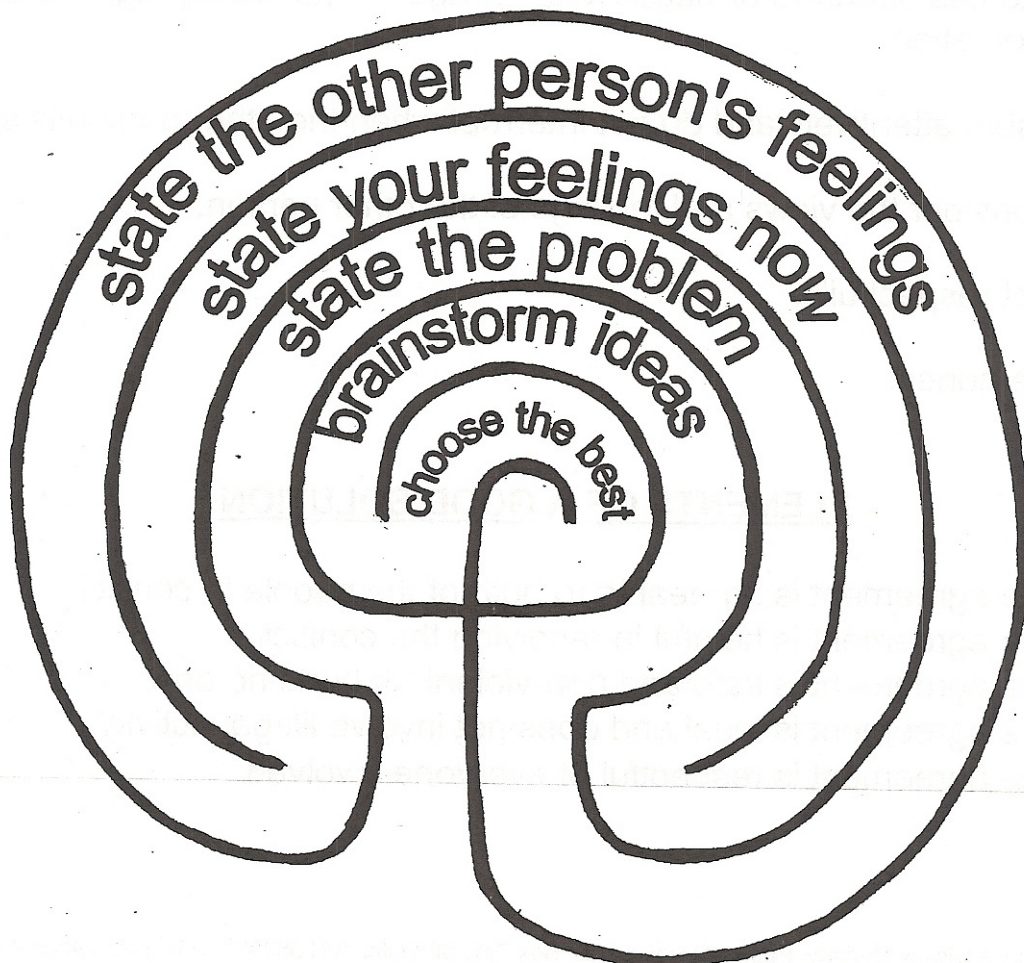


Problem Solving Labyrinth

Steps:

1. State the problem
2. State your feelings now
3. State the other person's feelings
4. Brainstorm ideas
5. Choose the best
6. Shake hands



Using the Problem Solving Labyrinth for Conflict Resolution

Two persons with a disagreement or problem to mediate may come to the labyrinth. It is often helpful to invite a third person as a neutral to witness and/or assist.

The two persons in conflict sit across from each other at a table, with the Problem Solving Labyrinth between them so each has a labyrinth in front of them. They agree to:

1. Attempt to resolve the problem
2. Not use offensive or negative language, name-calling, fighting or physical altercation.
3. Listen attentively and not interrupt when the other person is speaking.
4. Consider the views and feelings of the other person.
5. Act respectfully.
6. Be honest.

Each person begins by placing their index finger of their non-dominant hand at the threshold of the labyrinth and follows the path to the first place where the words are printed in the pathway. Each person stops and takes a turn to perform the stated task, listening without interrupting when the other speaks. When both have had a turn, they then proceed along the labyrinth path until they reach another printed instruction.

Repeat for each place on the path that has instructions to perform a task.

At the time of brainstorming (Path 4), a third person can help by writing down ideas or may even make some suggestions. In brainstorming, consider all possible solutions, even those that might seem outrageous.

In deciding upon one solution (Path 5), be certain that the solution will result in actions that are:

- Helpful
- Safe/Non-violent
- Legal
- Respectful

When one solution has been agreed upon, both people should continue to the center and shake hands. Then, each person can follow the labyrinth path back out to the threshold while reflecting on the agreement reached.

Remember, it is okay to “agree to disagree” and honor another’s differing viewpoint.

THE FIVE STEPS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION/PROBLEM SOLVING

- Step 1. State the problem as you see it. Use your own words. Speak from your heart.
- Step 2. State or describe your feelings – how this problem makes you feel.
- Step 3. After listening carefully to the other person, state in your own words how that person felt about the problem
- Step 4. Brainstorm ideas. List any and every possible solution to resolve the problem, no matter how outrageous it may sound.
- Step 5. Choose the best solution, one that both can agree upon.

STATEMENT OF BASIC AGREEMENTS

I agree to make an effort to resolve the problem

I agree not to use offensive or negative language, name-calling, fighting or physical altercation.

I agree to listen attentively and do not interrupt when the other person is speaking.

I agree to consider the views and feelings of the other person.

I agree to act respectfully.

I agree to be honest

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SOLUTION

- The agreement is agreeable to both of the people in conflict
- The agreement is helpful in resolving the conflict
- The agreement is safe and non-violent. It hurts no one.
- The agreement is legal and does not involve illegal activity.
- The agreement is respectful of everyone involved.