

I'm sure by now you are ready to dive into solving some issues. Before we do that, let's do a brief refresher of **TANGO**.

The speaker starts:

T - Tell what happened.

A - Affected me?

N - Nurturing statement.

The listener:

G - Get it?

O - Observe.

Take a moment and write down what each letter of the **TANGO** technique means to you.

Once you've successfully walked through this, you add an E...

So you have TANGO-E. I know; it doesn't make sense. It is what it is...

The E stands for Evaluating Common Interests, Values, and Goals.

This means that you both start identifying the common values, goals, interests. This is the negotiation phase, especially if you find that you and the other person have competing values, interests, or goals.

What are your core values? Write them down again in the space below to help you remember to use them. Include the definition of each value

Once you determine the common interest, value(s), and/or goals, you are ready to move towards conflict resolution.

Let me give you some practical steps towards this:

- Set a time and place for the discussion.

This goes along with the power of rhythm. I would do this weekly. You can do it right after you successfully practice the TANGO.

Go ahead and identify the person with whom you need to communicate and resolve a conflict. Write his/her name below:

Now, write down a date and time you can follow through with this.

- Define the problem or issue.

This is the TANGO-E. You focus less here on what the person did and more on the value that was violated. Ask the following questions:

1. What value, interest, or goal was violated when the person engaged in the behavior?

2. What common interest, value(s), and/or goals can we agree upon?

3. Write these down or make a clear note of the agreed-upon values, interests, goals.

- Once you've successfully walked through the TANGO-E, ask yourselves, "How do I contribute to the problem?"

This is an important question because we do not exist in isolation. If we are all taking responsibility for our part in a family or friendship system, the system—or relationship—improves.

- Think through any past attempts to resolve the issue that did not work.
- Brainstorm new ideas and solutions.

Write these down as you talk.

- Talk through and evaluate these possible solutions and agree to try one of them.
- Once you agree on a solution to try, talk through how each person will work towards the solution.

This again comes back to personal responsibility in relationships. Write down how you and how the other person will take responsibility in moving towards the solution.

You:

The Other Person: _____ [Name]

- Set up a follow-up meeting to discuss your progress.

I recommend that you use the one meeting a week to practice communication and conflict resolution skills.

How's the solution working? If it isn't, start back at #4. If it is working, move to step 9.

- Celebrate the successful conflict resolution.

Why do this? We pay more attention to the negative than we do the positive. By celebrating together, you are acknowledging the progress and affirming each other. This goes a long way in learning how to value others and improve in your ability to communicate well and solve conflict in healthy ways.

Remember: Schedule, Schedule, Schedule. Leveraging your schedule helps you build a healthy rhythm of communication and conflict resolution.

This is going to feel awkward, but it's worth it. Here's to happy, successful conflict resolution!