

Interpersonal Conflict

Managing and Resolving Conflicts
in Interpersonal Relationships

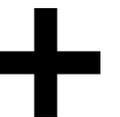
What is conflict?

A photograph of a wooden surface with several pawns. On the left, there is a single red pawn. To its right, there is a group of five yellow pawns. The pawns are arranged in a line, with the red one on the far left and the yellow ones to its right. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Definition

Interpersonal conflict is an **expressed struggle** between at least two **interdependent parties** who perceive **incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other parties in achieving their goals.**

- Wilmot and Hocker (in Adler and Rodman, 2006)



Two sides of
a coin

Constructive conflict

Conflict that helps build new insights and establishes new patterns in a relationship

Destructive conflict

Conflict that dismantles rather than strengthens relationships

Destructive conflict

Conflict that
dismantles rather than
strengthens
relationships

How can conflict be
detrimental to a
relationship?

Destructive conflict

Potential negative effects:

- Cyberbullying
- Hate crimes
- Stalking
- Aggressive verbal abuse
- Physical abuse

Constructive conflict

Conflict that helps
build new insights and
establishes new
patterns in a
relationship

In what ways have you
seen your
relationships benefit
from conflict?

Constructive conflict

Benefits:

- Focuses attention on problems that may have to be solved
- Clarifies what may need to be changed
- Focuses attention on what is important to you and your partner
- Clarifies who you are and what your values are.
- Helps you learn more about your partner.
- Keeps relationships interesting.
- Strengthens relationships



What is your typical
response to conflict?



Thomas Kilmann's

Conflict styles +

ASSERTIVENESS

ASSERTIVE

UNASSERTIVE



UNCOOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVENESS

AVOIDING

- occurs when people non-assertively ignore or stay away from conflict
- can be physical or conversational



AVOIDING

–Method of conflict resolution:

Lose – Lose



ACCOMMODATING

–occurs when you allow others to have their way rather than asserting your own point of view



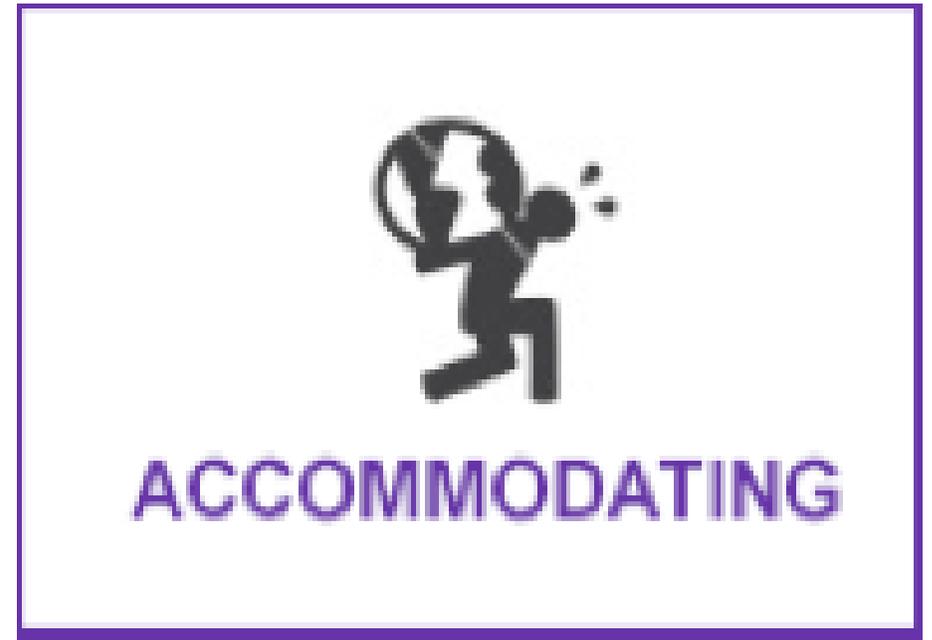
ACCOMMODATING



ACCOMMODATING

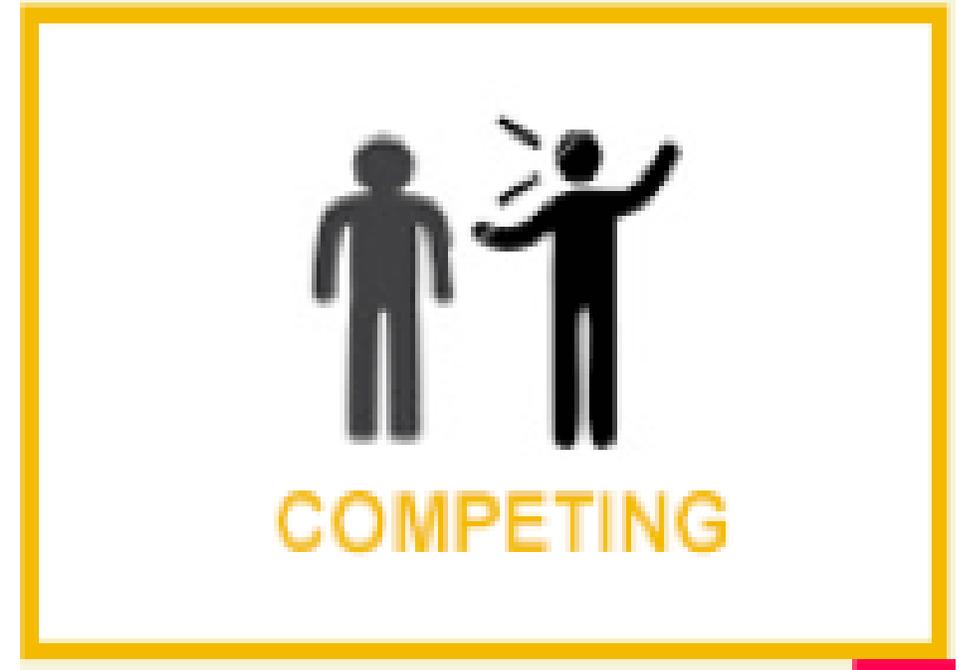
–Method of conflict resolution:

Lose – Win



COMPETING

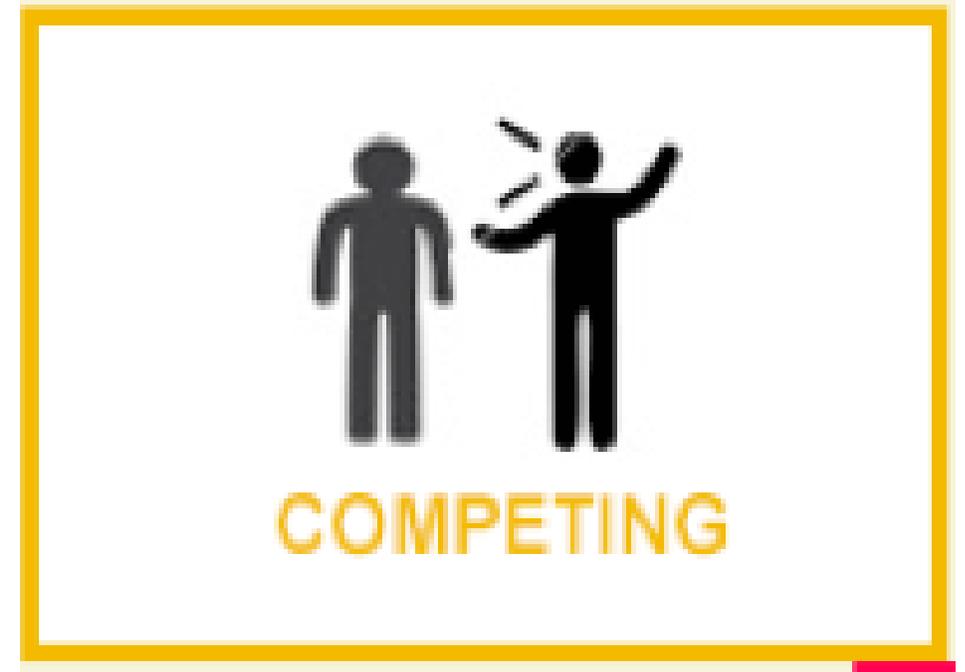
–stresses winning a conflict at the expense of the other person involved



COMPETING

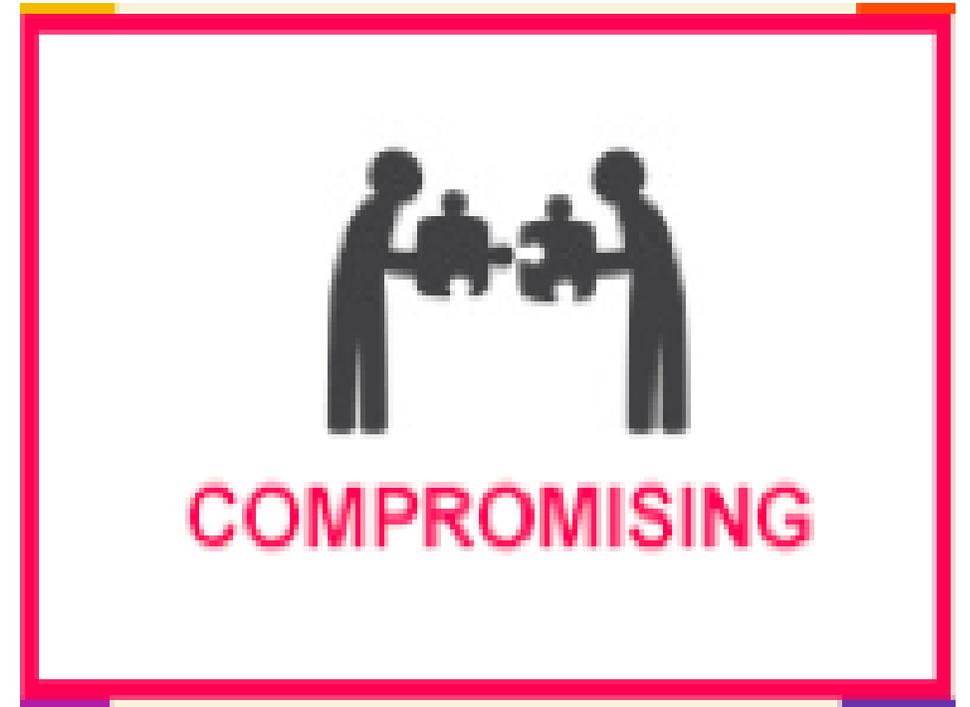
–Method of conflict resolution:

Win – Lose



COMPROMISING

–gives both people at least some of what they want although both sacrifice part of their goals

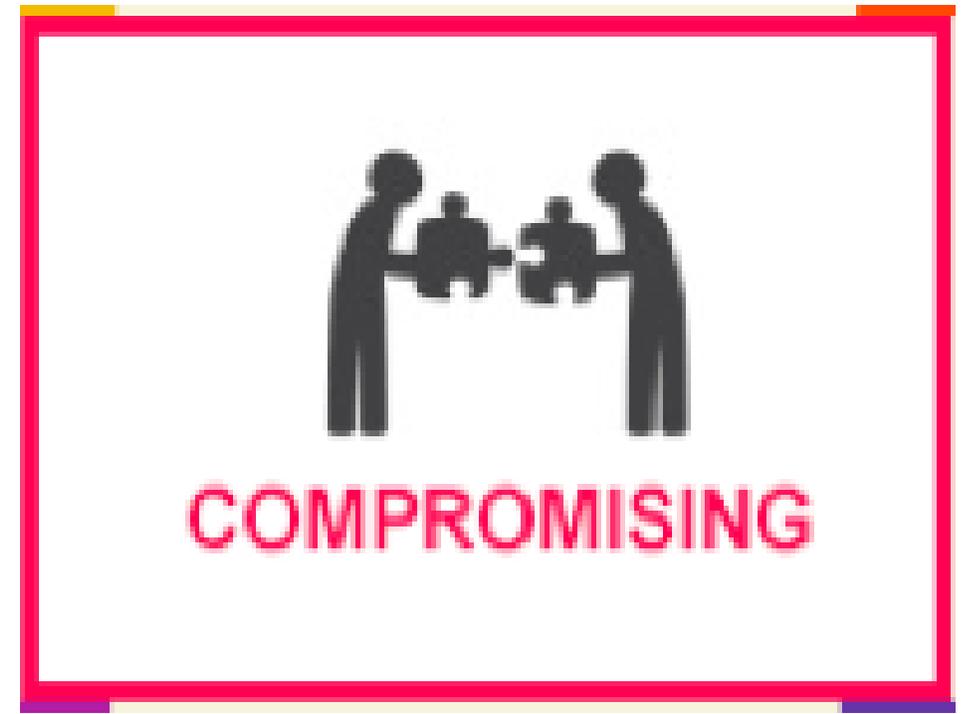


COMPROMISING

–Method of conflict resolution:

Partial

Lose – Lose



COLLABORATING

–is concerned about finding a solution that satisfies the needs of everyone involved



COLLABORATING

–Method of conflict resolution:

Win – Win





Which style is best?

- Factors to consider:
1. The relationship
 2. The situation
 3. The receiver
 4. Your goals

