

NOVEMBER MONTHLY THEME:
CONFLICT—*THE VALUE OF FACING HARD ISSUES*

In a world full of differences, conflict often emerges. Different values, perspectives, and ways of being in the world can generate conflicts among people—and sometimes within ourselves. While conflicts can dangerously accelerate into violent aggression and even war, confronting conflict can also enable an opportunity for new understandings and even reconciliation and peace. Our theme this month asks us to consider what role conflict plays in our lives as persons and as groups.

Which question is calling to you? Where is it leading you?

1. How comfortable are you with conflict?
2. Do you fear engaging in certain situations of conflict? Why?
3. What strategies do you find helpful in resolving conflict?
4. Consider a time where negotiating conflict helped you or a relationship to grow.

Wise Words:

Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict—alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence. *Dorothy Thompson*

Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love. *Martin Luther King, Jr*

Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you. *Friedrich Nietzsche*

Change means movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a nonexistent abstract world can movement or change occur without that abrasive friction of conflict. *Saul Alinsky*

I swore never to be silent whenever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. *Elie Weisel*

Peace produced by suppression is neither natural nor desirable. *Anna Julia Cooper*

My father would say to me, 'Any organization which works for peace, I will join. If you want to resolve a dispute or come out from conflict, the very first thing is to speak the truth. If you have a headache and tell the doctor you have a stomachache, how can the doctor help? You must speak the truth. The truth will abolish fear.' *Malala Yousafzai*

Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding. *Albert Einstein*

In a few decades, the relationship between the environment, resources and conflict may seem almost as obvious as the connection we see today between human rights, democracy and peace. *Wangari Maathai*

Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict. *William Ellery Channing*

I wish that the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program could be taught in every classroom in America, because we are not going to deal with the violence in our communities, our homes, and our nation, until we learn to deal with the basic ethic of how we resolve our disputes and to place an emphasis on peace in the way we relate to one another. *Marian Wright Edelman*

Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional. *Max Lucado*