

FACILITATED SOLUTIONS

Mediators & Conflict Management Specialists

Prevent | Manage | Resolve

Facilitation Fridays **Leadership and Conflict Management in the #MeToo Era**

Sandy Koop Harder, Janine Hogue Sansregret, David Dyck

Starting at 10:30 am (CDT)

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www.workplaceconflict.ca + www.familyconflict.ca

#MeToo – *Tarana Burke*

- “Power Over”
- Gendered Violations
- Naming the pervasiveness
- Breaking through patterns of silencing
- Confronting sexism/male privilege
- Accountability for/calling out of abusers
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/15/me-too-founder-tarana-burke-women-sexual-assault>



Conflict Management in the Workplace

- **Conflict management** is the practice of being able to identify and handle **conflicts** sensibly, fairly, and efficiently.
- **Managers** need to address **conflict** in the workplace with timeliness and professionalism.
- <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-conflict-management-definition-styles-strategies.html>



STRATEGIES
for Conflict Resolution
in the
WORKPLACE

Harm Reduction



Harm Reduction in the Workplace

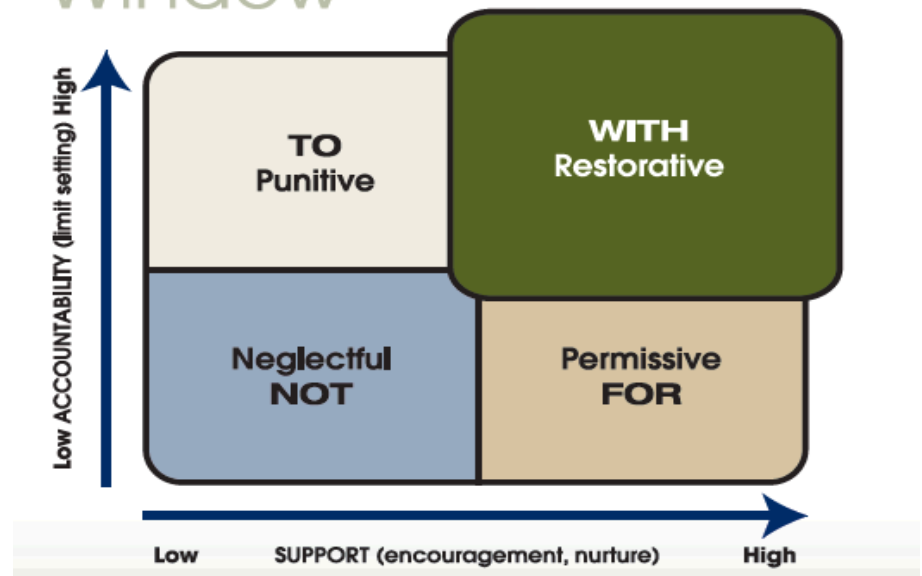
- Harm Reduction is the practice of leaders:
 - Identifying that a **harm has occurred**
 - Ensuring that the **harmful behaviour is stopped**
 - Ensuring that those who have been harmed as well as those who have done the harming **are treated fairly**
 - Ensuring that a **safe, respectful workplace conducive to well-being and productivity** is re-established

Today's Session

- We will explore examples of **gender-related abuse**
- We will also reflect on **other harmful** as well as **conflictual** situations
- i.e. Situations that too often see leaders responding in **neglectful** and/or **permissive** ways
- Or, more occasionally and recently, in **punitive** or faux “**restorative**” ways

Social Discipline Window

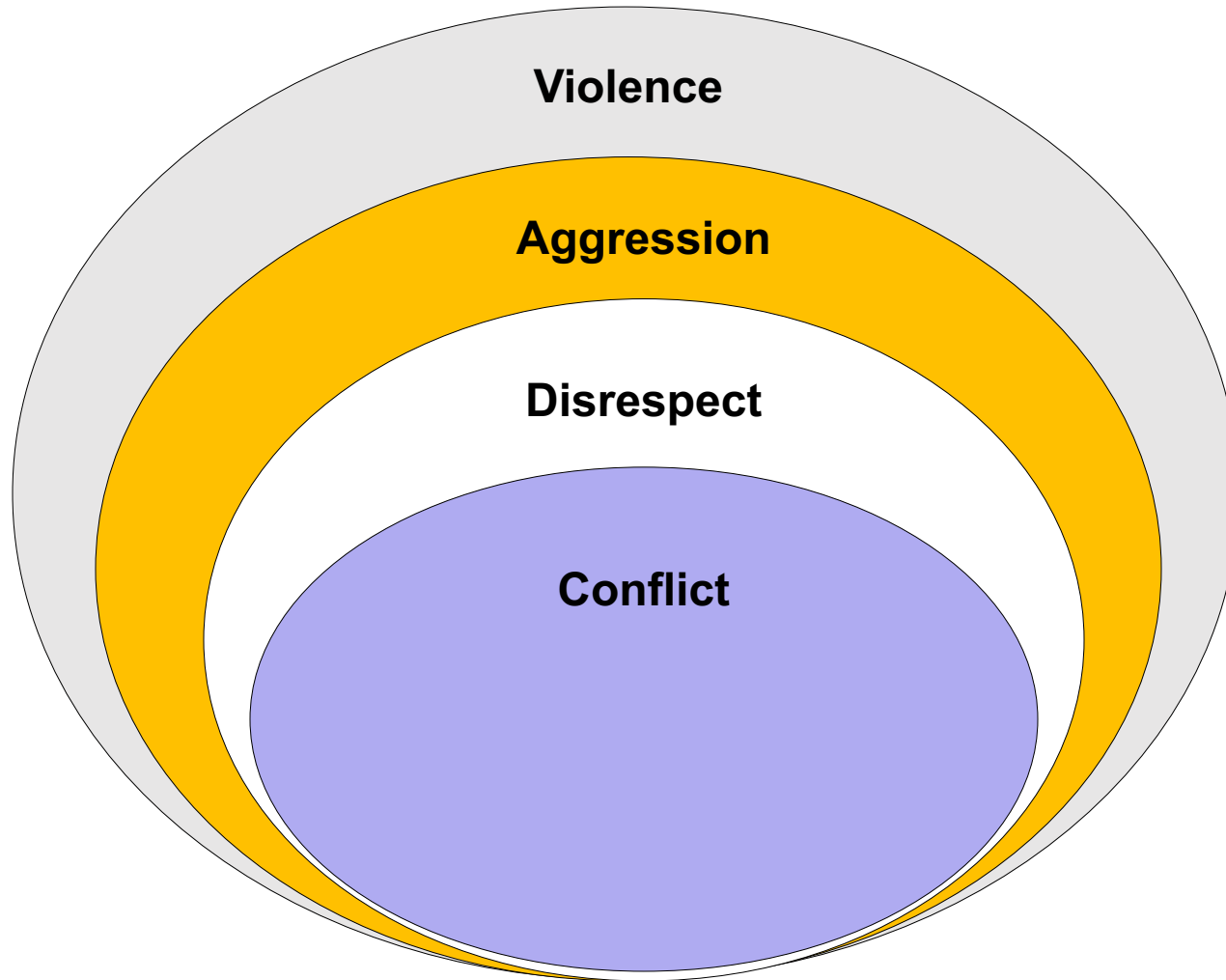
Based on the work of Ted Wachtel



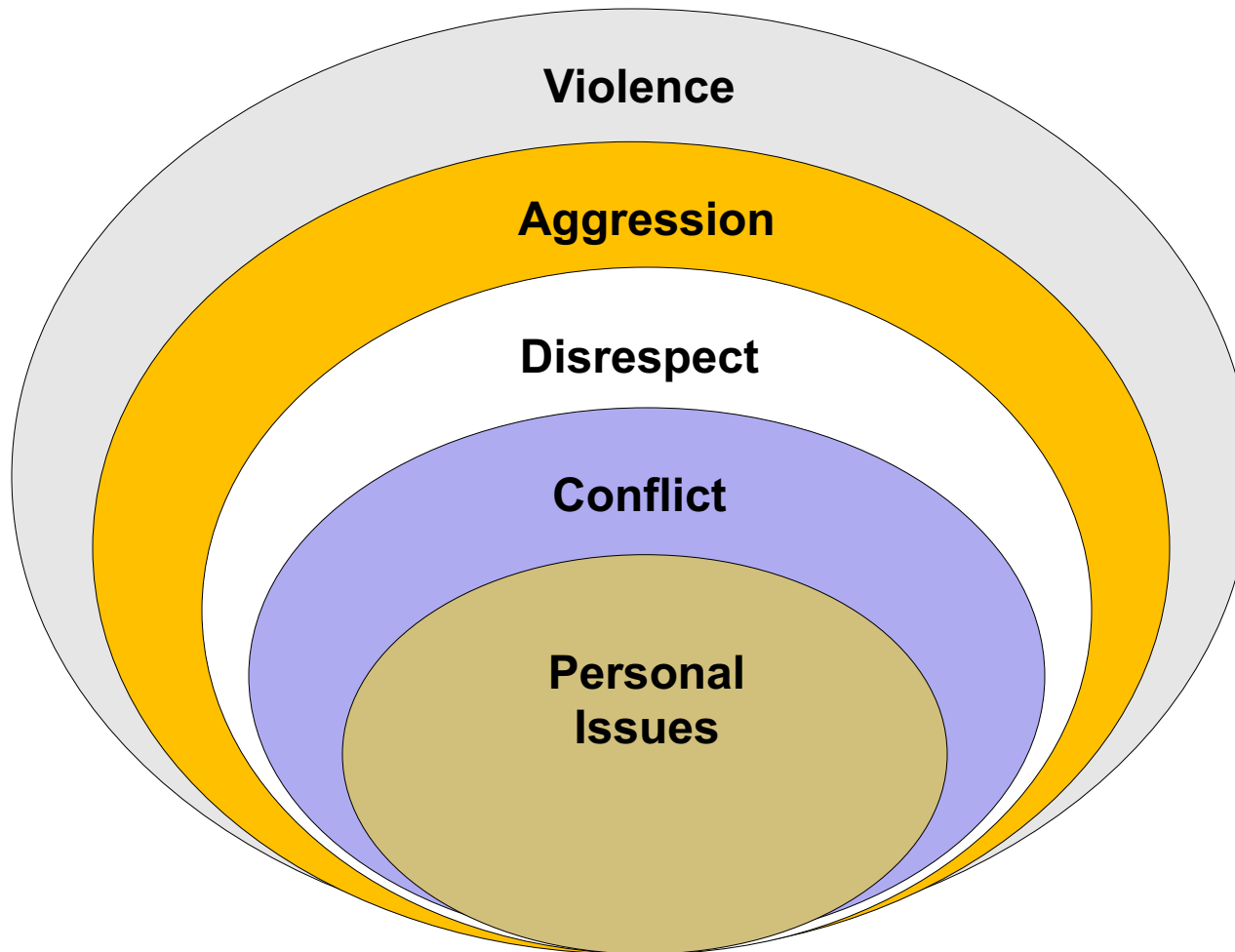
Our Goals Today

- To understand these situations better, using a **“Levels of Conflict and Harm”** framework
- To understand the **obligations of leaders** and organizations with respect to the different levels; i.e. with respect to **conflict vs harm**
- To understand better the role that **different approaches, systems and processes** can play in responding appropriately to these different levels

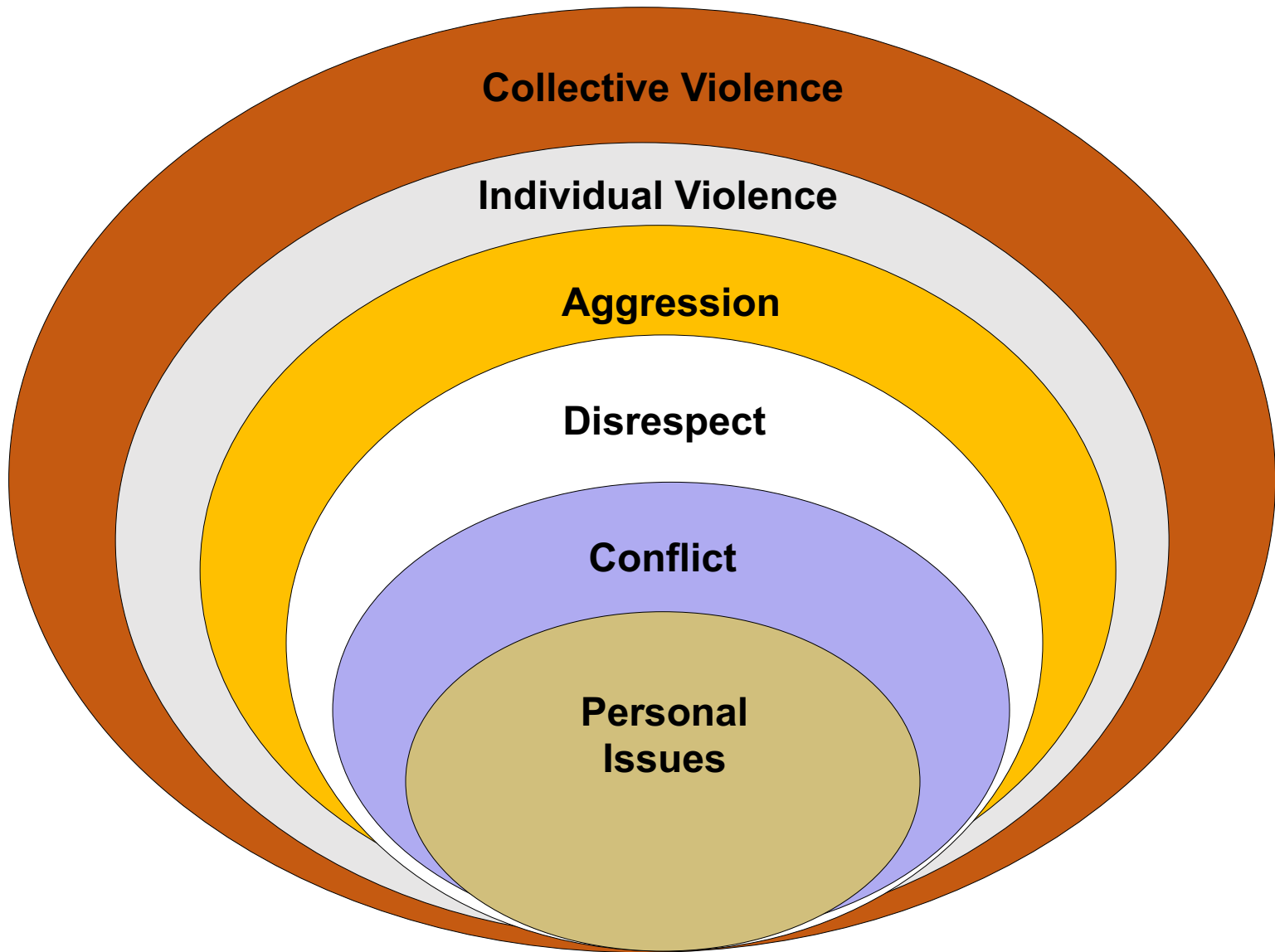
Levels of Conflict and Harm



Levels of Conflict and Harm



Levels of Conflict and Harm



Levels of Conflict and Harm

CONFLICT

- Differences + tension
- Natural and universal
- Unpleasant, but not against the rules
- Not always intentional
- Often mutual contributions
- Spirit of respect possible
- Amenable to collaboration
- Resolvable
- Has both + and - functions

Levels of Conflict and Harm

DISRESPECT

- Not inevitable
- Can include conflict but behaviour now “crosses line”
- i.e. Is personal / hurtful
- Often only 1 party is acting out to this level
- Prohibited, but may be “grey”/hard to prove
- Sanctionable, if proven, under respectful workplace
- Harder to recover from

Conflict

Levels of Conflict and Harm

AGGRESSION

- Not inevitable
- Conflict + disrespect + extreme behaviours
- i.e. Antagonizing - inflicting pain/fear/shame
- Often only 1 party is acting out to this level
- Prohibited by workplace/possibly unlawful
- Subject to discipline and/or legal sanction
- Even harder to recover

Disrespect

Conflict

Levels of Conflict and Harm

VIOLENCE

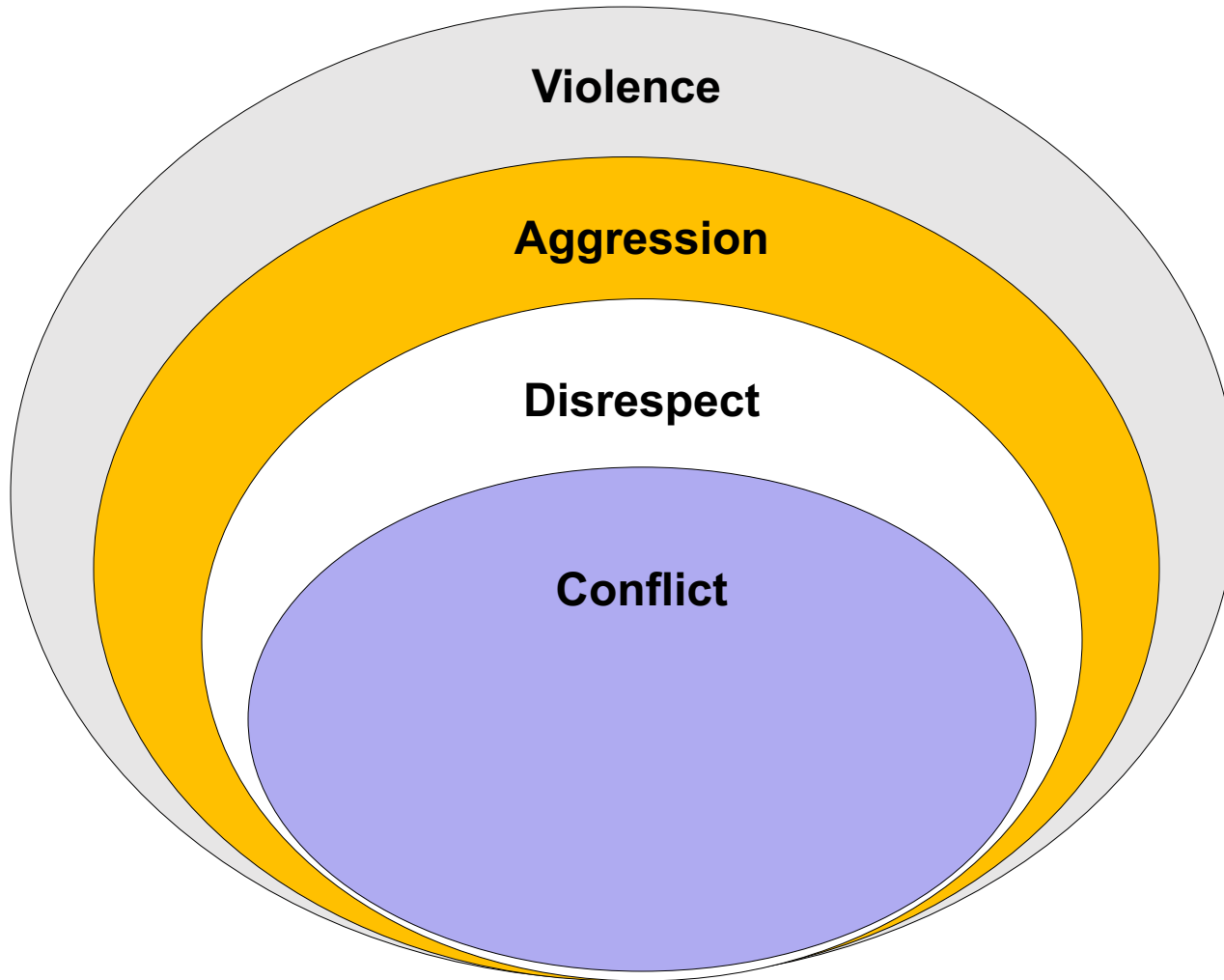
- Not inevitable
- May include conflict, disrespect, aggression
- But also threats/acts of violence
- Desire is to injure
- Usually only 1 party is acting out to this level
- Unlawful + subject to legal sanction
- Usually not recoverable re: ongoing co-working
- Needs external authority

Aggression

Disrespect

Conflict

Levels of Conflict and Harm



The Role of Leadership/HR

1. To draw on **organizational values/culture** and training/skills to facilitate the proactive and respectful resolution of conflict.
2. To draw on **respectful workplace frameworks** to cultivate safety and enhance well being and productivity.
3. To draw on **investigation** and/or **progressive disciplinary** systems to protect the vulnerable and enforce standards.
4. To discern when to act on the need to involve **external authorities/“power over”** to investigate and prosecute.

MBLL – e.g. Values Statement

Includes their “5 C’s”



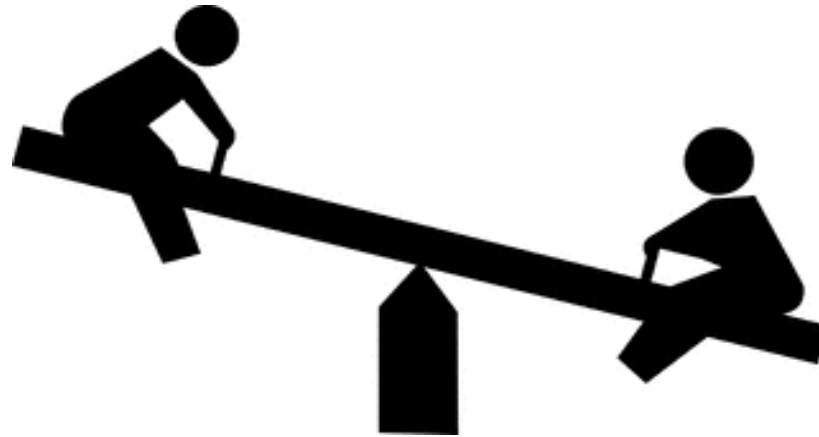
The Role of the Leader or Organization in Addressing Conflict (Level 1)

- No harm, only differences + tension
- A basic moral balance is retained
- *So leader “**Stands Between**”*



The Role of the Leader or Organization in Addressing Harm (Level 2-4)

- Harm creates imbalance
- Balance must first be restored
- *So leader first must “**Stand With**”*



Role of Collaborative/Restorative Processes in Addressing Conflict (Level 1)

- Views conflict as a “**teachable moment**”
- Seeks to **clarify, address** and **resolve** misunderstandings and disagreements
- Promotes **mutual understanding** of impacts
- Provides for coaching/assistance in discerning **contribution** and the **taking of responsibility**
- Creates space to explore and name **interests/needs**
- Seeks to build **mutually satisfactory agreements** that facilitate workplace peace and productivity

Role of Leader - “Stands Between” (middle of *teeter-totter*)

Potential Role of Collaborative/Restorative Processes in Addressing Harm (Level 2-4)

- Assuming safety needs have been satisfied, views harm as a **potentially recoverable/teachable** moment
- Provides **info, support, and re-assurance** to target
- Assists aggressor to take **responsibility/accountability**
- Opens doorway to understanding **psychological/social factors**
- Assesses **mental health** and **capacity to engage** productively
- Assesses **risks versus benefits** of a collaborative approach
- Facilitates **repair, recovery, reparation, and restoration**
(inasmuch as this is possible)

Role of Leader – “Stands With Target” (to balance *teeter-totter*)

Summary of Key Points (thus far):

- The need for both restoration and investigation
- The critical importance of leaders understanding the place of both approaches and when to draw on each vis-à-vis **“Levels of Conflict and Harm”**
- The value of developing skills to draw on each approach effectively/safely
- The importance of knowing when to get help!



What about the tricky ones?

Is it conflict or harm? Which route to take?



- Sometimes it's both!
- Sometimes it's presented as conflict but it's actually harm.
- Other times, understood as harm but it's actually conflict.

Bottom line? – It is the **Leader's job** to discern.

Leaders must lead - That said:



- If you feel at all out of your depth...
- Leaders and organizations are well-advised to consider **external professional help**
- **As part of** assessing the situation and PRIOR to devising a plan.

Wrap-Up

“Chat” Time

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THANK YOU!

Please send your feedback on this session
and your topic suggestions to **Sandy** at
skh@workplaceconflict.ca

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Next Week May 29th 9:30 CDT

Sustaining Team and Trust in Times Like These

Resources from today's session will be posted on our
website

www.workplaceconflict.ca