



Conflict Self-Resolution Meetings

A self-resolution meeting can be used when there is a conflict in an inter-dependent and on-going relationship. Use a self-resolution meeting when the parties involved have not given up on finding a mutually agreeable solution and there is low risk of verbal or physical retaliation. Self-resolution meetings should focus on **future cooperation, not settling past complaints or grievances.**

1. **Define the problem**

Determine what is impacting the high-quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls and adults. The focus is on the “business” problem that is causing an issue, not finding fault with the other person. This is your opportunity to DEFINE the issue and its impact on Girl Scouting. No conversation is taking place just yet. When defining the problem, ensure that it is:

- Unbiased & impartial
- Objective - does not place blame
- Specific - so the other knows exactly what is to be solved
- Resolvable – do we have the authority to solve it?
- Concise – brief

2. **Find a time to talk**

The “in the moment” conversation often occurs to vent about a problem; however, it isn't always the best time to discuss issues in a manner that will lead to solutions. Approach the other person to suggest a direct conversation and to set some ground rules.

- **Initiate:** Contact the other person to discuss having a self-resolution meeting.
- **Provide the issue statement:** Share the reason you need to talk.
 - *I'm concerned about the girls experience when we...*
 - *I've noticed evidence (observable behavior / facts). When that occurs, it is affecting...*
 - *I'd like for us to find a solution to the difficulty we are having in working together to ensure that we provide a high-quality experience for girls.*
- **The request:** *Would you agree to sit down with me to explore a solution?*
- **The rules:** *Can we agree that we will continue to discuss until we can come up with a mutually agreeable solution? And that neither of us will leave until that is accomplished?*
- **The time & place:** When and where you will have your conversation that will provide privacy and no interruptions or distractions.

3. **Talk it out**

This is the time and place to address the problem and have an open and honest conversation about solutions for moving forward.

- **Express appreciation:** *Thanks for meeting with me.*
- **Express optimism:** *I am sure we can find a way to work together better.*
- **Focus on the issue:** *My understanding of the problem we are here to solve is.....; what is your understanding?*
- **Ask probing questions and use A.C.T.I.V.E. Listening.** Sometimes you are in a more powerful position by using A.C.T.I.V.E. Listening and asking probing questions rather than pushing your own agenda. Let the other person share their

perspective so you can better understand their position. Examples include:

- *Help me to understand your viewpoint.*
- *I want to understand.*
- *Can you explain further?*
- *How do you believe that impacts (the girls, the troop, the event, other parents)*
- **Be considerate.** Avoid placing blame (you always, you never) and assuming you have the one “right answer.”

4. **Create a written action plan**

The meeting itself is certainly important, but equally important is recording the agreed upon solution and next steps. This may be useful in the future for review.

- Plan the future by creating an agreement that is mutually beneficial. If you feel you are being coerced or dominated, indicate that you don't feel the solutions are balanced and keep working on it. Both parties should benefit and share sacrifices or compromises.
- Consider using the [Troop Parent/Guardian Agreement](#) as a framework if appropriate.
- Agree on who will write up the agreement and determine the delivery date.
- For a more complex issue, it may be necessary to meet again. *Let's meet again in two weeks to review our progress...*