

Explore Conflict Responses (Elementary)

Have you ever become so mad at someone that you shouted at them and said something you didn't mean? Or maybe someone hurt your feelings, and instead of explaining your feelings, you stayed away from them the rest of the day. When we spend time with friends, family, teachers, and others, conflicts are bound to happen. Even if we try to avoid disagreements, they still happen.

We can use the strategy ***explore conflict responses*** to explore what can happen when we react to conflict in different ways. There are five different ways you can respond to conflict. You can choose to act like a shark, a turtle, an owl, a teddy bear, or a fox.

If you choose to be a shark, you try to get what you want, even if it hurts the other person's feelings. You might raise your voice, stomp your feet, and even say some mean words to the other person—anything to get your way. Sometimes it's okay to be a shark, like when someone is getting hurt or needs help immediately.

If you choose to be a turtle, you avoid the situation and hope it goes away. You stay away from conflict and don't try to solve the problem. Sometimes it's okay to be a turtle, like when you don't care about what happens next or if what you are disagreeing about isn't important to you.

If you choose to be an owl, you will find a solution where everyone wins. You explain your feelings and listen to others' feelings. An owl talks to the other person and tries to fix the problem so it's a win-win. It's best to be an owl when you care about the other person and when you care about the outcome of the conflict.

Choosing to respond to a conflict like a teddy bear means that you do what others want, not what you want. A teddy bear wants to be liked by everyone, and they avoid disagreements because they are afraid people won't like them if they disagree. They often fail to share their wants, needs, and feelings.

Responding to a conflict like a fox means that you work to find a solution so everyone wins and loses something. When you respond like a fox, you give up part of what you want and ask the other person to give up part of what they want to end the disagreement.

When we ***explore conflict responses***, we think about what it would be like to respond like each animal when we have a disagreement. We think about which one would be best for that particular situation. ***Exploring conflict responses*** will help us decide if we want to react like a shark, a turtle, an owl, a teddy bear, or a fox.