

How to handle conflict/tension within a group

Tension is necessary for a group to become life-giving. Manage it by encouraging members to address the conflict in an open and respectful manner.

Some tips for dealing with conflict:

- Go over group rules each time you meet so people understand what's expected.
- Acknowledge the conflict. It's OK for people to disagree. "I sense that some of us disagree and that is OK. Let's find a way to discuss so we can attempt to resolve this..."
- Address the conflict in an open and respectful manner.
- State nature of conflict objectively and help people to understand their role without blaming. This may need to be done privately.
- Seek resolution without leaving anyone feeling victimized.
- Clarify ambiguity which will improve communication and understanding.
- Be sensitive to how people (and the group) tolerate conflict.
- Be realistic. Not everything can be resolved.
- Encourage forgiveness.