

Conflict & Dispute Resolution

Initial Reflections on Conflict

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

- Dean G. Pruitt & Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict*, chapter 1.

Questions

1. Explain in your own words Pruitt and Kim's definition of conflict. Can you apply this definition to a conflict in which you have found yourself?
2. Pruitt and Kim discuss four basic strategies for dealing with conflict. How would you describe each of these? Can you think of conflicts in which you've used any of these?
3. What are some of the potentially good features of conflict? What are some of the potentially bad ones? Have you been in conflicts revealing these different features?