

Conflict Management

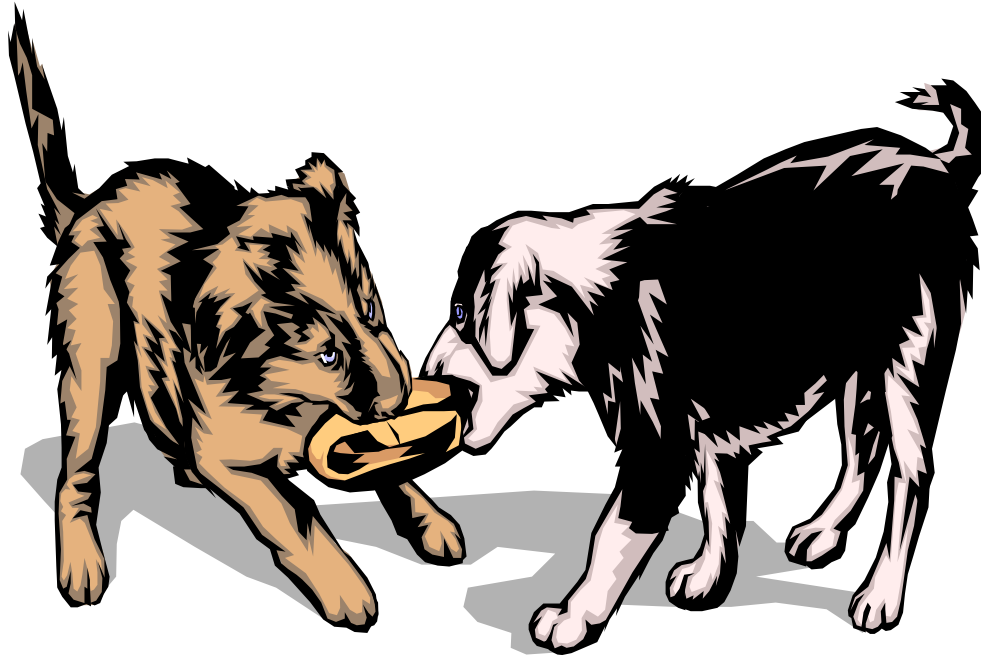


© Liz Ashe, M.Ed.

Director of Training Affiliated Healthcare Systems

Conflict is:

- Part of Life
- Inevitable
- Sometimes Negative
- Sometimes Positive



See Conflict as a **RED FLAG**

Something needs fixing



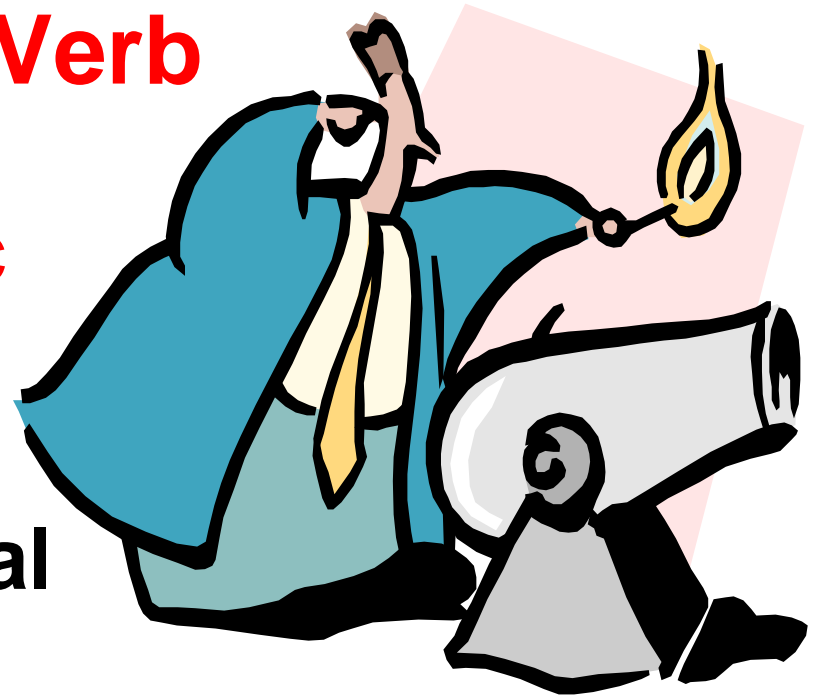
- Problems underground and festering
- WE THEY “camps”
- Someone smoldering
- Increased Grumbling
- Complaints
- Grievances

The Word Conflict is a Noun

Disputing is a Action Verb

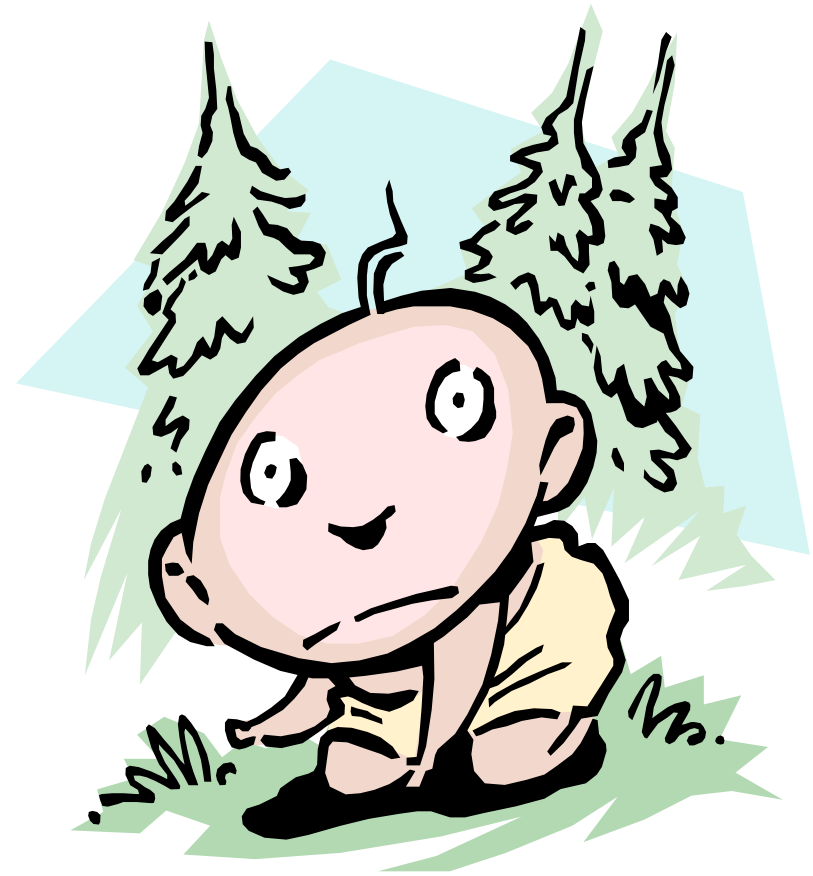
Disputing is Problematic
and involves:

- 💣 The ways people deal with conflict
- 💣 How it gets acted out



How we Deal with Conflict Is a Learned Behavior

**Where did we
learn how to
Resolve
Conflicts?**



Ways People Respond To Conflict With No Resolution

→ **FIGHT**

Use force, Domination

→ **FLIGHT**

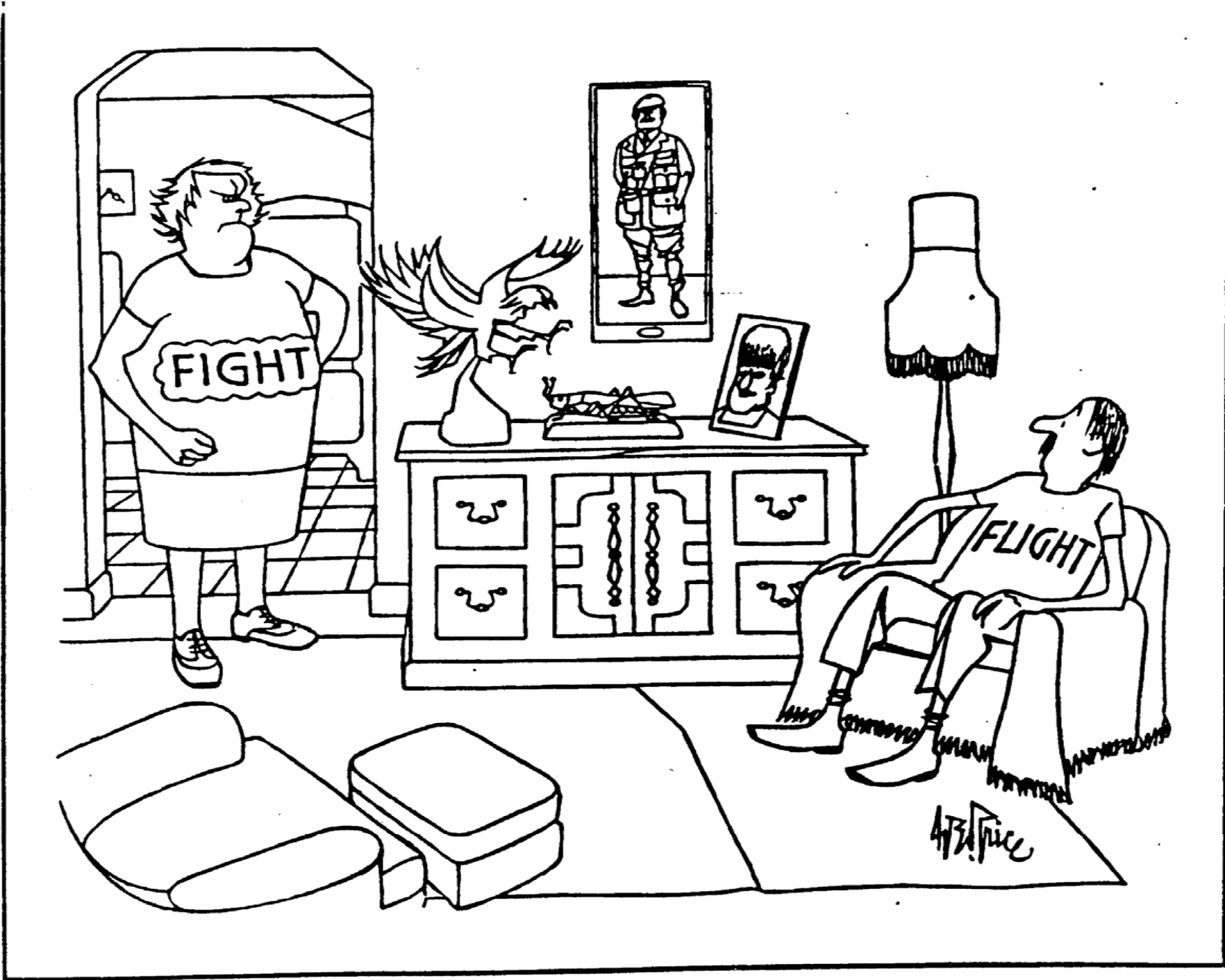
Avoid, Withdraw

→ **ACCOMMODATE**

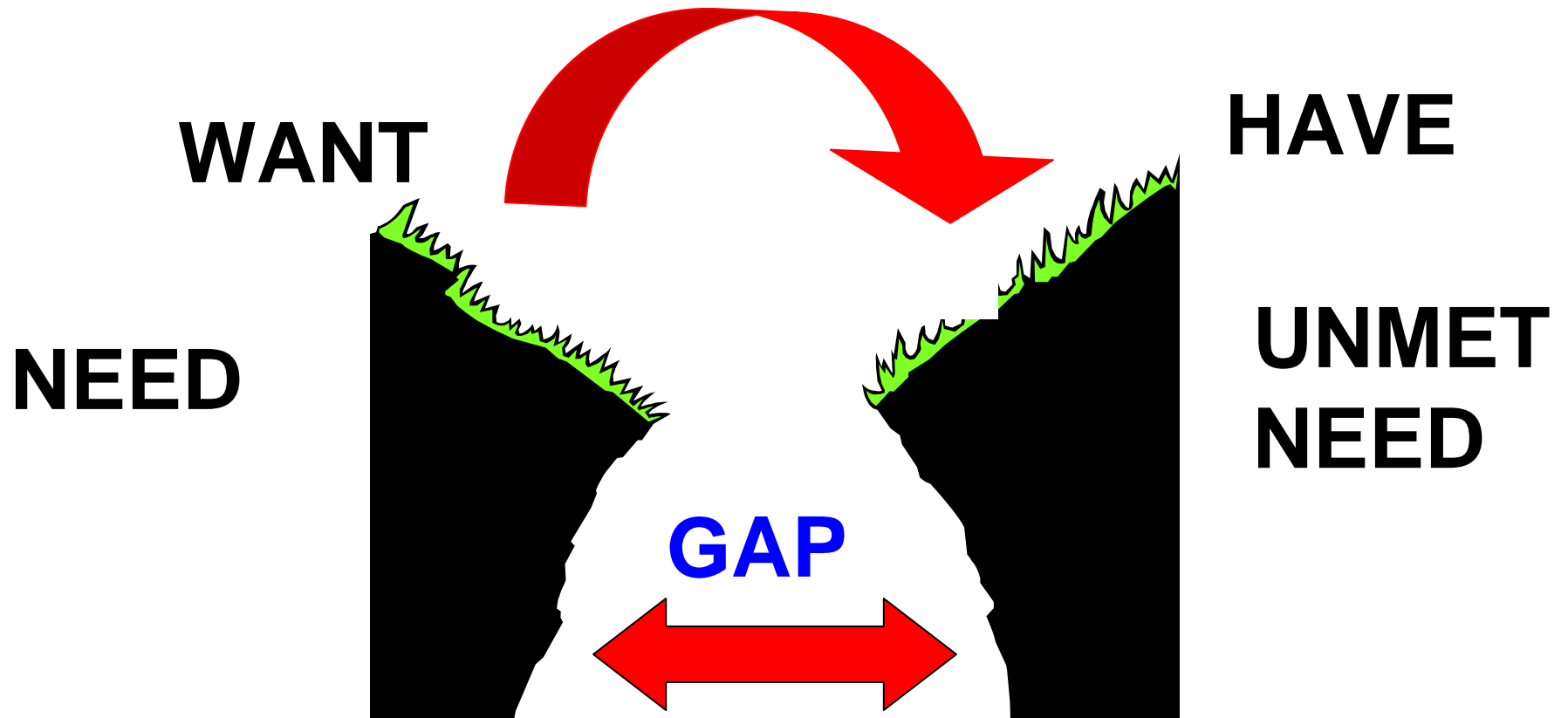
Placate, Smooth Over

→ **COMPROMISE**

Split the Difference



Conflict is often about the GAP



Determinants of Conflict

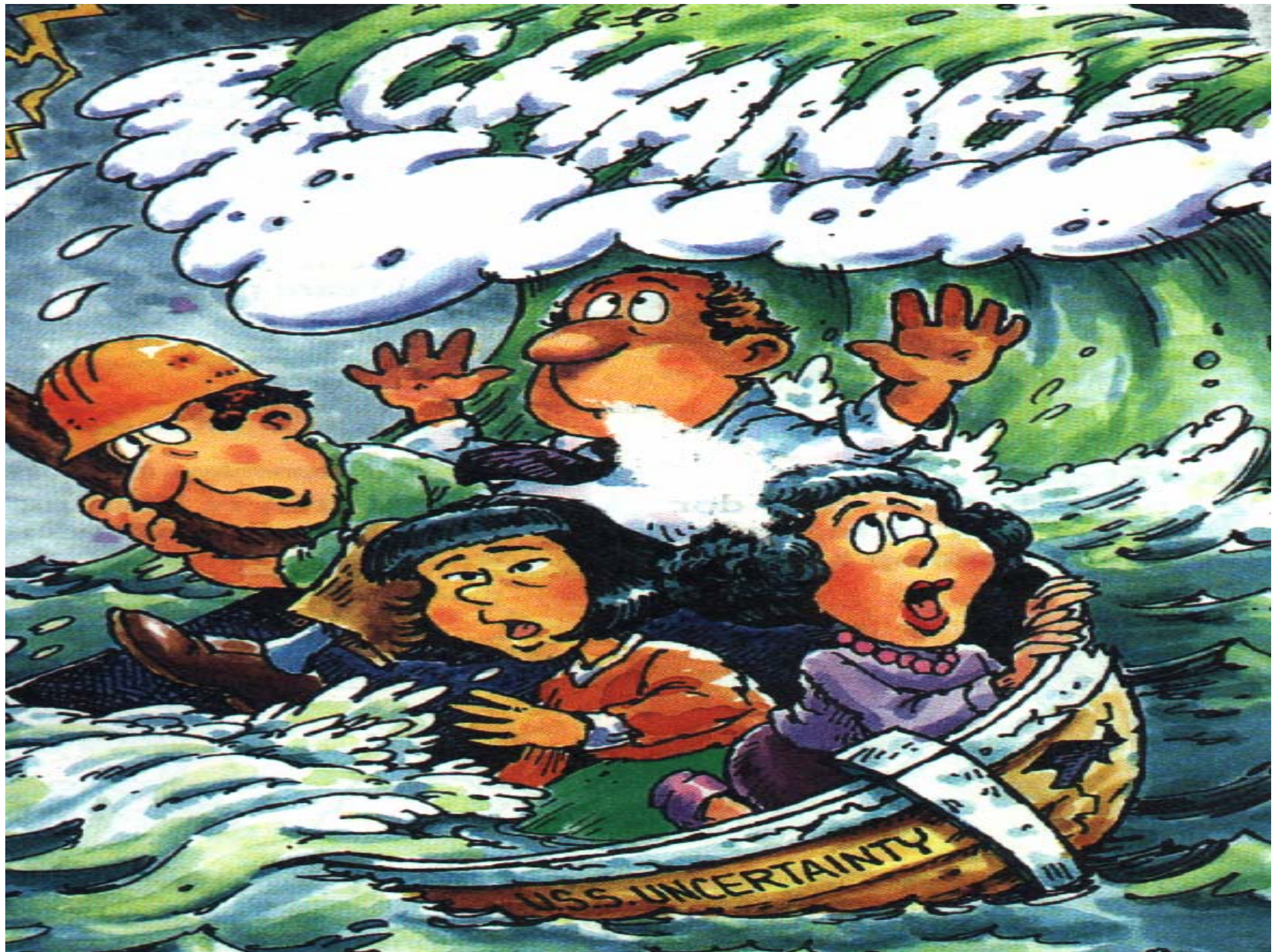
- **Size of GAP**
- **How big the investment, commitment**
- **How strong the Need, Desire or Want**
- **How rigid the “rules” or beliefs**
- **How strong the need to be right**
- **Past grudges or old anger**
- **Mood of the moment, stress level**
- **Self-esteem; secure or not**

SITUATIONS
CAN CAUSE
CONFLICT



What Causes Conflict in Organizations?

- Unrealistic expectations
- Stressful conditions
- Poorly defined roles or responsibilities
- Lack of information
- Lack of security
- Having little or no control
- Fear
- No common goals
- Poor communication
- Turf wars
- Management styles
- Unclear expectations
- Lack of teamwork
- Perception of Favoritism
- Lack of respect
- Different priorities
- Feeling taken advantage of
- Not feeling appreciated



Change:

- ◆ Is a very personal thing. No two people respond the same way to change
- ◆ Is a significant emotional event
- ◆ When unwanted, causes FEAR and “*psychological soreness*”

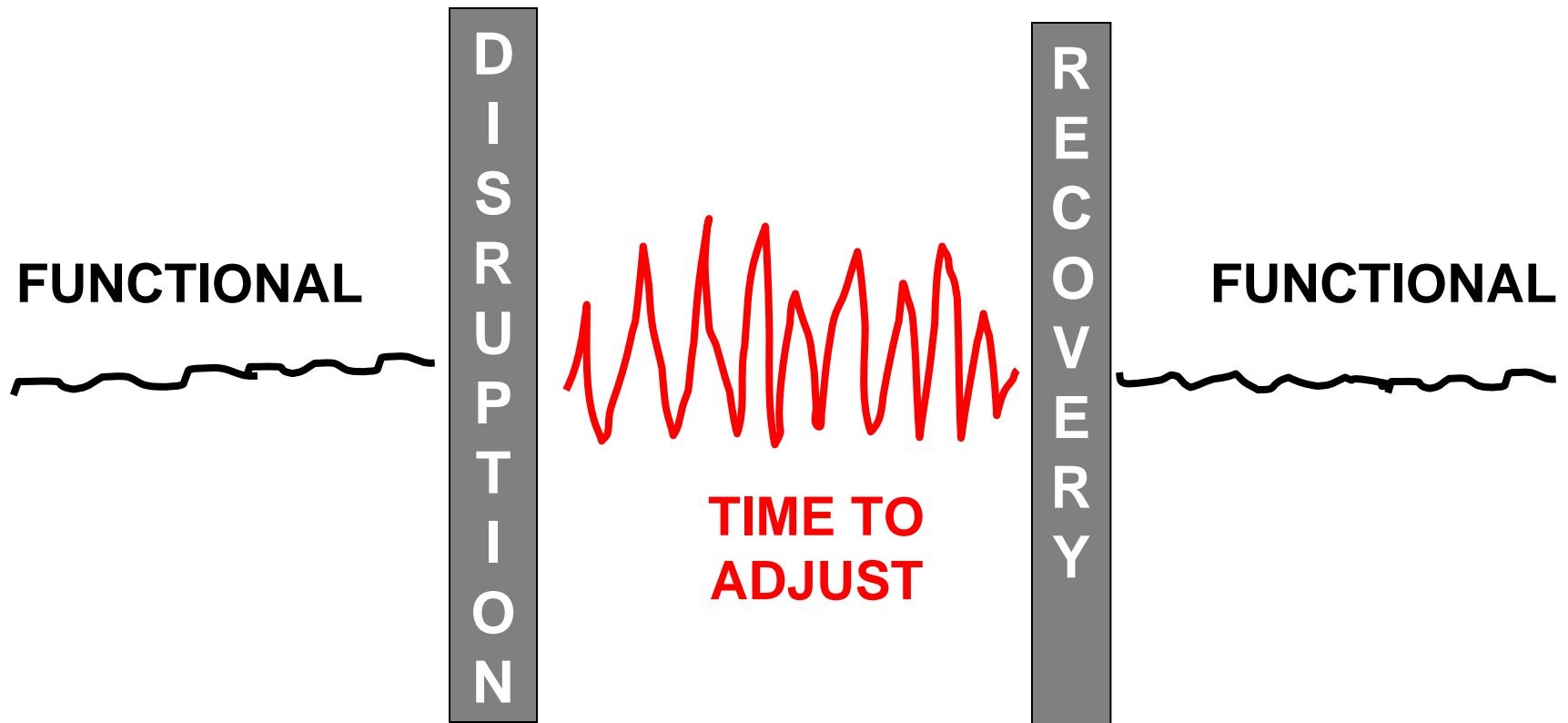
Change is About the Gut

There is a “ME” focus

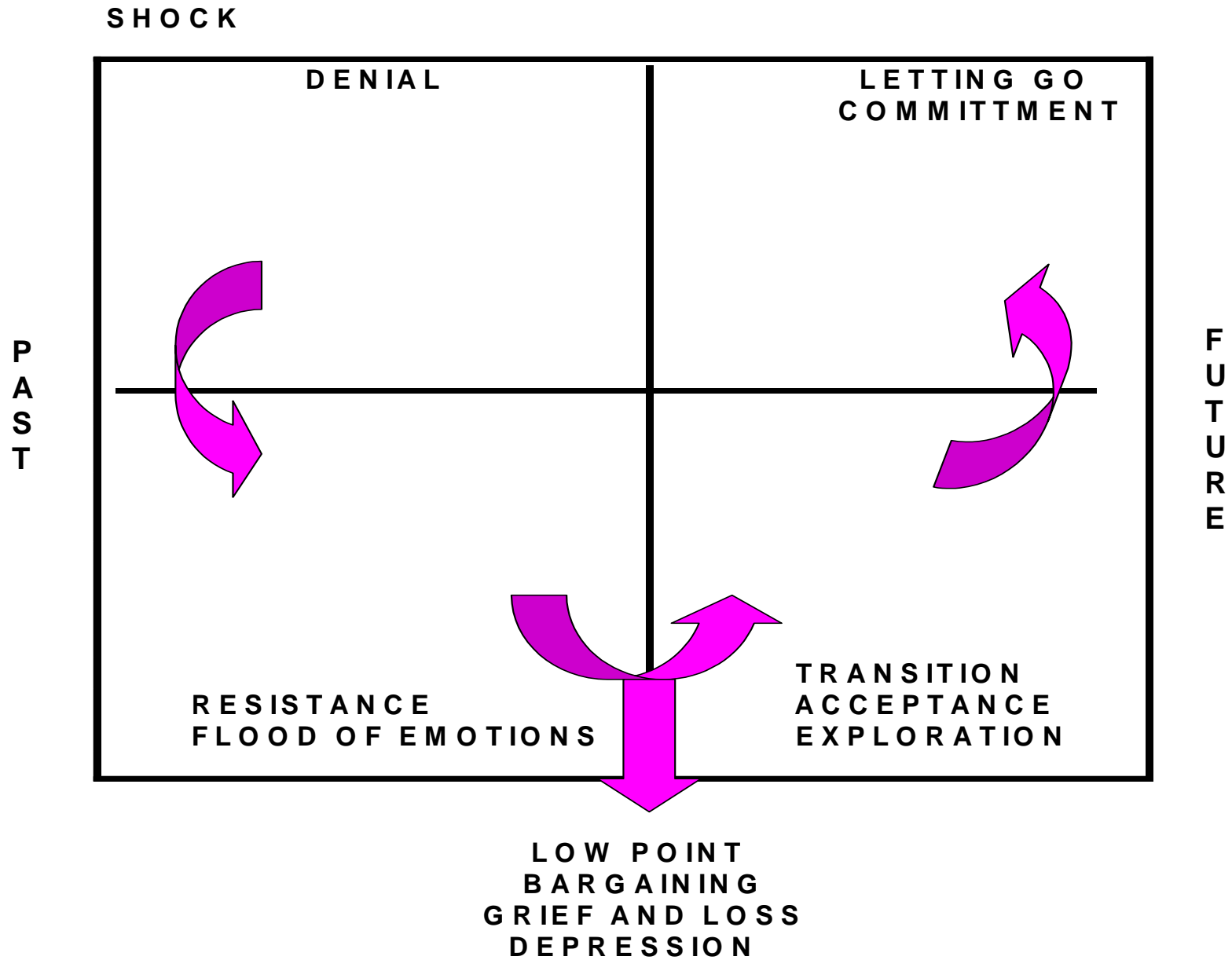
- ◆ What is going to happen?
- ◆ How will it affect me?
- ◆ How will I manage it?
- ◆ Will I do the same job? Lose job?
- ◆ Can I do it?
- ◆ Will my efficiency be compromised?
- ◆ How will I cope?



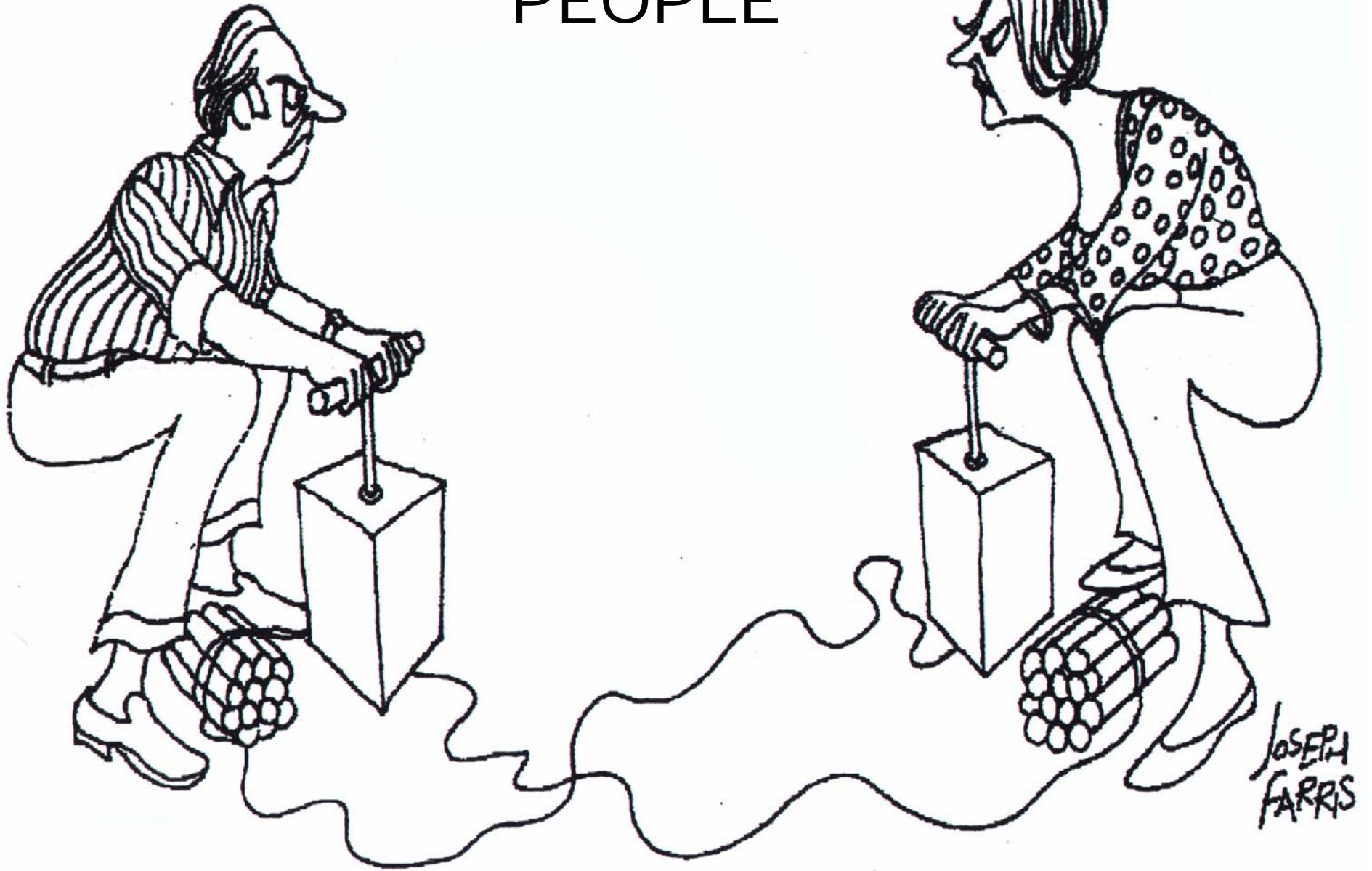
Transition Process



THE NORMAL STAGES OF CHANGE



PEOPLE



What Causes Person to Person Conflict?

- Personality clashes
- Differences in work styles or ethics
- Communication styles
- Assumptions
- Individual preferences
- Stress
- Prejudice and bias
- Culture, Gender, Age
- Inflexibility - Narrow minds
- Miscommunication
- Desire to get own needs met
- Character attacks
- Differences of opinion
- Unmet needs
- Competition
- Revisiting past mistakes, wrongs, issues
- Different goals, priorities
- Narrow minds

What Attracts Conflict Like a Magnet?



- Being made to look bad in public
- Character or personality attacks
- Unfair practices
- Lack of information
- Shame and Blame
- Subjective Criticism
- Not being Listened to
- Threats

Categories of Conflict



- **Here and now, in your face**
- **Problems that need solving**
- **On going conflicts that require open honest communication**
- **On going conflicts that require intervention or mediation**

Helpful Insights for Managing Conflict



- **Acknowledgement**
- **Appreciation of Differences**
- **A common Ground or Focus**

Acknowledge Different Viewing Angles & Perceptions



**Acknowledge
There Is
Always More
Than One
Right Answer**

You,



Me,



Acknowledge there will always be Opposing Views



Acknowledge Types of Behavior we all have

ACTIVE BEHAVIOR:

- Sane, logical, rational, adult-like

REACTIVE BEHAVIOR

Less sane, not logical,
Irrational, more child-like

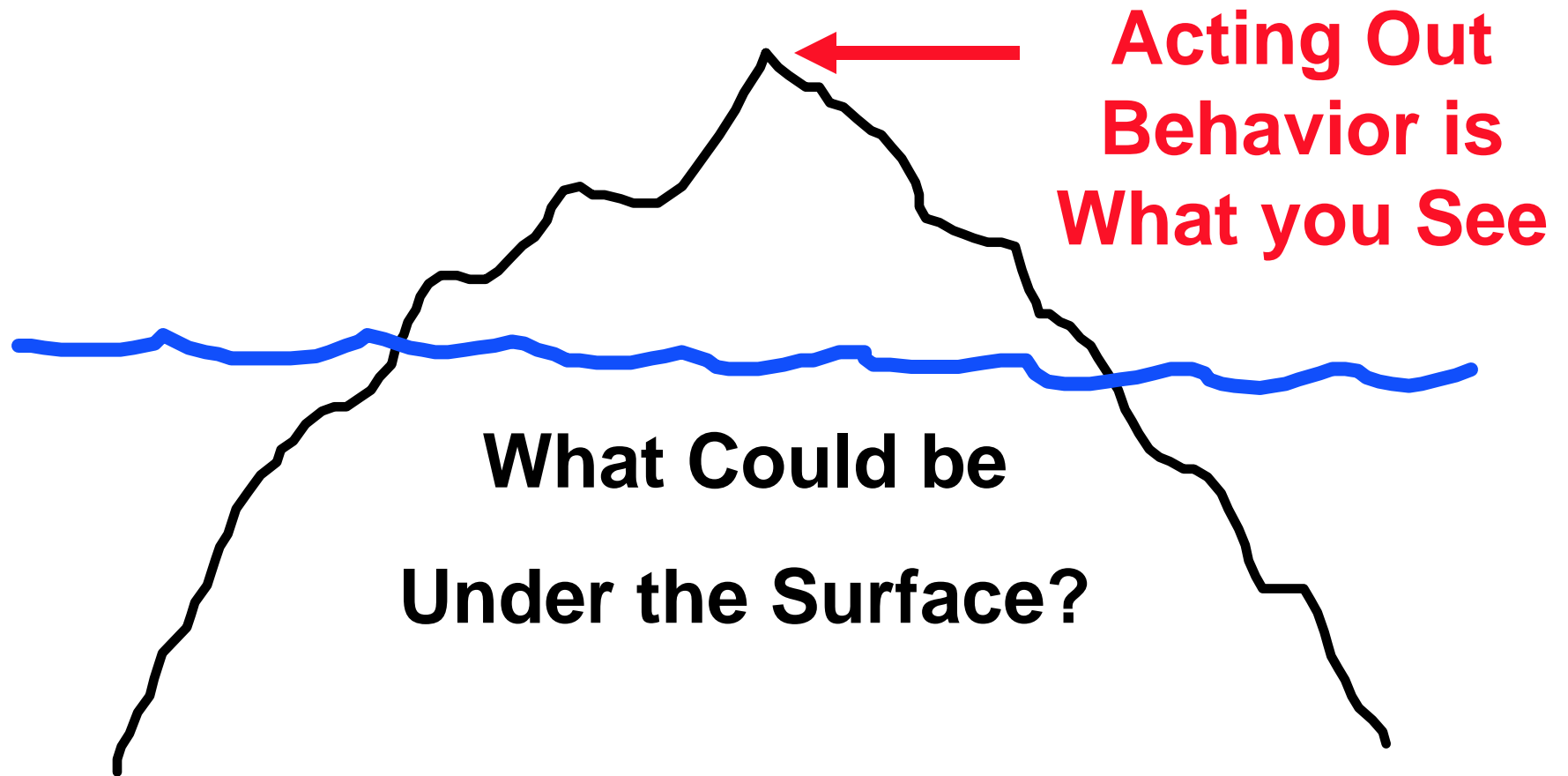
Rarely Happens in Isolation



Some Reactive Behaviors

- Yell, Scream
- Bring up Past
- Poke Fun At, Ridicule
- Clam up, Suffer in silence, hide feelings
- Complain to Others
- Leave, Walk Away
- Back down, give in
- Temper Tantrums
- Hide from the Person
- Whine
- Cry
- Use Demeaning words
- Threaten

Reactive Behavior is the Tip of the Iceberg



Acknowledgement



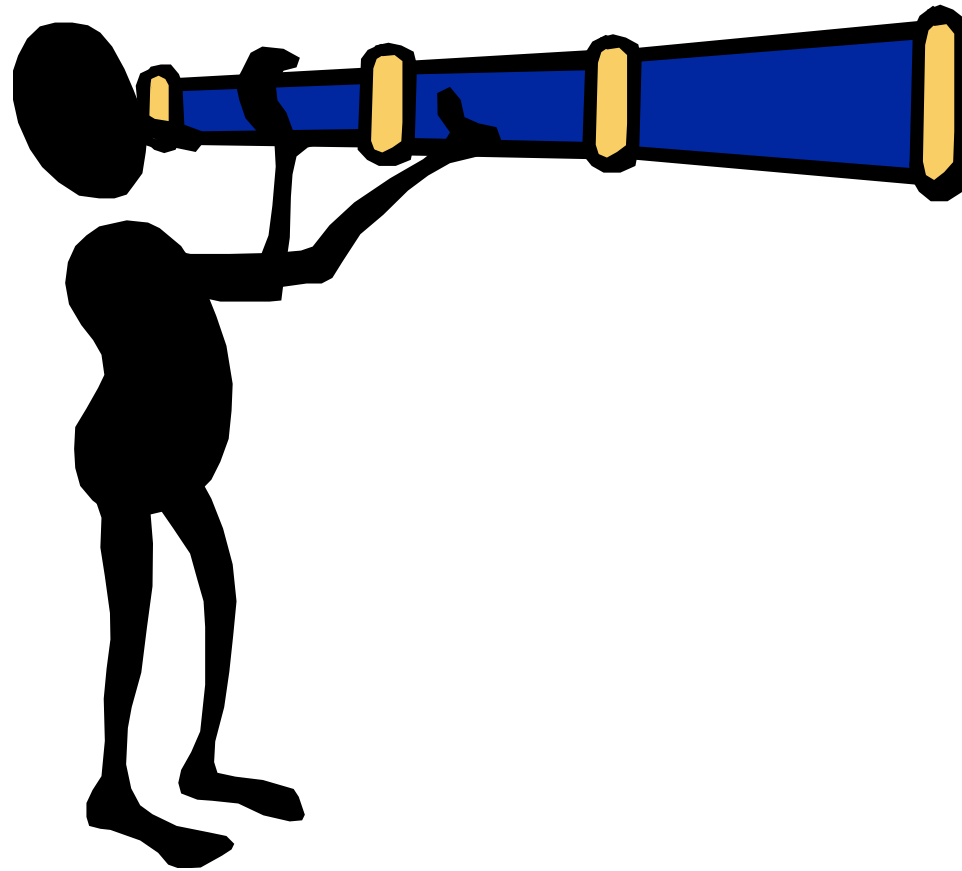
- Takes away the power of attacker
- Directs energy in same direction as attacker
- Prevents “Grab” paralysis
- Drops the “Hot Potato”

Appreciation of Differences

- Meyers-Briggs
- Enneagram
- DISC Inventory
- Learning Styles
- Multiple Intelligence's
- Communication Styles



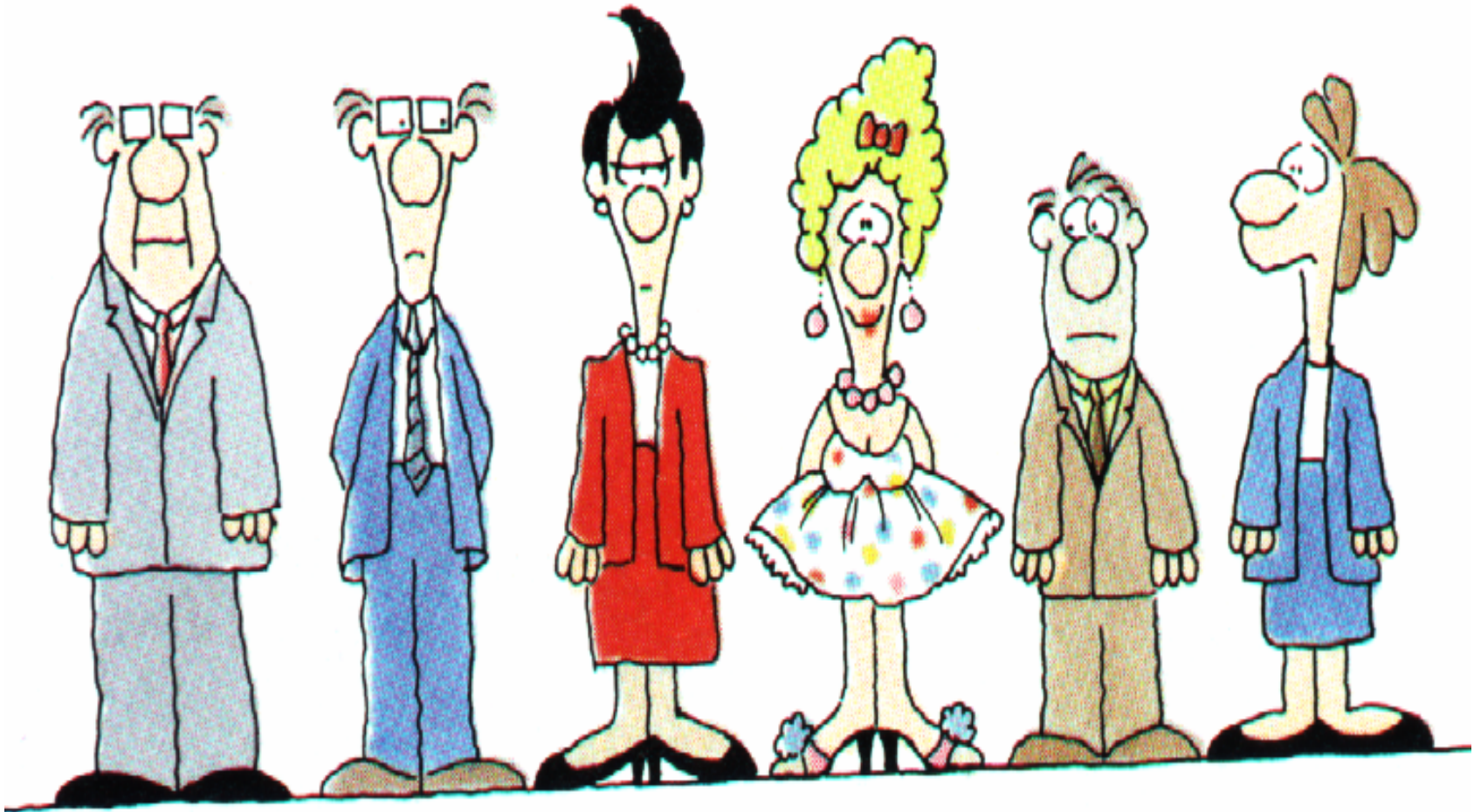
We View People From Our Own Own Way of Seeing



We All Categorize and Judge Others



**The More Like Me You Are
The More Normal You Are**



The More Unlike me...

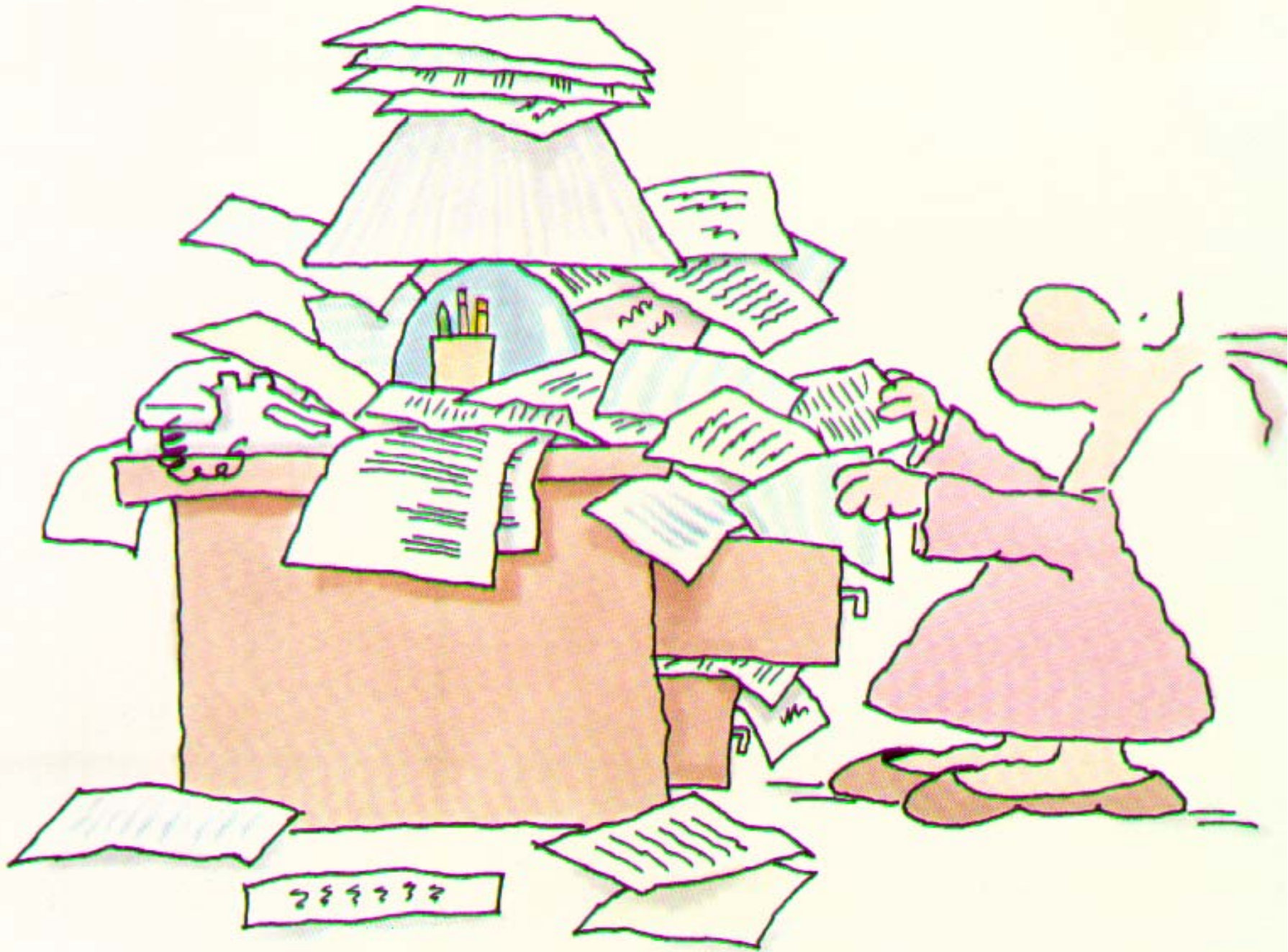
the more weird you are

GOOD

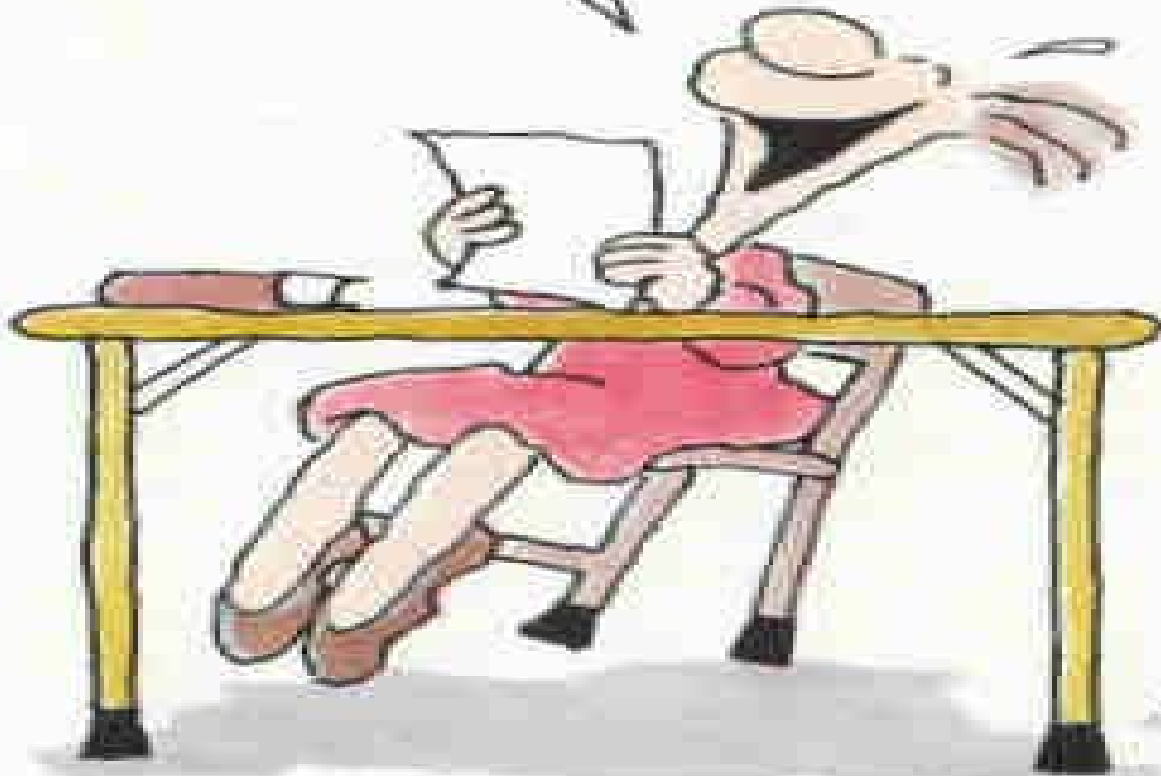
morning!

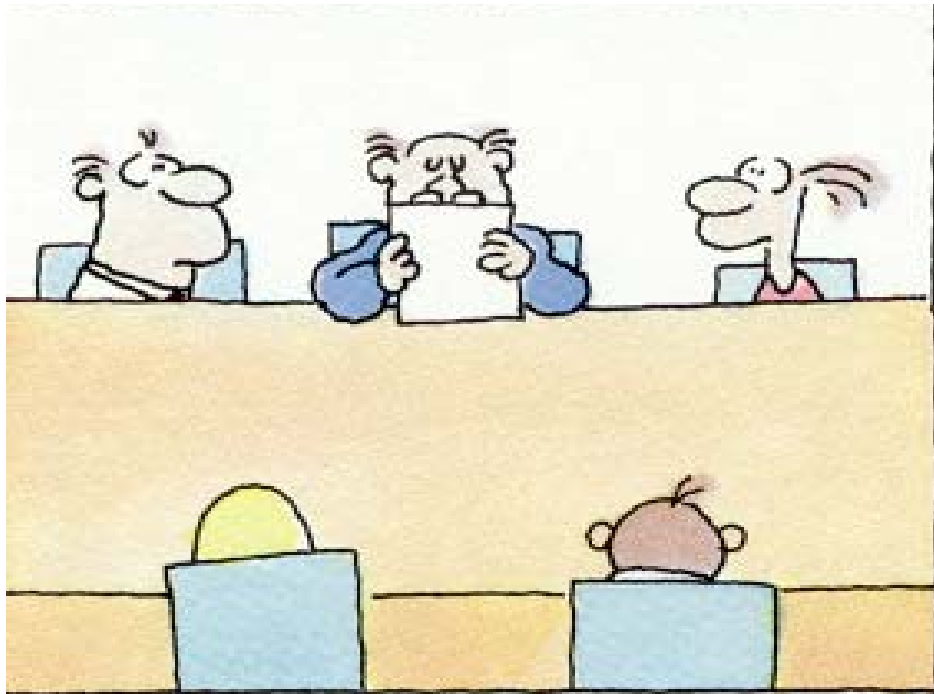
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HA HA HA
HA HA
Who wrote this
stupid memo?



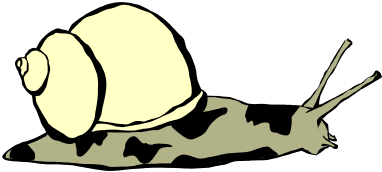
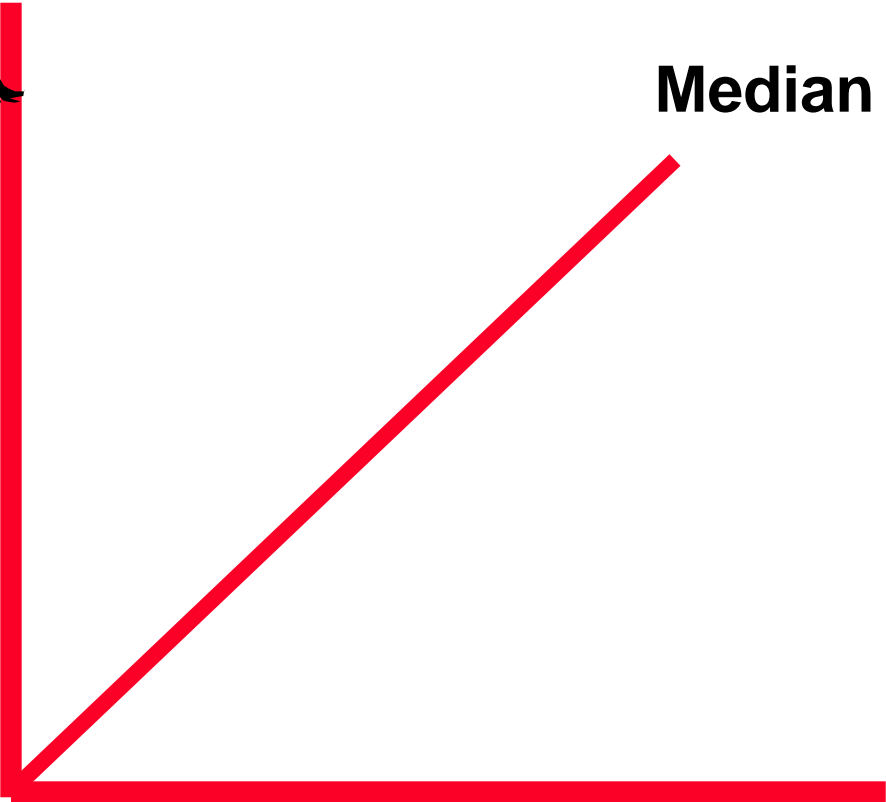


Velocity Differences



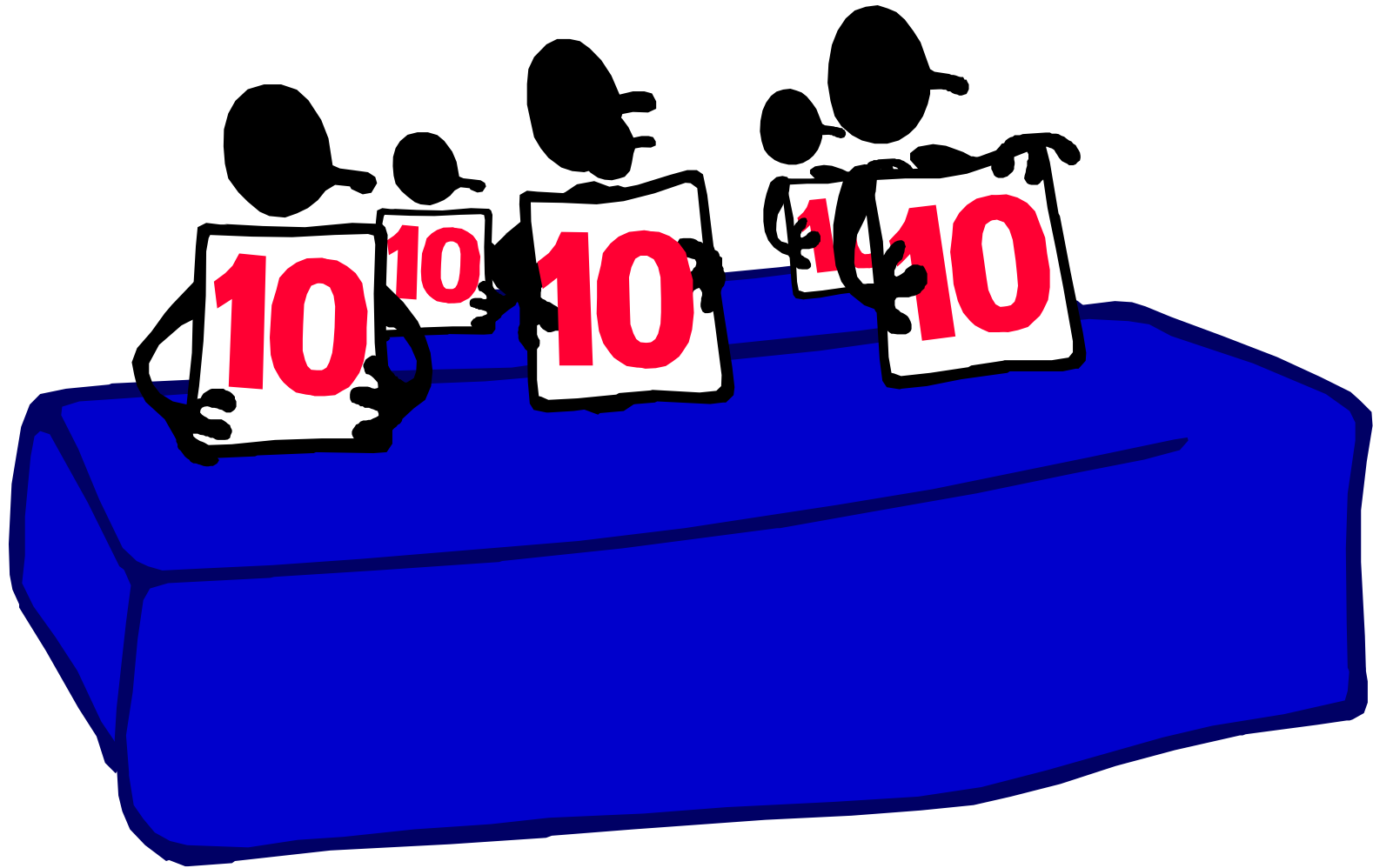
Race Horse

Median Velocity



Snail

We Tend to be More Tolerant of Those we Like



No Matter the Type Characteristic...



- **Everyone has strengths**
- **And liabilities under stress or pressure**
- **Everyone operates from a sense of purpose**
- **And can get upset when their sense of purpose is derailed**

SENSE OF PURPOSE

NOT MET

- **Get it Done**
 - **Get it Right**
 - **Relationships**
 - **Recognition**
- **Pushy, abrupt, bulldoze, over-controlling, attack, abrupt**
 - **Picky, slow to make decisions, obsessed with details, “No”**
 - **“Yes” over promises, wishy-washy, I’m sorry, won’t make decisions, tears, flight**
 - **Frustrated, speaks without thinking, rebellious, impulsive, short fused, hypersensitive**

Team Work

Common Goal Focus



Conflict Management Skills

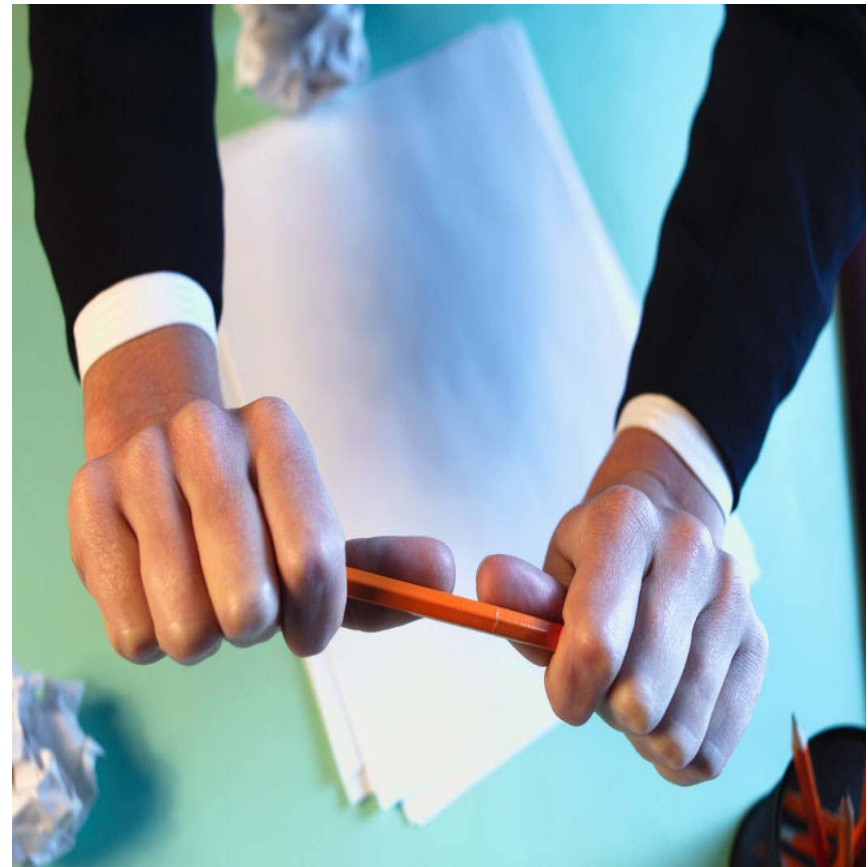
Skills can be learned and practiced

- **For the here and now in-your-face conflict**
- **For ongoing conflicts**



Attending Skills

**Watching for clues
as to emotional
intensity**



Paying Attention to Nonverbal Communication



**The FACE
speaks volumes**

Listening Skills

“Listening actively is one way to show unconditional positive regard for another person.”

Carl Rogers



Active Listening

- **Minimal Verbal Responses** *A-huh? Mmm. Really. Oh? Tell me more. Wow. I see.*
- **Asking Open-Ended Questions beginning with How or What**
What have I done to make you so angry? How can I fix this to your satisfaction?
- **Reflecting a Feeling**
Sounds like you are really annoyed (upset) (angry). This is frustrating for you and I apologize for the delay.
- **Clarifying or summarizing issue**

I-Messages

- Identify the behavior you don't like using with an I-message
 - *I feel... or I amI want ...I don't like*
- State how you are affected or feel
- State The outcome you want

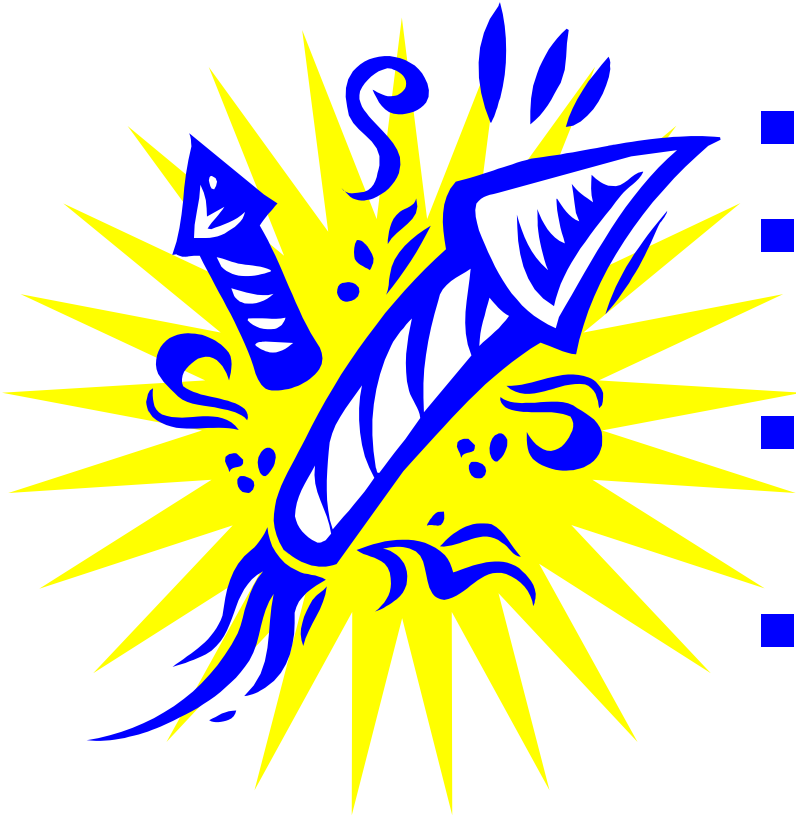
“I really don't want to participate in gossip. I suggest you talk to the people you have a problem with or to those who can solve your situation.”

“I really needed your help today and I get upset when you go on break regardless of the workload.”

Putting Out the Fire Skills

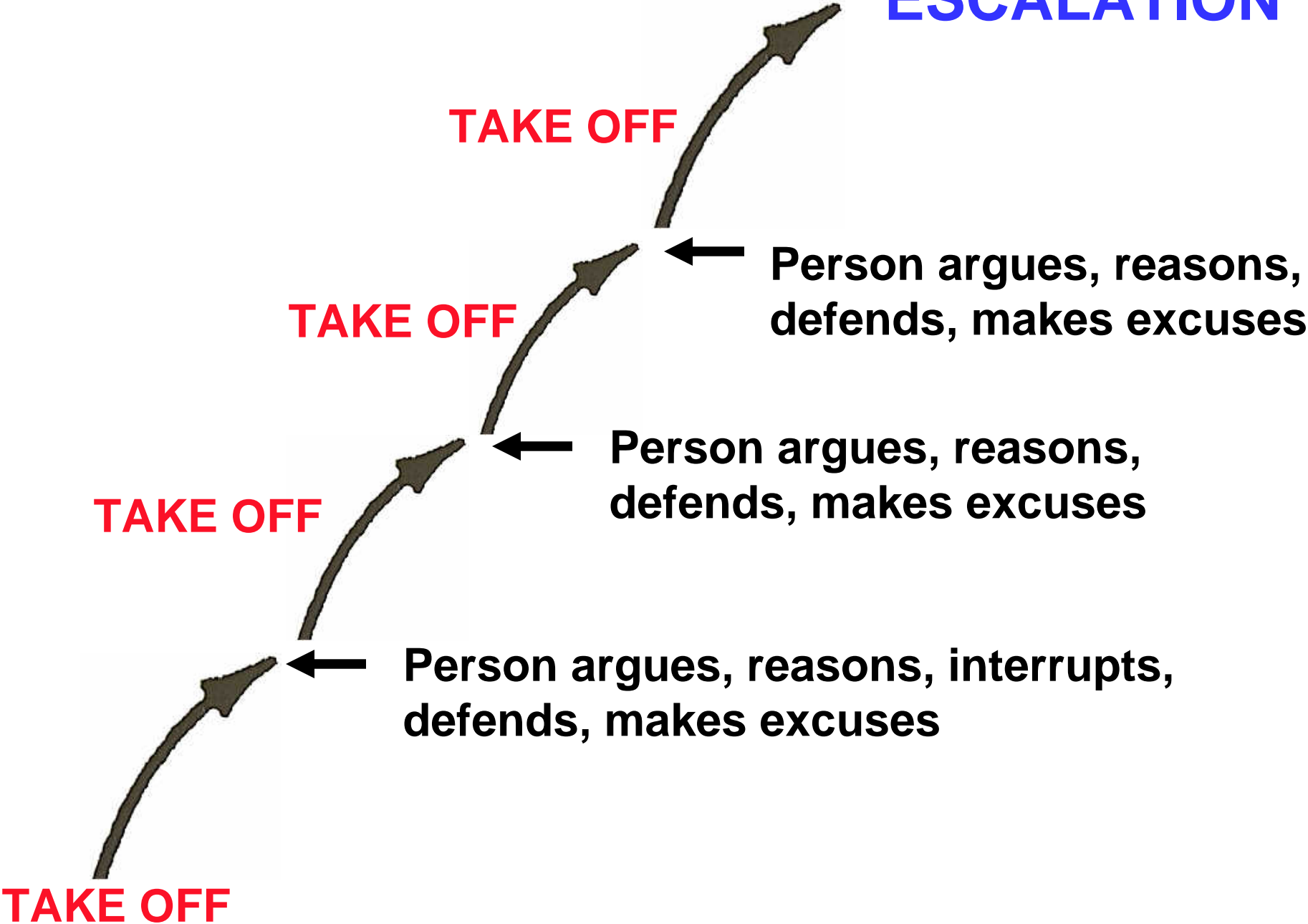


Anger is an E- motion that can Escalate



- Leaving hurt feelings
- Resulting in more anger and conflict
- Ending with no solution or resolution
- And lead to grievances

ESCALATION



Don't Add Fuel to Fire



What Behaviors Adds Fuel to the Fire?



Fuel For the Fire

- **Insults and Name calling**
- **Yelling or Screaming**
- **Aggressive Stances**
- **Leaving Abruptly**
- **Glaring and other facial expressions**
- **Pointing a finger**
- **Closing in on personal space**
- **Hand gestures**
- **Excuses**
- **Verbal Poker**
- **Verbal or Physical threats**
- **Making a fist, Shaking a fist**
- **Pranks, Hazing**
- **Passive Aggressive Silence**
- **Arguing who is right or wrong**
- **Interrupting**

Putting out the Fire



De-escalation or Energy Reduction
is done by:

- **Allowing Verbal Release (Venting)**
- **Listening and Responding calmly**
- **Not interrupting or making excuses**
- **Keeping Cool Under Fire**

Emotions & Logic are like Oil and Water

Feelings
must be
dealt with

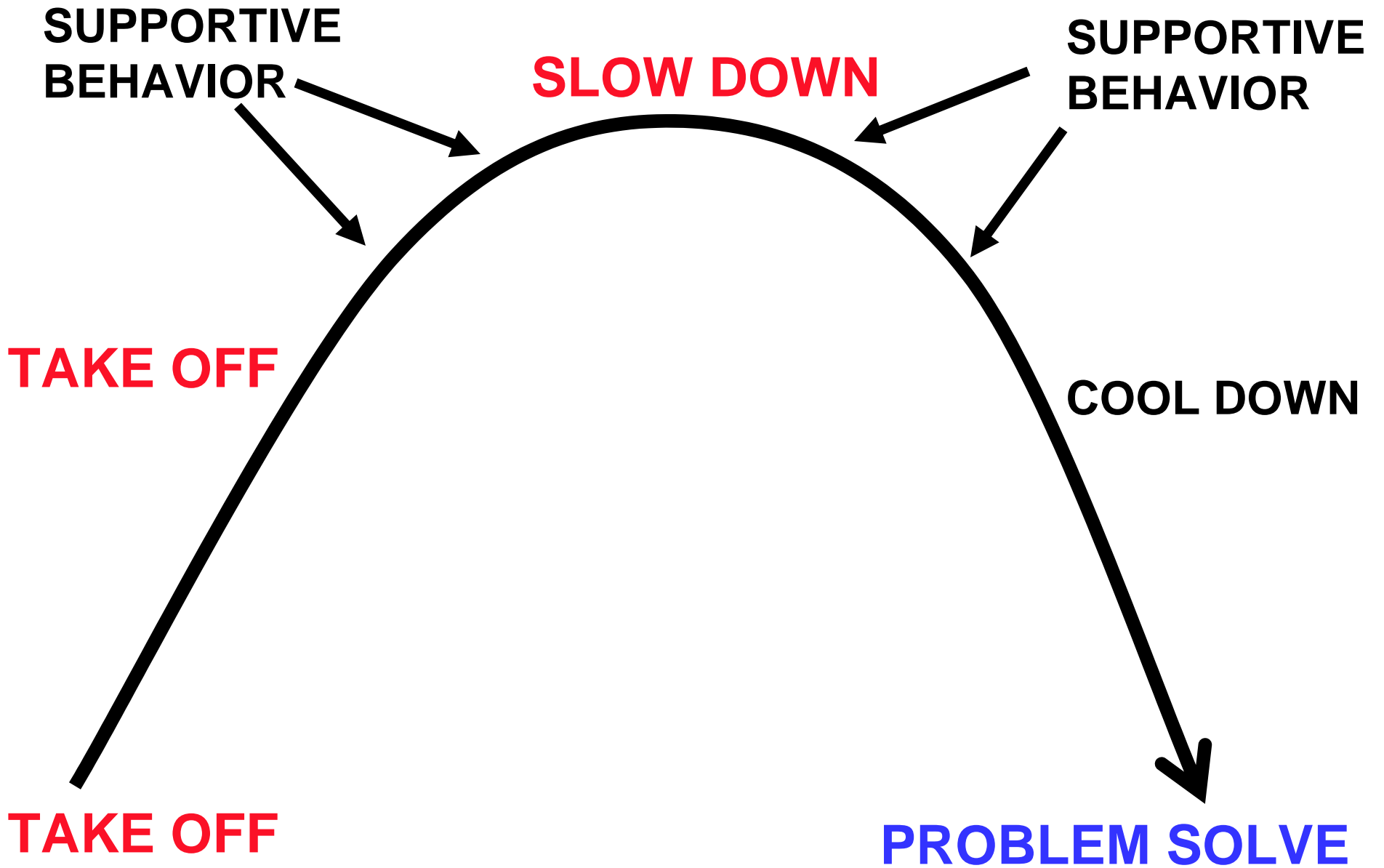


Before logic
can be heard



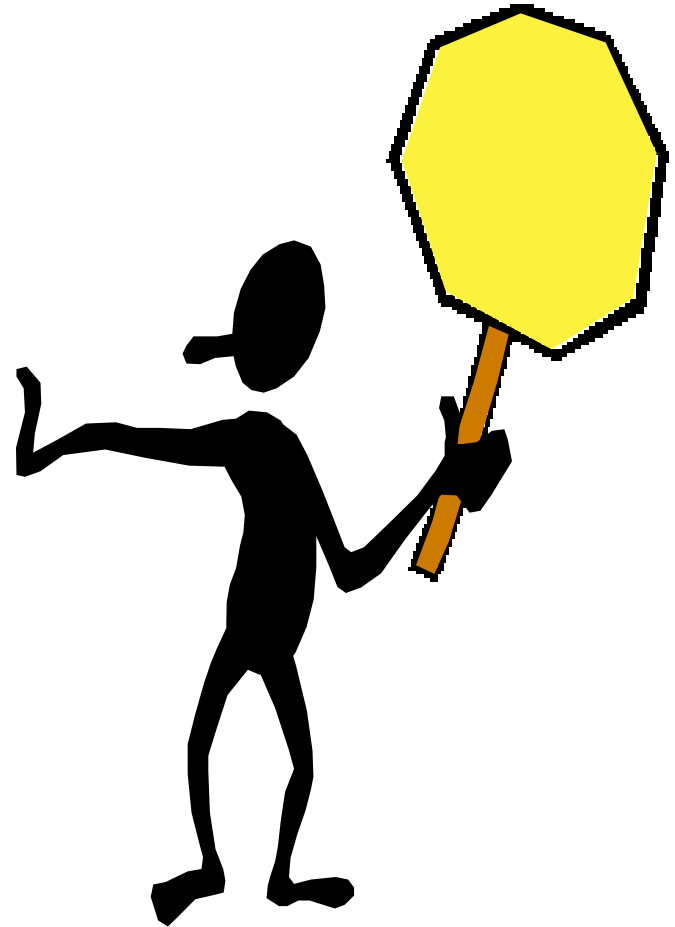
Active Listening Paramount

DE-ESCALATION



Assertive Language Skills

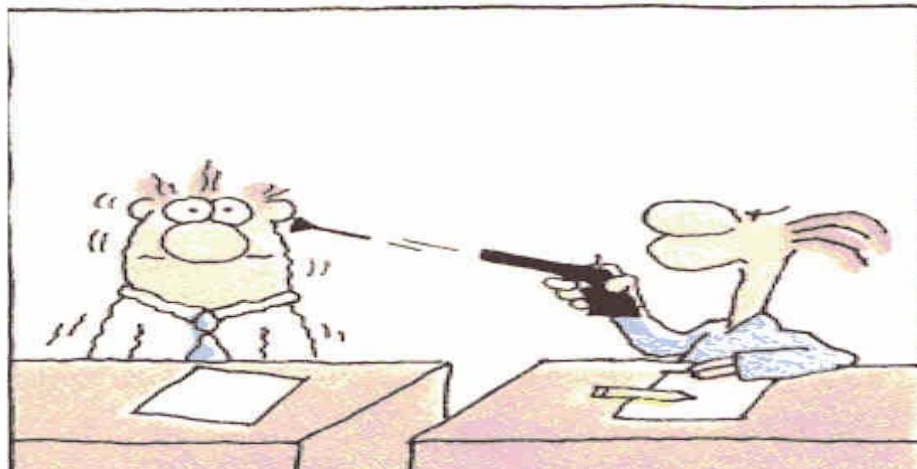
- Ask person to Stop the behavior
- Ask for a Change Behavior



Confronting the Behavior Assertively

- Don't start sentences with "YOU..."
- Use I-messages to call attention to their **behavior and how it makes you feel**
- Stand your ground and continue asking for a change in behavior

PERSON WITH AN ANNOYING HABIT



Assertive Statements

- **I can't concentrate when you sing. Please stop.**
- **You are telling the wrong person.**
- **Your silence isn't helping us fix things.**
- **I don't appreciate your talking behind my back.**
- **I was talking, you interrupted me.**
- **I won't listen to your yelling and swearing**

Ask **How** or **What** Questions

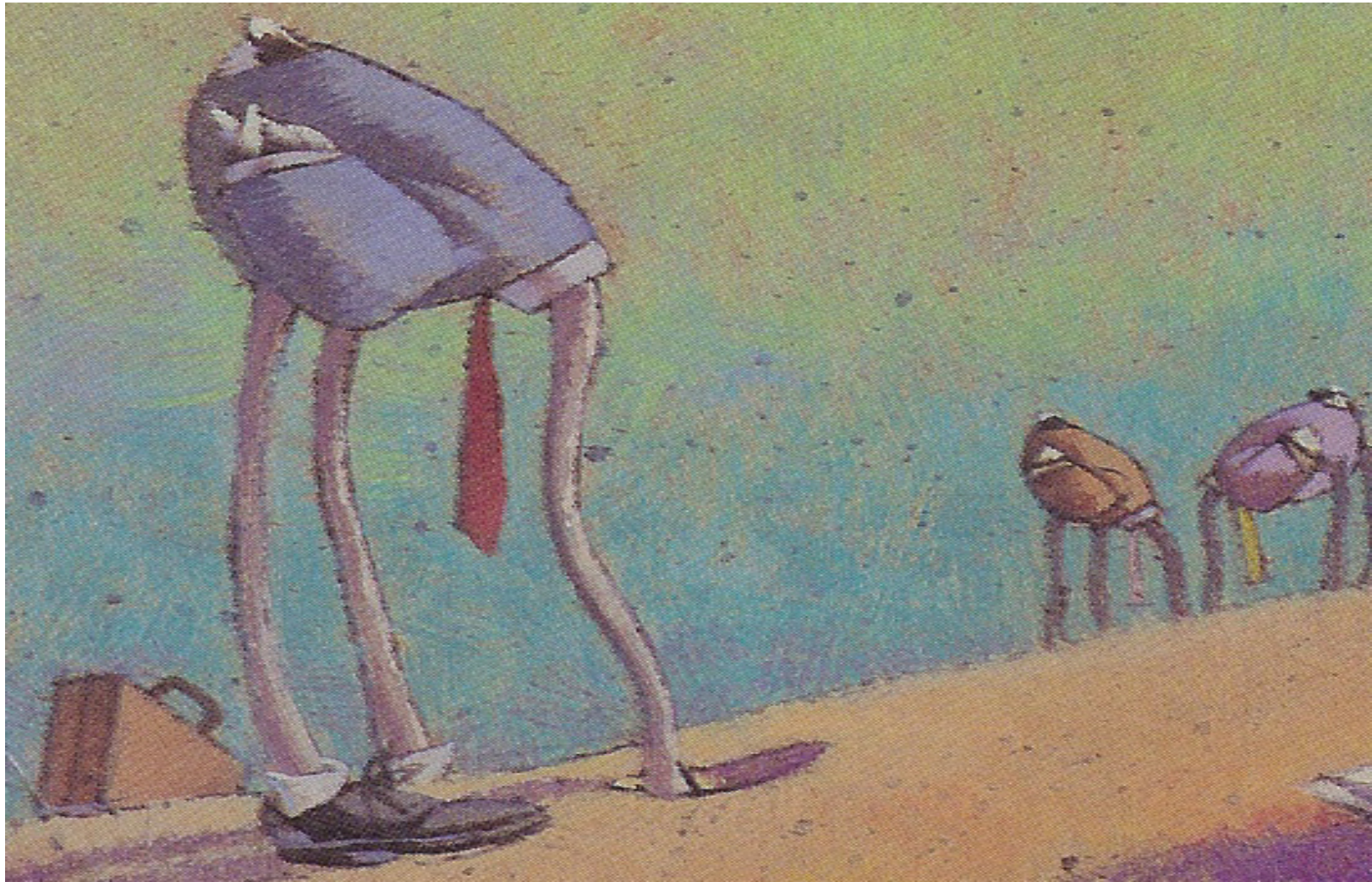


- **What is the purpose of telling me this?**
- **How would you change things?**
- **How can we work this out?**
- **What can I do to make this right?**
- **What do you mean by that statement....?**
- **What did I do that makes you call me a..?**

Options for Dealing with Conflict



Pretend Conflict Doesn't Exist



Can do Nothing and Keep the Conflict Going



Keep Butting Heads



Get MAD Get EVEN

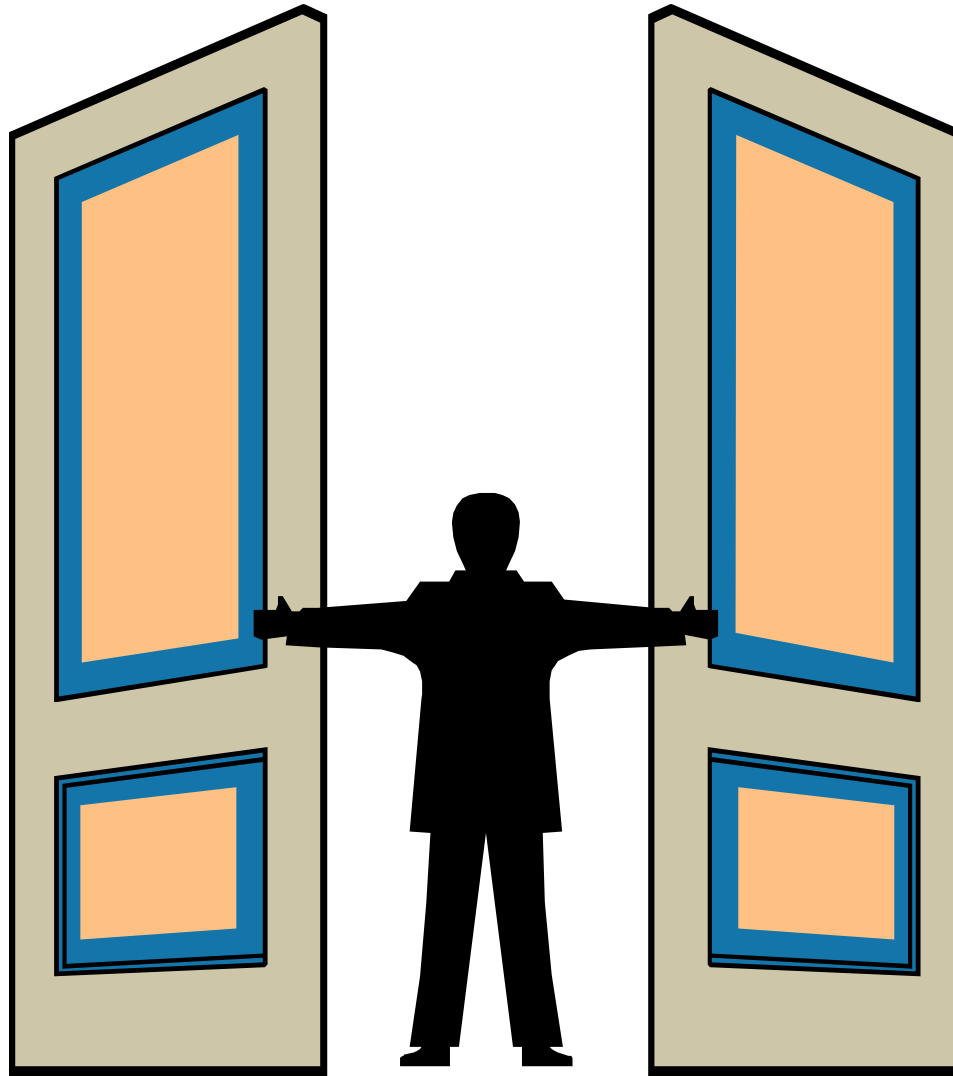


Weigh Battles Carefully



**Is this
worth it?**

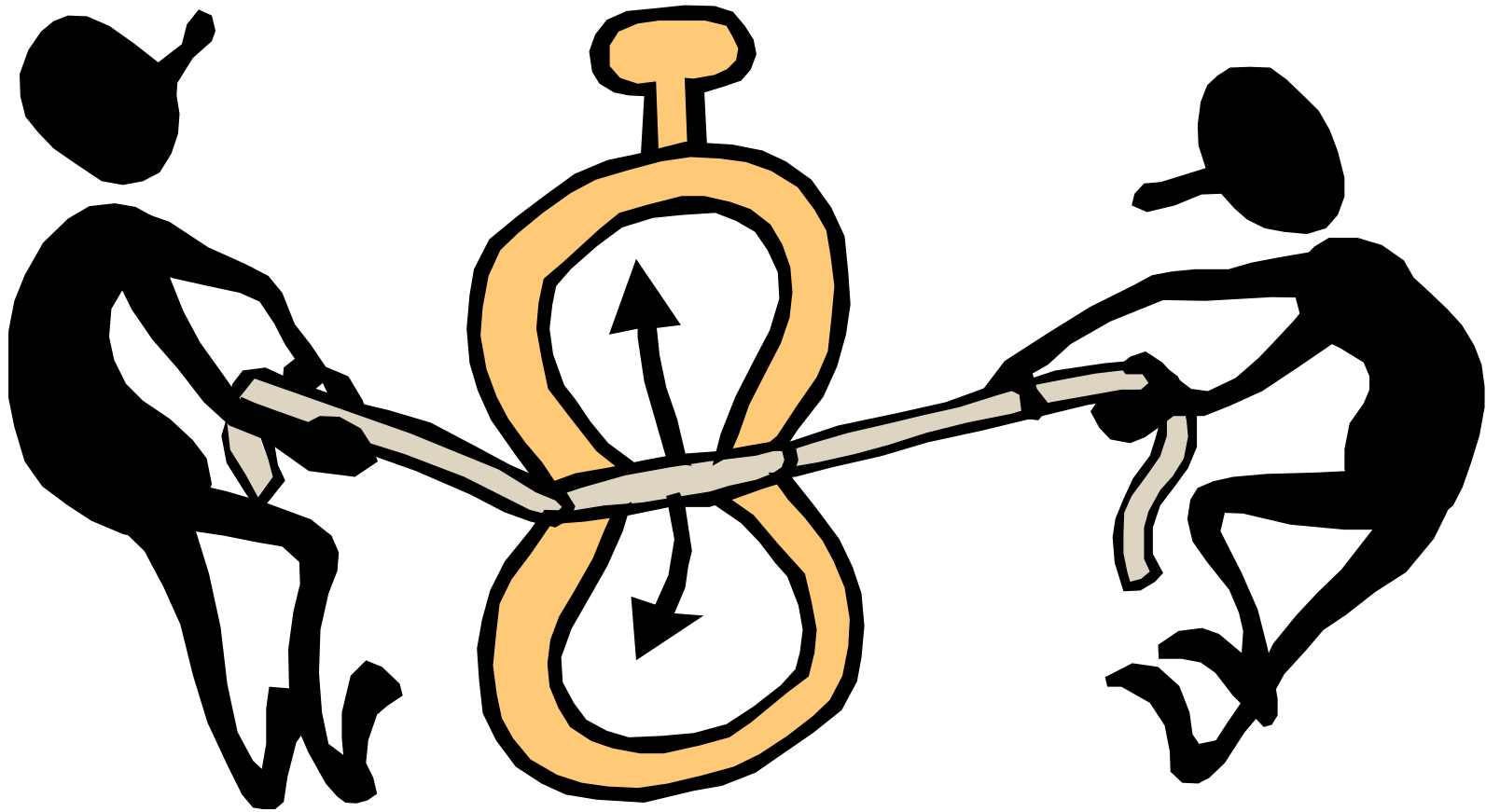
Leave or Walk Away



**Decide Not To
Go There!**



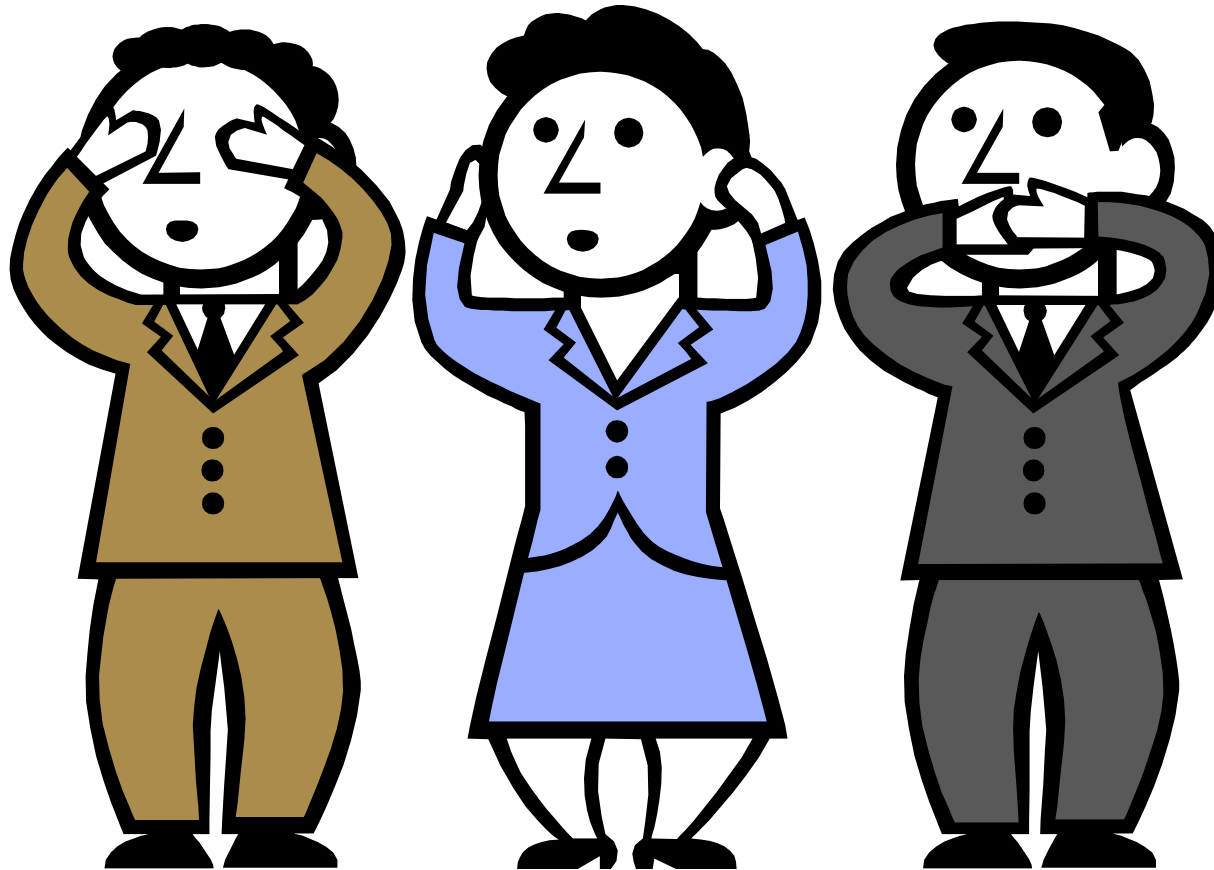
Refuse to give it your Time or Energy



Hide from the Responsibility to Solve Things



Refuse to be part of the Problem or Solution



Can Pass it Off or Up



Explore Options



AVOID



ALTER



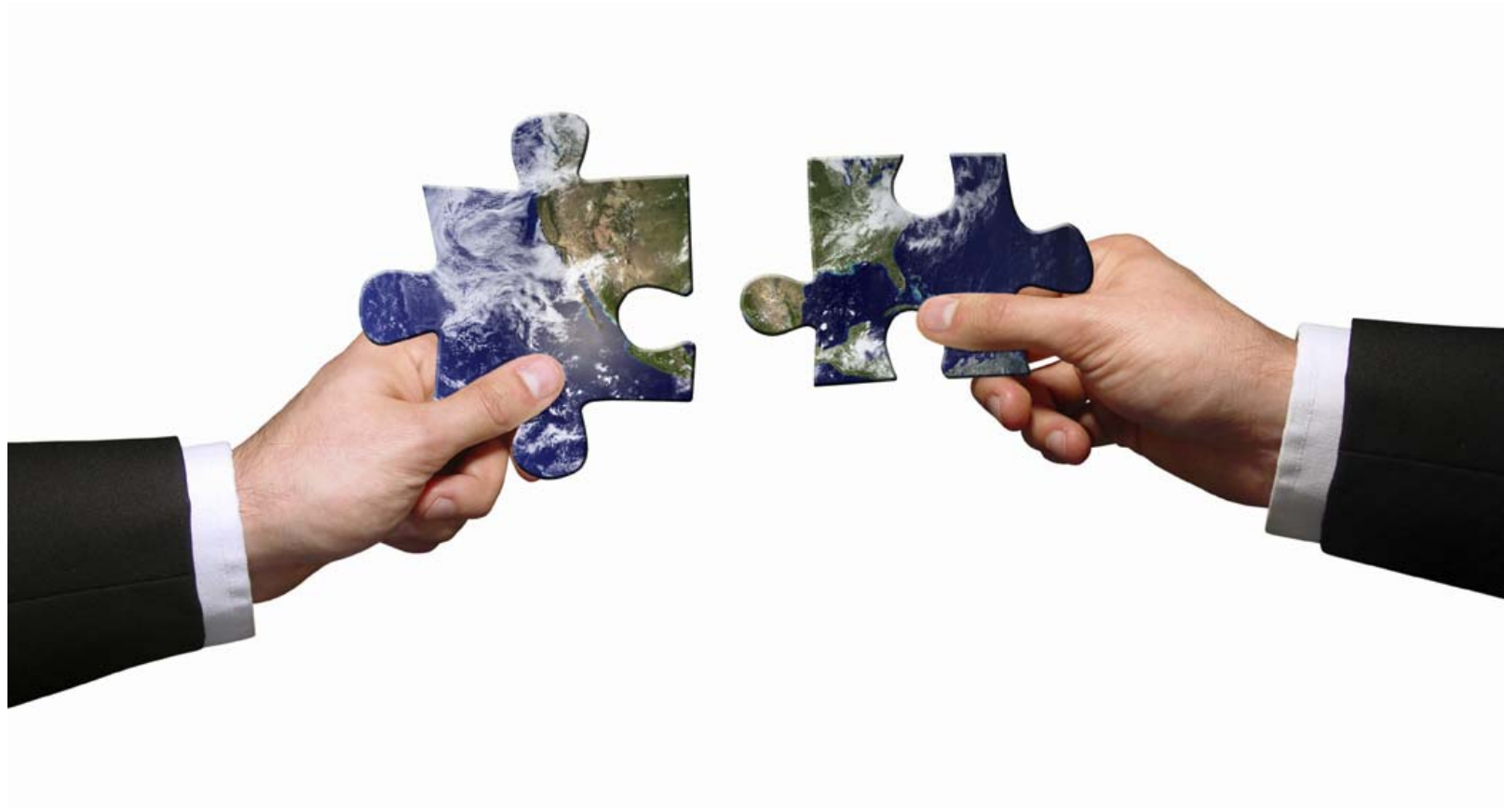
ACCEPT

Resolving Conflict is Rarely About Who is Right or Wrong



You don't have to agree with someone else's position, you just have to let him or her have one and you need to try to understand it.

Interest Based Problem Solving



Problem Solving is:

“Any effort to locate a mutually acceptable solution to the controversy.

It is a dual concern model.” Pruitt & Rubin

Discussion

not

Debate

Options

not

Conceding

People stay in entwined in the briars of Conflict because:



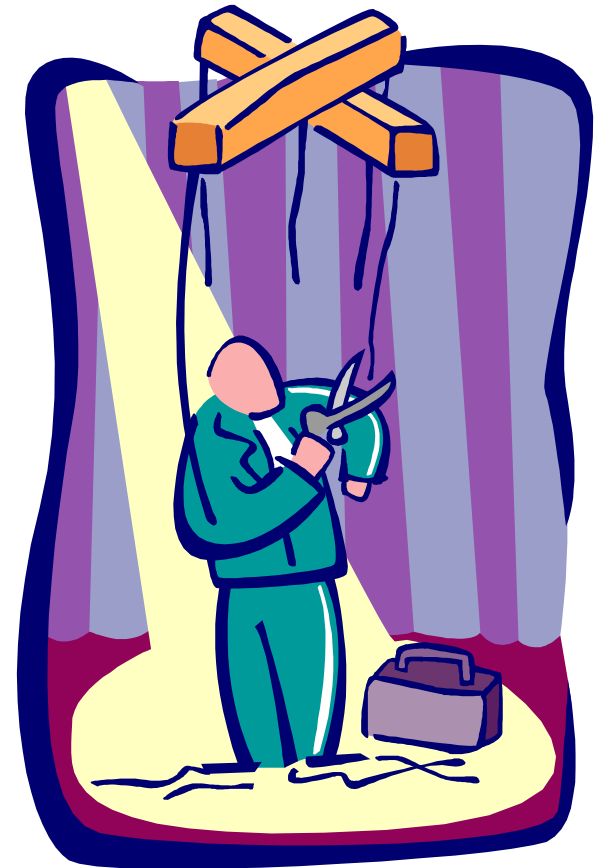
- They haven't defined the problem
- One or the other, or both, haven't a clear idea of what they want from each other

A problem identified is half solved

Conflicts get resolved faster when parties can state what they want

Determine the Degree of Control

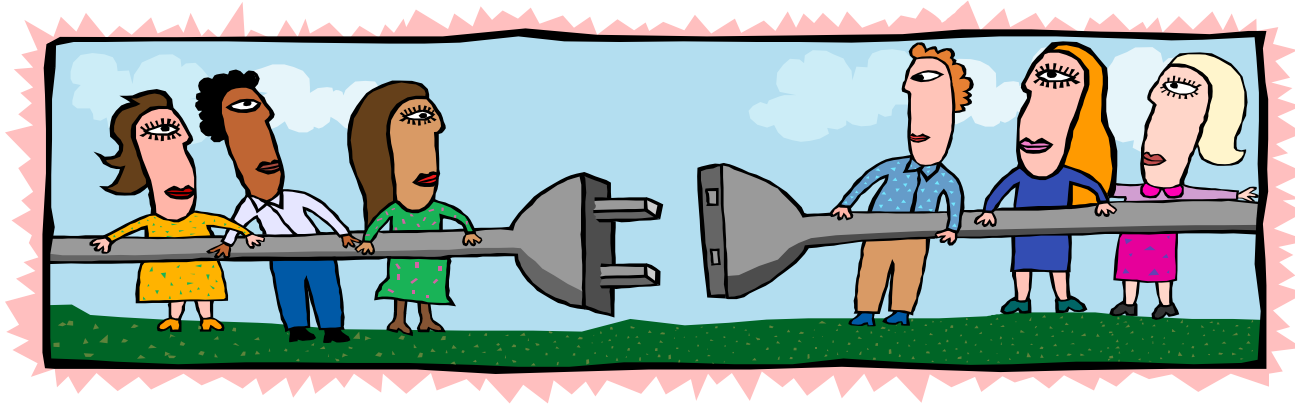
- Do I have any control over the situation or person?
- Can I influence the situation?



Questions To Ask

- **Is this conflict about my way versus the other person's way?**
- **What have I done to let this person know their behavior bothers me?**
- **What skills do I need to master to manage my reaction in the future or resolve future conflicts?**

Realign Differences



- **Identify Common Ground, Needs, Wants**
- **Team goals**
- **Respect Differing Opinions and Perceptions**
- **Personalities set aside**

Identify Problem

Determine if Real or Perceived



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| ■ People are Paranoid | ■ Perceived |
| ■ People are filing grievances | ■ Real |
| ■ Boss doesn't care | ■ Perceived |
| ■ People are Lazy | ■ Perceived |
| ■ Never enough time | ■ Perceived |
| ■ Things aren't getting done on time | ■ Real |
| ■ Morale is Low | ■ Perceived |

Elevator Problem Solving



- **Identify REAL Problem**
- **Keep going beyond one right answer using the following questions over and over.**

1. **“What is the reason....?”**
- 2 **“Why is that?”**

Interest based Conflict Mediation



- Identify real problem
- Ground rules decided

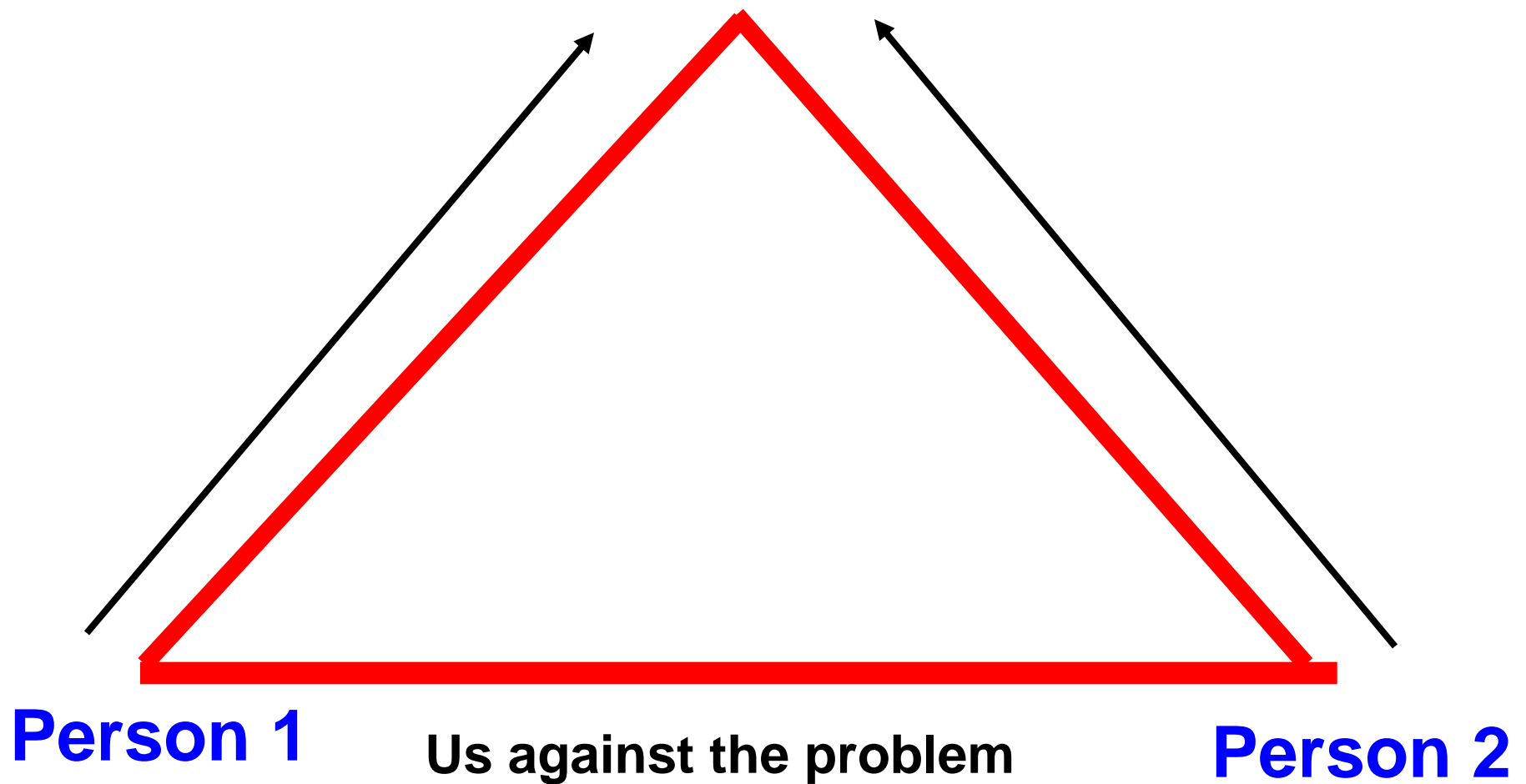
Ground Rules Prevent Escalation

DURING DISCUSSION NO:

- Insults
- Verbal threats
- Sarcasm
- Blame
- Judgments
- Power shifts
- Interrupting
- Physical Gestures
- Standing up
- Leaving
- Screaming
- Silent Treatment
- Digging up Past
- Attacking Others
- Dishonesty

Interest Based Conflict Resolution

Problem or Issue



Best Possible Outcome



- **Open honest communication**
- **Both sides listened to and heard**
- **Options discussed - pros and cons**
- **Option chosen (each person's best walk-away alternative)**

People want you to fix a Conflict



**What approach
will you take?**

Supervisor Mary is frustrated because two people in her department are at odds. They dislike each other and only speak when spoken to. She wants you to do an intervention.

Pat is frustrated because of her “difficult employee” Millie. She told you that she wished Millie would quit. She isn’t a team player and is dragging others down with her negativism. Pat wants you to do something!

Supervisor Mark, just completed a review on Richard. Richard used to be the supervisor in the department but stepped down. Mark's comments seem incongruent with what you know of Richard's reputation. It is very subjective.

John comes to you and complains that his boss Jill is playing favorites and is inconsistent with her discipline tactics and let's some folks get away with not following policies. He says she picks on him and no one else.

Stan, the new administrator, has 20 years of management experience. He came highly recommended. The interim administrator was Denise, the director of nursing. She's "run the show" for 9 months. She won't let go of the reins and is still making decisions Stan should make. She told someone she doesn't trust an outsider to do the job. Stan talked to her but it didn't work. The last time Stan tried, Denise got very nasty and she won't speak to him at this time. Stan calls you.

New supervisor Margaret got off to a wrong start. You hired her and thought she would be great. But she has done everything the books on leadership say not to do. Every person on her team has been in to talk to you at least once. Words they have used to describe Margaret are: dictator, micro-manager, finds fault with every little thing, inflexible, demanding, lacks compassion or empathy and gives mixed messages.

Lisa and Linda hate each other for reasons you don't know. They frequently have loud "words." They talk about each other behind backs and it sometimes gets quite vicious. Their work gets done, but this is very draining on you and others that work with them. You have repeatedly talked to each one about their actions and they can't work it out for longer than two days. Lisa came in today to find that Linda had turned her desk around so that her back is toward Lisa. And both are not speaking.

Shipping and Manufacturing work closely together. Joe, supervisor in shipping noticed that when Kevin (manufacturing) works on his floor, he takes lots of extra breaks and some he extends by 10 minutes. Roy, supervisor in Manufacturing doesn't pay much attention to this because Kevin works extremely hard, always goes over and above the call of duty and sometimes works late.

Joe however, doesn't think it is right and when Kevin is on his floor, he harps at Kevin about breaks. This has been going on now for three months and you've heard from other employees that Kevin is ready to quit. Roy asks you to intervene.

You just can't seem to get through to Betty. Her idea of teamwork and yours are entirely different. Betty's been with the company ten years and you are 20 years younger than she is. She applied for your supervisory job, but was passed over and they hired you from the "outside." You get the feeling that she doesn't respect your position because of your age and the fact that you are new. Sometimes she undermines your decisions.

Jane, was hired in the advertising department. She quickly demonstrated her unusual artistic abilities. She openly communicates her ideas but when others start to talk, her attention drifts. Her supervisor noticed Jane often doesn't complete the sketches as outlined in their morning briefings. She turns in outstanding art work, but often unrelated to his assignments. He doesn't dare confront her because he is afraid of stifling her creative genius. He comes to you for advice.

What About Brick Walls ?



**What if other
person is not
willing to
discuss and
problem solve?**

Give it Up and Let it Go



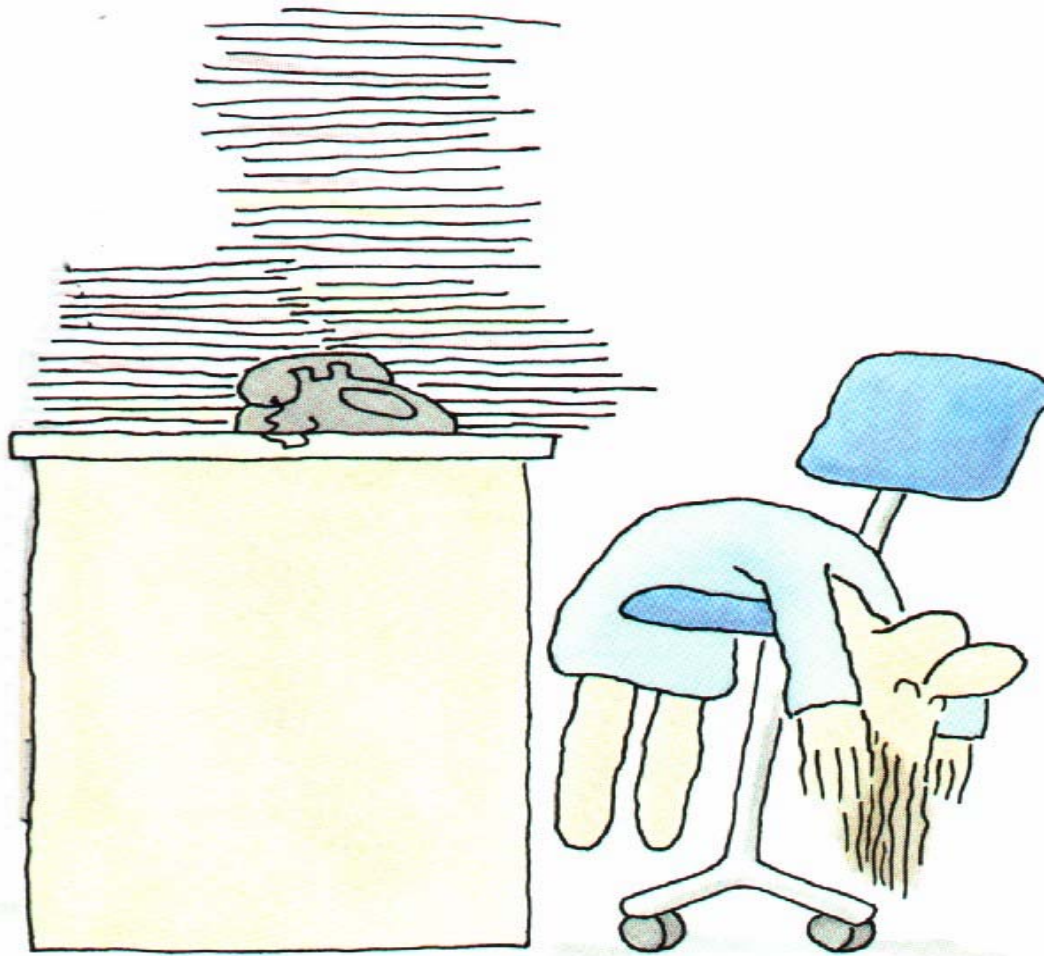
**Regardless of effort, not
everything can be resolved**

Protect yourself from Emotional Shrapnel



**5 Minutes of
Remembered Anger
Can Suppress the
Immune System for
up to 6 hours**

Have a De-stress kit for Self-care



Turn Stress Off - Relaxation

- Rest eyes
- Prayer, Meditation, Yoga
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Reflexology, Acupuncture
- Massage
- Hot bath, Sauna, Hot Tub
- Read a Book
- Listen to Calming Music
- Talk to someone - EAP



Have Milk and Cookies and put your Head Down



Use Stress Up

