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CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MANAGEMENT

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WHAT DEFINES A CONFLICT?

Conflict is refers to any situation in which there are incompatible Goals, Cognitions or Emotions within or between individuals or groups which then leads to opposition and/or antagonistic interaction. A conflict is typically an incompatible disagreement or argument between two or more people or a group.





CAUSES OF CONFLICT

INFORMATION CONFLICT

This type of conflict arises when people have different or insufficient information or disagree over what data or information is relevant. Allowing sufficient time to be heard, in a respectful environment facilitated by a neutral person can help clear up information differences.

VALUES CONFLICT

These types of conflicts occur when people have perceived or actual incompatible belief systems. Disputes arise when a person or group tries to impose their values upon others and/or claims exclusive rights to a set of values. While values may be non-negotiable to certain people and/or groups, values can be discussed and people/groups can learn to live peacefully alongside one another other.



INTEREST CONFLICT

These are conflicts that are caused by competition over perceived or actual incompatible needs. For examples, “interest” conflicts may occur over issues of money, resources or time. Parties often mistakenly believe that in order to satisfy their own needs, the needs of their opponent must be sacrificed. A mediator can help identify ways to help create opportunities for mutual gain and win/win outcomes.

RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

Relationship conflicts generally arise from misperceptions, strong negative emotions, and/or poor communication. One person may distrust the other and believe that the other person's actions are motivated by malice or intent to harm. Such conflicts may be addressed by allowing each person uninterrupted time to talk through his or her issues and respond openly and honestly to the other person's concerns.



STRUCTURAL CONFLICT

Structural conflicts are caused by oppressive behaviors or situations that are imposed/exerted on others. For example, limited resources and/or opportunities can promote conflict behavior. In such cases, parties may benefit from mediation to neutralize the power imbalance.

TYPES OF CONFLICTS

INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT

This type of conflict occurs within an individual, often involving some form of goal conflict or cognitive conflict. Goal conflict exists for individuals when their behavior will result in outcomes that are mutually exclusive or have compatible elements (both positive and negative outcomes).



INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT

APPROACH-APPROACH CONFLICT

In this situation, a person has a choice between two or more alternatives, each with positive outcomes. E.g. A person may have to choose between two jobs that appear to be equally attractive and beneficially.

AVOIDANCE-AVOIDANCE CONFLICT

In this situation, a person must choose between two or more alternatives, each with clear negative outcomes. E.g. Employees may be threatened with punishment in the form of demotion unless they do something they dislike, such as having to spend much time travelling on their job.

APPROACH-AVOIDANCE CONFLICT

In this situation, a person must decide whether to do something that has both positive and negative outcomes. For example, being offered a good job in a bad location.

TYPES OF CONFLICTS

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

This type of conflict involves two or more individuals rather than one individual. Two people competing for the same thing is an example of conflict that happens to alot of people and is quite familiar.



INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

PERSONAL DIFFERENCES

Some people have difficulty getting along with one another. This may be purely a personality problem and have nothing to do with job requirements or formal interactions.

CLASHES OF VALUES & INTERESTS

This conflict commonly develops between people or groups from different departments and highlights their different values. E.g. Engineers might value quality, design and durability while manufacturers may value simplicity and low costs. This can result in conflicts in company-level decision making that affect all employees.

PERCEPTIONS

Varied backgrounds, experiences, education and training can result in individuals having different perceptions of similar realities. The result of such different viewpoints and perceptions can results in an increased likelihood of interpersonal conflict.

SCARCITY IN RESOURCES

Conflicts over resources are exceedingly common. When the scarcity is absolute (the resource level cannot be enhanced), it is very difficult to manage interpersonal conflicts. E.g. If there are three equally highly-qualified individuals for a position, and there is only one position available, interpersonal conflicts can develop an escalate to an unmanageable level.

TYPES OF CONFLICTS

INTER-GROUP CONFLICT

This is a term that refers to a disagreement or confrontation between two or more groups and their members. Such confrontations can involve physical violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension. Intergroup behaviors must be studied and monitored closely so that conflicts can be recognized early on and dealt with appropriately by a mediator.



TYPES OF CONFLICTS

INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

These types of conflicts occur within an organization between different departments and employee levels/rankings. E.g. between managers and employees. There are four main types of intra-organizational conflict:



INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

Vertical Conflict

Refers to any conflict between superior and subordinate levels within an organization. Vertical conflicts usually arise because a leader attempt to control his/her employees instead of showing up as a team player.

Line-staff conflicts

Refers to when employees and line managers typically have different personal characteristics. These different personal characteristics are frequently associated with different values and beliefs. The surfacing of these different values tends to create conflict.

Horizontal Conflict

Refers to a conflict between employees or departments who are at the same hierarchical level within an organization, group, or team.

Role Conflicts

Occurs when workers are given different roles at the same time or their role overlaps with another leader/worker or work group. The greater the role conflict, the higher the likelihood of a leader/worker experiencing work-related stress.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict resolution can be defined as the informal or formal process of negotiation which two or more people or groups use to find a peaceful solution to their disagreement or argument. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional.



STRATEGY

IGNORING/AVOIDING

Sometimes it’s best when faced with a conflict to take a passive role and simply avoid it all together. Sometimes walking away from the situation can help mitigate the emotional upset, tension, and frustration created by the conflict and things will simmer down and resolve themselves naturally over time.

SMOOTHING

Smoothing is simply a means to cove up the conflict by appealing to the need for unity rather than addressing the conflict itself. If two parties have a conflict within a group, the leader may try to calm things down by being understanding and supportive to both parties and appealing them for cooperation. Smoothing is more sensitive than ignoring because as long as the parties agree that not showing conflict has more benefits than showing conflicts, the conflict can be avoided

STRATEGY

COMPROMISING

A compromise can be reached by balancing the demands of the conflicting parties and bargaining in a give and take position to reach a solution. Each party gives up something and also gains something. Compromising is a useful technique, particularly when two parties have relatively equal power, thus no party can force its viewpoints on the other and the only solution is to compromise. If the problems are complex and time is limited to solve them, it might be in the interest of both parties to compromise.

PROBLEM SOLVING

This technique involves confronting the conflict in order to seek the best solution to the problem. This approach objectively assumes that in all organizations, no matter how well managed, there will be differences of opinions which must be resolved through discussions and respect for differing viewpoints. In general, this technique is very useful in resolving conflicts arising out of semantic misunderstandings. It is not so effective in resolving non-communicative types of conflicts, such as those based on differing value systems, where it may even intensify differences and disagreements.

STRATEGY

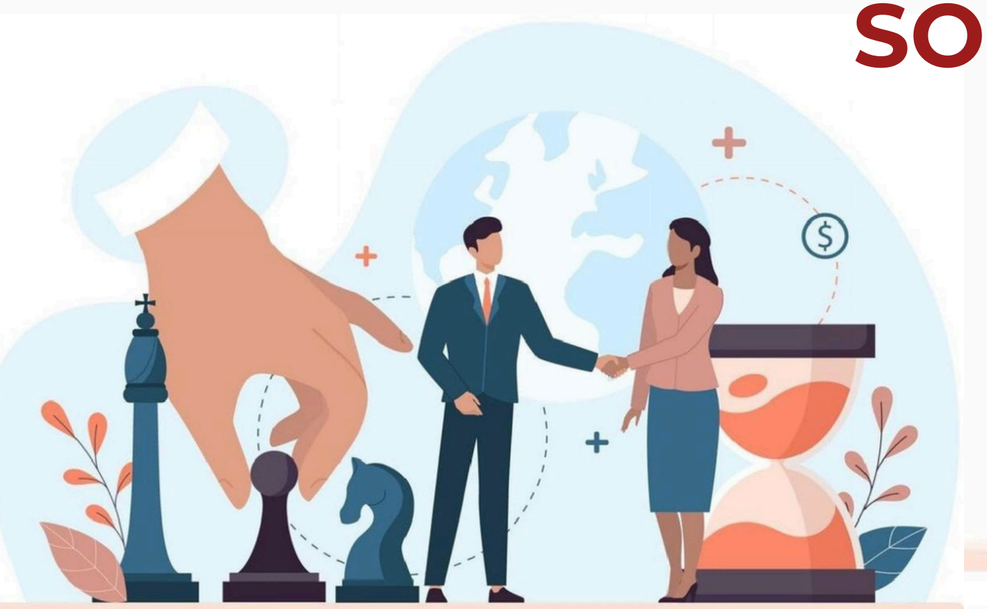
FORCING

This technique is potentially effective in situations such as a president of a company firing a manager because he is considered as a trouble - maker and conflict creator. This technique always ends up in one party being a loser and the other party being a clear winner.



ACTIVITIES THAT EMBRACE PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES AND CAN HELP PREVENT AND/OR SOLVE CONFLICTS







PLAY THE GAME CALLED “GUESS WHAT”

Get to know your teammates better and learn to accept each other for who you really are. In the game called “Guess What?” participants guess about personal and work-related facts about one another other to bond.

For example:

One person says, “I guess that you are the oldest in your family.” The other person will say yes or no. The outcome is that participants gain new perspective about their teammates beyond the conflict at hand, which can create a positive sense of greater connection and understanding.





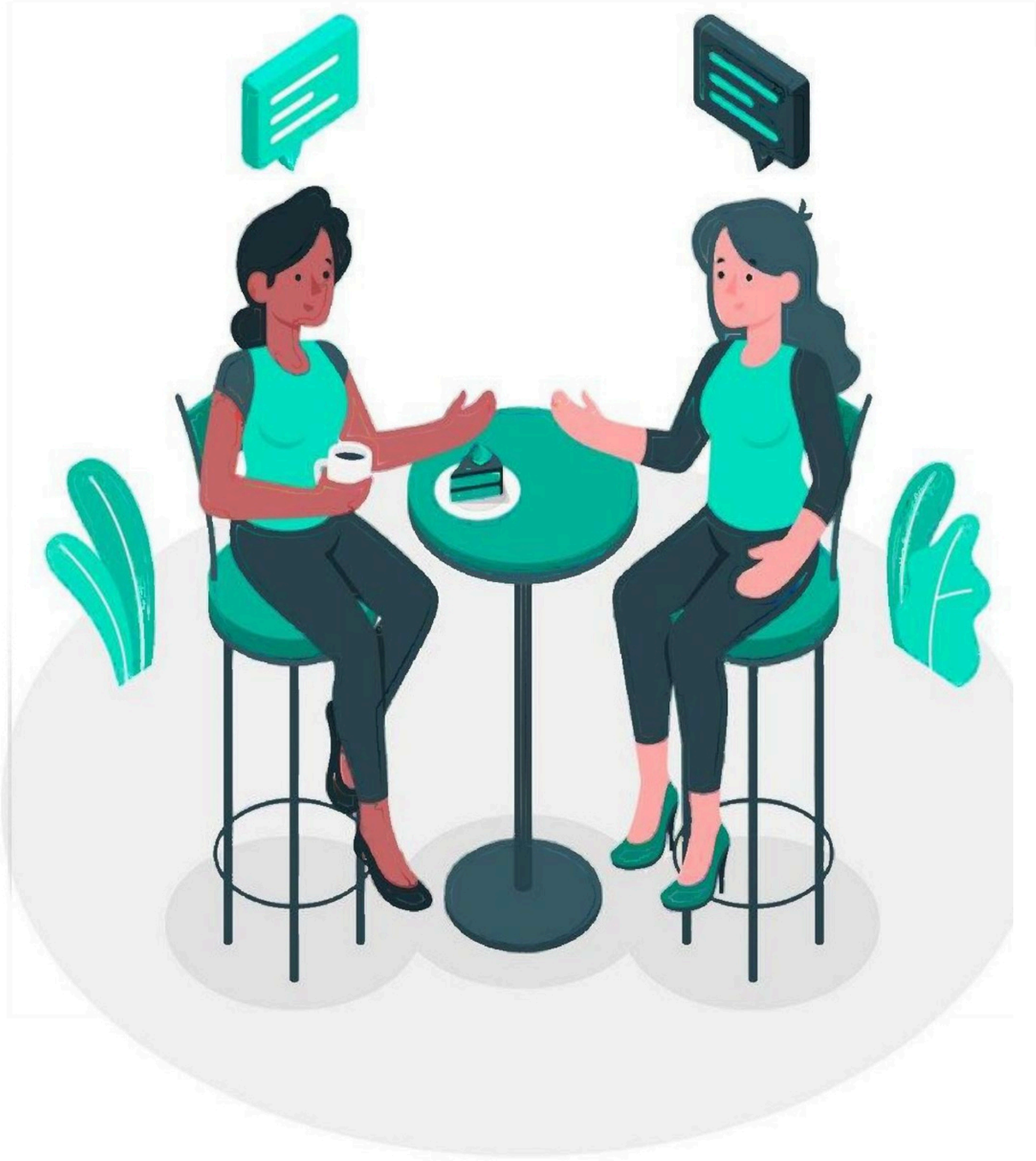
BOND OVER NON-WORK RELATED ACTIVITIES

One of the best ways to prevent conflicts from repeating is for individuals to get to know each other as people not just as teammates or colleagues. Try participating in after-hours activities like having coffee, tea, or a meal; doing art projects; going for a walk or hike; playing games; etc. This helps people feel connected and learn to understand one another, nurturing friendships that will help mitigate present and potential future conflicts.

FINDING COMMON GROUND

One of the keys to practical problem-solving is finding values that individuals share. There is a simple conflict-resolution team building game in which each player needs to find at least one interest in common with other participants. This empowers players to focus on their similarities and not their differences.





DISAGREE WITHOUT DEBATING

This is a simple-yet-effective team building activity in which a team leader encourages a sharing conversation. Such conversations are best done in a safe space where each team member feels comfortable openly sharing his/her point of view. Each participant is invited to share his/her story, emotions, challenges, and impressions without fear or judgement or reprisal. Meanwhile, the group must be supportive and judgment free, even if they were negatively affected by the conflict. This helps empower people to disagree without making them enemies.



WHAT IS CONFLICT MANAGEMENT?

Conflict management is the process of limiting the negative aspects of a conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflicts. The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes including effectiveness and performance.

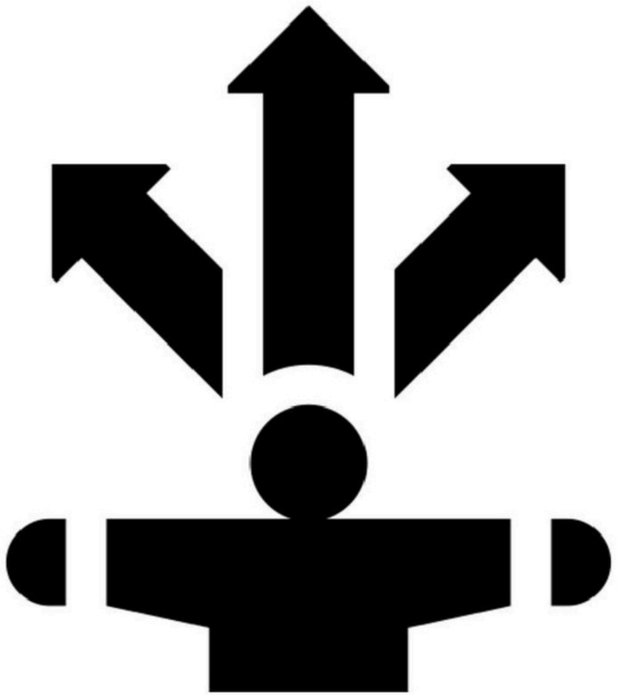
Elements of conflict management include . . .



ACCOMODATION

This is a lose/win situation. The accommodation approach is generally used when one is willing to forfeit their position. It is best used in situations where:

- Someone wishes things be fair.
- People wish to encourage others to express their own opinion.
- The issue or problem is more important to the other person concerned.
- It is more important to protect the relationship rather than argue about the issue.



COMPROMISE

This is a win/lose-win/lose situation where everyone involved gains and loses through negotiation and flexibility. Each person or group will win some of what they desire while at the same time giving something up they have requested as well. The main goal of this approach is to find common ground and maintain the relationship. Compromise is best used:

- To achieve an agreement when all parties have equal power.
- To reach a temporary resolution in more complicated matters.
- To achieve a settlement when time or other circumstances are constrained.



AVOIDANCE

This is a lose/lose situation. Neither party takes action to address the issues involved in the conflict, meaning that the conflict will remain unresolved. This approach is best used:

- If all concerned feel that the issue is a minor one and will be resolved in time without any fuss.
- When the parties need a chance to cool down and spend time apart.
- If other people are able to resolve the conflict more effectively than the parties concerned.
- When more time is needed before thinking about dealing with the issues.
- If the impact of dealing with the situation may be damaging to all parties involved.



COMPETITION

This is a win/lose situation. One party attempts to win through dominance and power. This approach is best used:

- When all other methods have been tried (and failed).
- In emergency situations when quick, immediate and decisive action is called for.
- In situations where unpopular changes need to be applied and discussion is not appropriate.



COLLABORATION

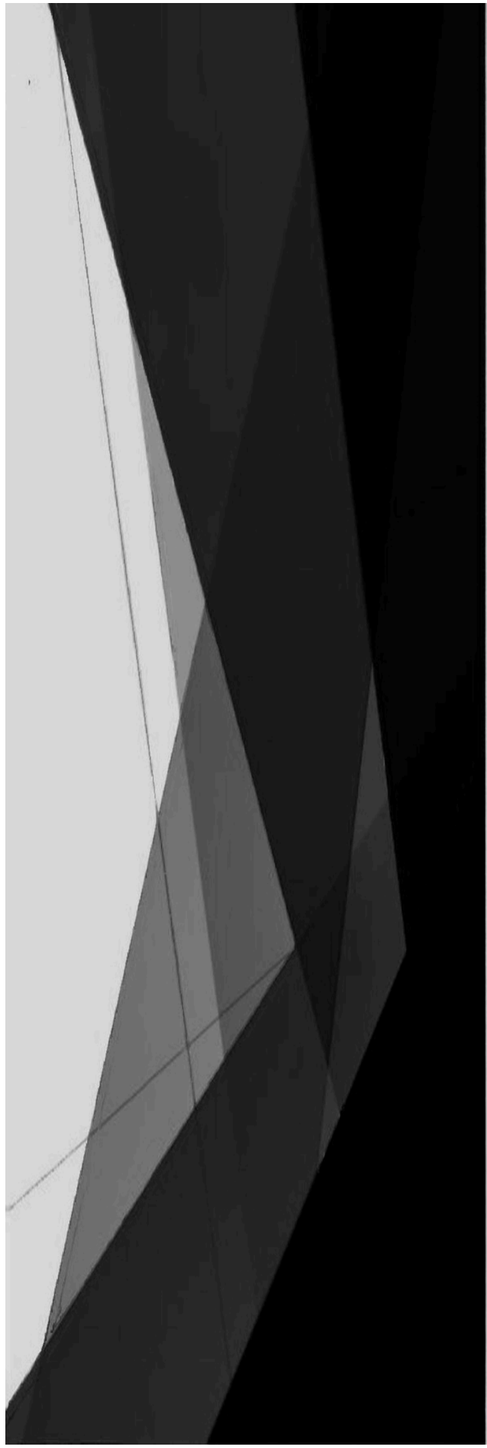
This is a win/win situation. It is the most effective and yet also the most labor and time intensive way of managing and resolving differences. Collaboration requires trust and commitment on all sides to reach a resolution by getting to the heart of the problem. All parties need to be willing to empathize and try to understand each other's situation. Collaboration is most appropriate:

- When all parties are willing to investigate alternative solutions together that they may not necessarily have thought of on their own.
- When trying to get to the source of problems that have continued for a long time.
- When upholding objectives that cannot be compromised on any side while still preserving the relationship.
- When parties from different backgrounds and experiences are involved.

PART 1: OPENNESS

The quality of being willing to consider different ideas or opinions.

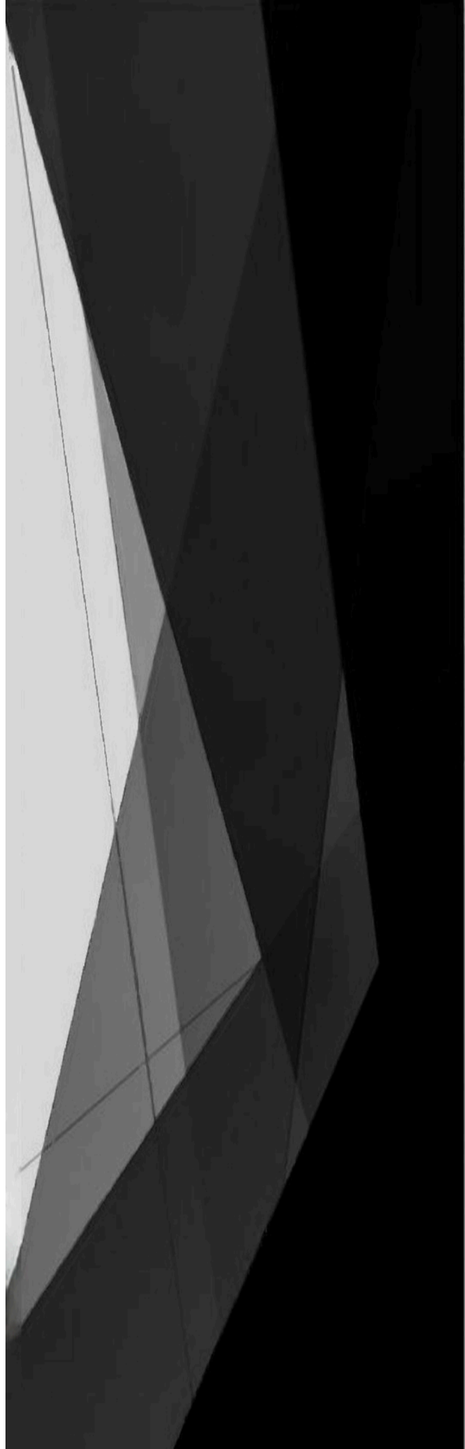
Activity	Agree	Slightly Agree	Moderate	Slightly Disagree	Disagree
OPENNESS	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
I accept people the way they are					
I believe in the importance of art					
My moods change easily					
I take care of other people before taking care of myself					
I am always prepared					
I have a vivid imagination					
I want to be around people who can help me change and grow					
I feel comfortable around people					
I often feel blue					
When someone criticizes me,I get very upset					
I am the life of the party					
I treat everyone with kindness and sympathy					
I get chores done wight away					
I appreciate it when people point out my strengths as well as my weaknesses					
I have a kind word for everyone					
I am skilled in handling social situations					



PART 2: CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.

The quality of wishing to do one's work or duty well and thoroughly.

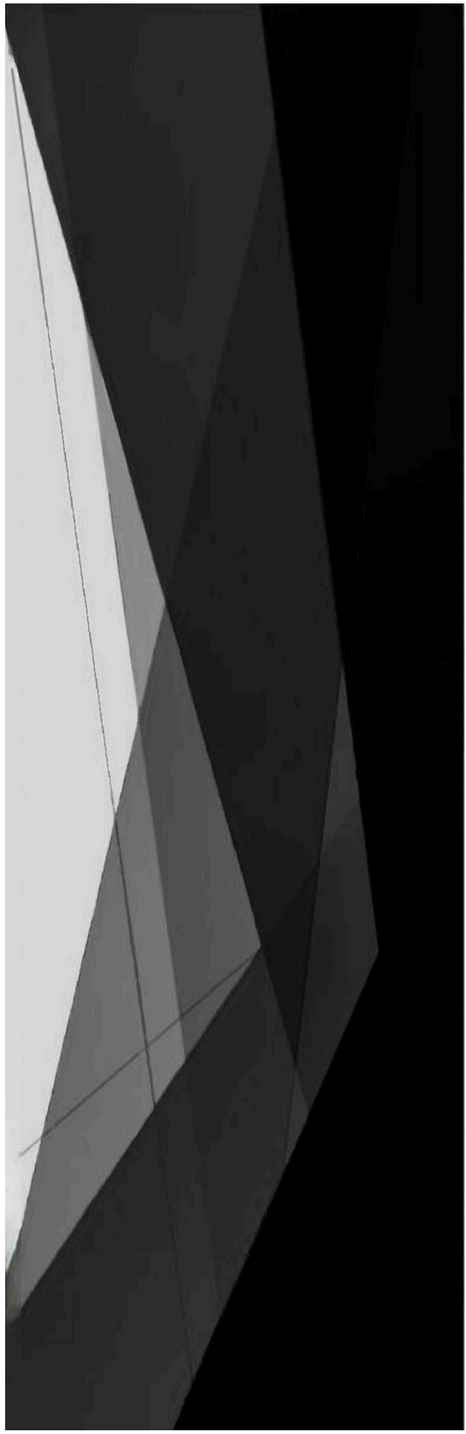
Activity	Agree	Slightly Agree	Moderate	Slightly Disagree	Disagree
Conscientiousness	5	4	3	2	1
I often feel anxious about what could go wrong					
I start arguments just for the fun of it.					
I often worry that I am not good enough.					
I find it difficult to get to work					
I want my friends to push me to be a better person,even if it's uncomfortable at times.					
I stay in the background					
There are many things that I do not like about myself.					
I prefer friends who tell me the truth,even if it hurts					
I do not like art.					
I stop what I am doing to help other people					
I am interested in uncovering the flaws in my character					
I change my plans frequently.					
I am often troubled by negative thoughts.					
I avoid conversations that make me confront my shortcomings.					
I feel comfortable with myself.					
I avoid philosophical discussions.					



PART 3: EXTRAVERSION.

The quality of being outgoing and socially confident.

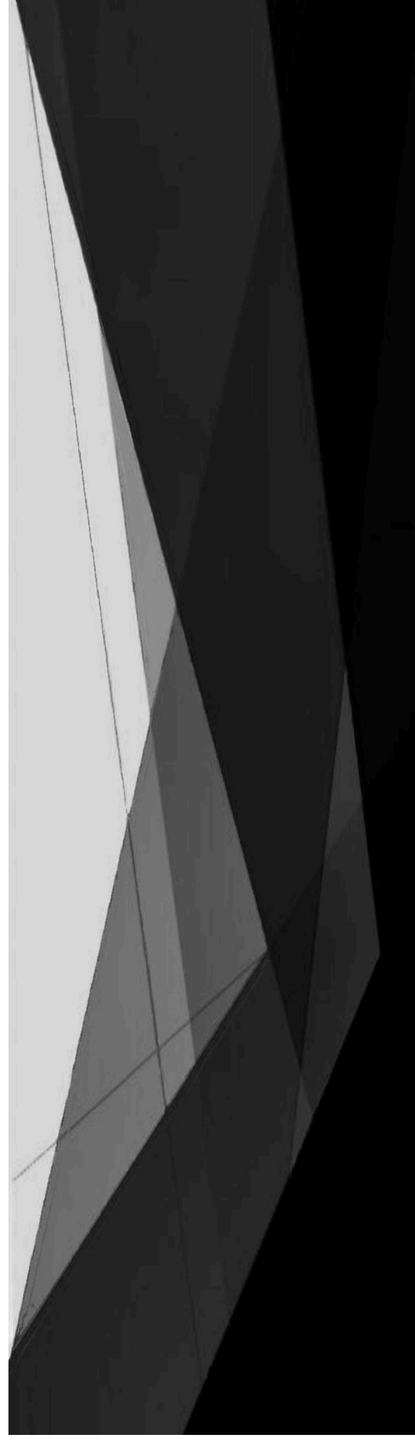
Activity	Agree	Slightly Agree	Moderate	Slightly Disagree	Disagree
Extraversion	5	4	3	2	1
Original					
Systematic					
Shy					
Soft -hearted					
Tense					
Inquisitive					
Forgetful					
Reserved					
Agreeable					
Neryous					
Creative					
Self -disciplined					
Outgoing					
Charitable					
Moody					
Imaginative					
Organized					
Talkative					
Humble					
Pessimistic					



PART 4: AGREEABLENESS.

The quality of being flexible and willing to agree to something.

Activity	Agree	Slightly Agree	Moderate	Slightly Disagree	Disagree
Agreeableness	5	4	3	2	1
I have a lot to say.					
I enjoy going to art museums.					
I always make good use of my time.					
I am interested in the meaning of things.					
I want to understand my faults so I can overcome them					
I avoid taking on a lot of responsibility.					
I don't like to draw attention to myself.					
I feel I am better than other people					
I make friends easily.					
I feel anxious about hearing others'opinions of me					
I make plans and stick to them					
I am not interested in abstract ideas					
It's important for me to be able to express my thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment.					
I criticize other people.					
I don't talk a lot					
I enjoy hearing new ideas.					
It's important to me that people are on time.					



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THANK YOU

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