

## **Advance Course in Social Psychology**

### **Lecture 27: Conflicting Behavior- Part-IV**

Hello students, welcome back. Today, I will continue my discussion related to conflicting behavior. Previously I discussed about defining conflict and different stages of conflict and sources of conflict. Today I will talk about the conflict resolution strategies that on what basis any conflict can be resolved in any group or organization. Social scientists have identified certain strategies that how conflict can be resolved along with some dispute resolution strategies. The first is competing.

These are the strategies which deal with the behavioral aspect of the members while understanding their behavior and what strategies psychological strategy can be adopted to resolve any conflict. The first is competing which is also assertive and uncooperative. When two parties who are in conflict with each other they will not adjust with at any point of time and at the same time the conflicting parties will try to win over the other. They will only focus on the gains and not on the losses that what they have to suffer although the losing party will have to bear the expense.

So this strategy is characterized by assumption that one party wins and the other loses. The party competing is more assertive and less cooperative. Both the parties are assertive and cooperative. The only focus is that who will win. It is a power-oriented approach because any conflict will arise because there is need for power, there is more need for recognition.

So whenever any party needs more power then they become more assertive or compelling in nature. So this is a power oriented approach and the competing party makes a unilateral decision. That means there is no compromise, there is no adjustment and they are asserting their own decision that what can be done or what has to be done. That means the party is only focusing on their own benefits and gains and is not considered as this strategy is not considered as a good strategy as it does not lead to problem solving rather it creates more problems. So, it does not allow room for diverse perspectives in a well-informed total picture.

Obviously, there is no diversity there is only assertion within the group members so as to win over the other party. So, there is no diversity more assertion and unilateral decision, more imposition of the decision of the winning party. This is competing, the other is collaborating or being assertive and cooperative. This kind of strategy focuses on the win-win situation where two conflicting parties try to come to a common point where both are experiencing maximum benefits

or gains. So it is an attempt to find a win-win situation and the members are assertive to incorporate the valid insights of their respective parties.

Here in both the conflicting parties will try to highlight only on the positive aspects or the valid insights what they have to resolve the problem and they will tend to shed off all the negative insights which they carry for each other. So they tend to only focus on what positive they have and try to assemble all the valid insights altogether to resolve the conflict and create a situation where both the parties are at maximum gains. It contributes with the possibility of co-creating a shared solution that everybody will support. That is what that they can only highlight the valid insights only the positive aspects to bring in more problem solving solutions before the conflicting groups and they tend to be more assertive only with what they can offer. So there is more support and the parties are associated with better decision making and favorable experiences and bargains.

So here the decision making is completely based on the win-win situation that both the parties are enjoying the benefits, both the parties have maximum gains and reduce all the negative aspects or that can aggravate the conflict. So the idea here is in collaborating strategy is that members of both the conflicting parties tend to resolve the conflict and not only suppress the conflict but create a win-win situation where all the members are gaining benefits. So this is collaborating where assertion is there for valid insights and they will cooperate for valid insights only. The other is avoiding that is unassertive and uncooperative. This situation arises when the conflict is not resolved and members tend to suppress that conflict and when there is no potential to resolve the conflict then people tend to start avoiding those conflicting situations while suppressing.

This is avoiding or unassertive or uncooperative approach to conflict resolution. So the desire to withdraw from or suppress a conflict, this is the tendency of this kind of strategy to resolve the conflict either to suppress or withdraw. So whenever members choose this method there is a sense of discomfort that even the conflicting parties are confronting but still there is no solution and there is no potential that the conflict will be resolved. Under such circumstances the members of the conflicting parties tend to come to a point to either suppress the conflict or leave the group in order to avoid. This is unassertive and uncooperative approach.

The other is accommodating smoothing where unassertiveness is there and at the same time cooperation is there. Accommodation is a strategy where one party gives in to the wishes and demands of the other. To resolve the conflict one party is ready to sacrifice some positive aspects so that the conflict can be resolved. But at the same time the party which is ready to lose something at the expense of resolving the conflict there can be a harmonious situation but at the same time it can also lead group the other party to be more assertive or insisting and become a commander that the process and take control of most of the conversations. Here the party which is ready to lose something may be dominated by the other party and they become the commander.

So this is the negative aspect although it can create a win-win situation. So accommodation is pertaining to that one party is ready to lose something whereas the other party in the later form of interactions tend to dominate the party who is ready to lose anything to suppress or resolve the conflict. This is accommodating or soothing where unassertiveness is there but cooperation is more dominating and the other is compromising the mid range assertiveness and cooperation. In this situation the party both the parties the conflicting parties are willing to give up something. Party A and party B they both are ready to leave or miss out something and tend to come to reach a common point and this perception of the best outcome is when working by compromise is that splits the difference.

So the difference can be reduced when both the conflicting parties are ready to give up something. Maybe they have valid insights but they tend to shed off their some desires and goals at a very common point so that the conflict can be resolved. So they split the difference. Differences can be reduced by splitting it in form of giving up on those differences. So compromise is perceived as being fair when even if no one is particularly happy with the final outcome.

Maybe the outcome is not fruitful but if any conflict has to be resolved by two parties giving up on something then ultimately they tend to create a cooling period that how two parties can settle down on some aspects and tend to move forward. Now this moving forward will involve some diverse interactions among members so that the problem can be resolved with more innovation and creativity. So these five strategies that is competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising tends to resolve conflict in any group and organization. The other is alternate dispute resolutions. This constitutes alternate dispute resolution ADR or external dispute resolution or EDR.

These kind of resolution strategies involve the third party or some legal constraints or aspects to resolve any conflict which becomes very much intense. So these acquire a set of procedures, comprises a set of procedures in which disputing parties work together with the neutral party that is the third party. Two parties in conflict and the neutral party or the third party comes in action to help the conflicting parties to resolve the conflict and they provide some resolution or advices in order to resolve the conflict and avoid any sort of litigation or legal processes as legal process is very time taking. So in alternative dispute resolutions the third party can intervene and resolve the conflict. So there are three types of alternative dispute resolution.

The first is mediation, arbitration and negotiation. Mediation, it is a third party approach in which the mediator, the third party is a mediator and facilitates resolution process and may even suggest

or advise some suggestion to resolve the conflict. Now this resolution is in a form of proposal of solution that how the intense conflict can be resolved based on the proposal of the third party and that proposal is some solution to the problem. Although in this kind of mediation there is no way that the third party can impose that solution on the conflicting parties. It is the discretion of conflicting parties to agree to that third party solution or not.

So the mediator interacts with the members of the conflicting group and attempt to find common point that will tend to bring members at the common point and resolve the conflict. So here in mediation solution is there but the mediator cannot impose that solution. He can only interact with the conflicting parties and suggest about any resolution. The other is arbitration. This is again a third party process and the third party is known as the arbitrator and the arbitrator has a right to impose a solution on the conflicting parties.

So the arbitrator has the power to impose or at least recommend the terms of the agreement between two or more conflicting parties. So here the solution is in form of agreement between the two parties and that agreement is being imposed by the arbitrator. The third party is there but he has the power and right to impose. So arbitrations often occur because parties to contract agree that any future dispute or conflict connecting to the agreement will be resolved by arbitration. That means here in the process of arbitration the contact or interaction or any connect with the arbitrator will continue in wrong run that if even in long run even the conflict has been resolved but any conflict evolving in future will be very much dealt or resolved by the arbitrator itself.

So this has more organized way to resolve the conflict. So there is more compliance, more support and control and mutuality among group members because there is imposition of suggestion of the third party. So the conflicting parties when come to agree with each other there is much control and much support on the sources so that the conflict should not arise again. The third is negotiation or bargaining that the conflicting parties tend to exchange or give some proposals and offers in an attempt to find a mutually acceptable agreement. It is not luring the conflict, conflicting the other party but both the parties engage in the process of bargaining or negotiation where they tend to give some and take some more opportunities and solutions in return so that the conflict can be resolved.

So mediation, arbitration and negotiation are the three forms of alternative dispute resolution strategies. So what are the advantages of alternative dispute resolution? It is suitable for multi party disputes, it requires less time and money and does not involve consumers. It involves only the parties and no other person can interfere or intervene to resolve the conflict. There is likelihood and speed of settlements. It is more speedy process to resolve the conflict because no litigation is required.

There is more flexibility in the process. The mediator or the arbitrator can come up with different kind of flexible solutions to resolve the conflict. The parties control the process because of the intervention of the arbitrator or the mediator. There are more practical solutions while keeping in view about the situation of the parties. There are more practical solutions and flexible solutions.

There is wider range of issues that can be considered. That means the mediator is very much in close interaction with the members and they have a better view of the different kind of problems that conflicting parties face with each other. The issues are kept confidential. The future interests are shared and protected by the mediators.

There is more risk management. If it moves forward to the litigation then the risk is more and it is difficult to come out from those legal aspects. But if it is being resolved by the mediator then the risk can be controlled or managed and generally there is no need for lawyers and can be a less confrontational alternative to the court system. That means it is a better option considered than the court system or litigation. These are the disadvantages that there is a need for precedent, a need for court. ADR is less suitable than litigation when there is a need for precedent or need for court orders.

Sometimes the conflict becomes so intense that it requires some legalities to resolve the conflict. In that case any evidence has to be there which poses that it is a legal case and requires the intervention of the court cases or the lawyers, a need for interim orders. That means from time to time different kind of solution and orders are being imposed although final solution will not come to the conflicting parties. There is need for evidential rules that it requires clear cut evidences that when, how and why the conflict was created and what are the sources of conflict. So evidences are more important when it comes to disadvantages of ADR which is generally overlooked in this process, a need for enforcement, a power imbalance between parties.

When two parties may be one party is very powerful then there is more assertion and at the same time there is more imbalance. The party is less powerful and the party will find lot of difficulty to come to agree to any ADR or alternative dispute resolution. There is more complexity in the cases, the need for live evidence or analysis of complex evidence is required and the need for expert evidence. That means whenever any conflict becomes intense in form of insurrection or schism that is discord or disunion then ADR becomes less effective and it requires more intervention of any legal aspects. These are the advantages and disadvantages of ADR or alternative dispute resolutions or external dispute resolutions but at the same time it has lot of significance in resolving in house conflicts.

So this is how conflicts can be resolved based on ADR and other strategies that is competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising. So we are through with this module. I will start the next module soon. Thank you so much. Thank you.