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## What is Cross Cultural Conflict Resolution?

The one constant in life is change. Today, all organizations and the people within them are experiencing more rapid change than ever before. And hand in hand with change is the certainty of conflict. Conflict uses up individual, group and organizational energy, taking this energy away from constructive and productive relationships and work.

With the right conditions, a great deal of conflict can be solved without any need for a conflict resolution meeting. Sometimes love is the key ingredient that breaks through the conflict, at other times something bigger and more important arises and minimizes the focus on the conflict, and at other times a common task is found and while working through the common task, the conflict disappears. However, there are also situations of conflict that benefit from a conflict resolution meeting.

There are many forms of meetings for working with conflict. Mediation and negotiation are two forms of working with conflict. Sometimes they work to solve conflict. At other times, they work towards an agreement or a compromise but the conflict itself remains quite alive, often under the surface only to erupt again at a later time.

Our Cross Cultural Conflict Resolution meeting format for working with conflict was designed to create the conditions for the people involved in the conflict to really solve the conflict. In developing this approach to conflict resolution, we followed the philosophy that deep within all persons are some things that are universally the same. Although people engaged in conflict have some things that are universally the same, the individuals involved are usually fixed in one perspective. They rarely ask each other genuine questions. They also tend to lose contact with their whole selves, rendering a part of themselves voiceless. From this position, they are unable to participate fully and effectively in efforts to resolve the conflict.

Cross Cultural Conflict Resolution is a practical, holistic meeting process for working through conflict. Within the meeting, that which is universally the same amongst people is worked with as a base. However, before the meeting, and within our process, it is a benefit to work with the fixed perspective of the individuals to enable them to move beyond their perspective only. Within our conflict resolution process, individuals receive individual preparation for their involvement with the conflict resolution meeting. When the people come together in the meeting, they are in a more ready state to listen to each other. The Cross Cultural Conflict Resolution meeting creates the conditions for people to truly communicate—to speak and to listen to each other. Participants then move on to do creative problem solving. Finding the solution to conflict is really about creative problem solving. Once a solution is agreed upon, agreements, including any contingency plans are signed.

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