Chapter 2
Cooperation and Competition

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Some time ago, in the garden of a friend's house, my 5-year-old son and his chum were struggling over possession of a water hose. (They were in conflict.) Each wanted to use it first to water the garden. (They had a competitive orientation.) Each was trying to tug it away from the other and both were crying. Each was very frustrated, and neither was able to use the hose to sprinkle the flowers as he'd desired. After reaching a deadlock in this tug-of-war, they began to punch one another and call each other names. (As a result of their competitive approach, the conflict took a destructive course for both of them—producing frustration, crying, and violence.)

Now imagine a different scenario. The garden consists mainly of two sections, flowers and vegetables. Each kid wants to use the hose first. Let's suppose they want to resolve their conflict amicably. (They have a cooperative orientation.) One says to the other, "Let's flip a coin to see who uses the hose first." (A fair procedure for resolving the conflict is suggested.) The other agrees and suggests that the loser be given the right to select which section of the garden he waters. They both agree to the suggestion. (A cooperative, win-win agreement is reached.) Their agreements are implemented and both kids feel happy and good about one another. (These are common effects of a cooperative or constructive approach to a conflict.)

As this example illustrates, whether the participants in a conflict have a cooperative orientation or a competitive one is decisive in determining its course and outcomes. This chapter is concerned with understanding the processes involved in cooperation and competition, their effects, and the factors that contribute to developing a cooperative or competitive relationship. It is important to understand the nature of cooperation and competition since almost all conflicts are mixed-motive, containing elements of both cooperation and competition.

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A Theory of Cooperation and Competition

The theory being presented here was initially developed by Morton Deutsch (1949a, 1949b, 1973, 1985) and much elaborated by David W. Johnson (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). The Johnsons have provided the most extensive summary of the theory and the research bearing on it; their 1989 book and 2003 paper should be consulted for greater detail.

The theory has two basic ideas. One relates to the type of interdependence among goals of the people involved in a given situation. The other pertains to the type of action taken by the people involved.

I identify two basic types of goal interdependence: positive (where the goals are linked in such a way that the amount or probability of a person's goal attainment is positively correlated with the amount or probability of another obtaining his goal) and negative (where the goals are linked in such a way that the amount or probability of goal attainment is negatively correlated with the amount or probability of the other's goal attainment). To put it colloquially, if you're positively linked with another, then you sink or swim together; with negative linkage, if the other sinks, you swim, and if the other swims, you sink.

It is well to realize that few situations are "purely" positive or negative. In most situations, people have a mixture of goals so that it is common for some of their goals initially to be positive and some negatively interdependent. In this section, for analytical purposes, I discuss pure situations. In mixed situations, the relative strengths of the two types of goal interdependency, as well as their general orientation to one another, largely determine the nature of the conflict process.

I also characterize two basic types of action by an individual: "effective actions," which improve the actor's chances of obtaining a goal, and "bungling actions," which worsen the actor's chances of obtaining the goal. (For the purpose of simplicity, I use dichotomies for my basic concepts; the dichotomous types of interdependence and the dichotomous types of actions are, I assume, polar ends of continua.) I then combine types of interdependence and types of action to posit how they jointly affect three basic social psychological processes that are discussed later in this chapter: "substitutability," "attitudes," and "inducibility."

People's goals may be linked for various reasons. Thus, positive interdependence can result from people liking one another, being rewarded in terms of their joint achievement, needing to share a resource or overcome an obstacle together, holding common membership or identification with a group whose fate is important to them, being unable to achieve their task goals unless they divide up the work, being influenced by personality and cultural orientation, being bound together because they are treated this way by a common enemy or an authority, and so on. Similarly, with regard to negative interdependence, it can result from people disliking one another; or from their being rewarded in such a way that the more the other gets of the reward, the less one gets, and so on.

In addition to positive and negative interdependence, it is well to recognize that there can be a lack of interdependence, or independence, such that the activities and

fate of the people involved do not affect one another, directly or indirectly. If they are completely independent of one another, no conflict arises; the existence of a conflict implies some form of interdependence.

One further point. Asymmetries may exist with regard to the degree of interdependence in a relationship; suppose that what you do or what happens to you may have a considerable effect on me, but what I do or what happens to me may have little impact on you. I am more dependent on you than you are on me. In the extreme case, you may be completely independent of me and I may be highly dependent on you. As a consequence of this asymmetry, you have greater power and influence in the relationship than I. This power may be general if the asymmetry exists in many situations, or it may be situation-specific if the asymmetry occurs only in a particular situation. A master has general power over a slave, while an auto mechanic repairing my car's electrical system has situation-specific power.

The three concepts mentioned previously—substitutability, attitudes, and inducibility—are vital to understanding the social and psychological processes involved in creating the major effects of cooperation and competition. Substitutability (how a person's actions can satisfy another person's intentions) is central to the functioning of all social institutions (the family, industry, schools), to the division of labor, and to role specialization. Unless the activities of other people can substitute for yours, you are like a person stranded on a desert island alone: you have to build your own house, find or produce your own food, protect yourself from harmful animals, treat your ailments and illnesses, educate yourself about the nature of your new environment and about how to do all these tasks, and so on, without the help of others. Being alone, you can neither create children nor have a family. Substitutability permits you to accept the activities of others in fulfilling your needs. Negative substitutability involves active rejection and effort to counteract the effects of another's activities.

Attitudes refer to the predisposition to respond evaluatively, favorably or unfavorably, to aspects of one's environment or self. Through natural selection, evolution has ensured that all living creatures have the capacity to respond positively to stimuli that are beneficial to them and negatively to those that are harmful. They are attracted to, approach, receive, ingest, like, enhance, and otherwise act positively toward beneficial objects, events, or other creatures; in contrast, they are repelled by harmful objects and circumstances and avoid, eject, attack, dislike, negate, and otherwise act negatively toward them. This inborn tendency to act positively toward the beneficial and negatively toward the harmful is the foundation on which the human potentials for cooperation and love as well as for competition and hate develop. The basic psychological orientation of cooperation implies the positive attitude that "we are for each other," "we benefit one another"; competition, by contrast, implies the negative attitude that "we are against one another," and in its extreme form, "you are out to harm me."

Inducibility refers to the readiness to accept another's influence to do what he or she wants; negative inducibility refers to the readiness to reject or obstruct fulfillment of what the other wants. The complement of substitutability is inducibility.

You are willing to be helpful to another whose actions are helpful to you, but not to someone whose actions are harmful. In fact, you reject any request to help the other engage in harmful actions and, if possible, obstruct or interfere with these actions if they occur.

The Effects of Cooperation and Competition

Thus, the theory predicts that if you are in a positively interdependent relationship with someone who bungles, his bungling is not a substitute for effective actions you intended; thus the bungling is viewed negatively. In fact, when your net-playing tennis partner in a doubles game allows an easy shot to get past him, you have to extend yourself to prevent being harmed by the error. On the other hand, if your relationship is one of negative interdependence, and the other person bungles (as when your tennis opponent double-faults), your opponent's bungle substitutes for an effective action on your part, and it is regarded positively or valued. The reverse is true for effective actions. An opponent's effective actions are not substitutable for yours and are negatively valued; a teammate can induce you to help him make an effective action, but you are likely to try to prevent or obstruct a bungling action by your teammate. In contrast, you are willing to help an opponent bungle, but your opponent is not likely to induce you to help him make an effective action (which, in effect, harms your chances of obtaining your goal).

The theory of cooperation and competition, then, goes on to make further predictions about different aspects of intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup processes from the predictions about substitutability, attitudes, and inducibility. Thus, assuming that the individual actions in a group are more frequently effective than bungling, among the predictions that follow from the theory are that cooperative relations (those in which the goals of the parties involved are predominantly positively interdependent), as compared with competitive ones, show more of these positive characteristics:

1. Effective communication is exhibited. Ideas are verbalized, and group members are attentive to one another, accepting of the ideas of other members, and influenced by them. They have fewer difficulties in communicating with or understanding others.
2. Friendliness, helpfulness, and less obstructiveness is expressed in the discussions. Members also are more satisfied with the group and its solutions and favorably impressed by the contributions of the other group members. In addition, members of the cooperative groups rate themselves high in desire to win the respect of their colleagues and in obligation to the other members.
3. Coordination of effort, division of labor, orientation to task achievement, orderliness in discussion, and high productivity are manifested in the cooperative groups (if the group task requires effective communication, coordination of effort, division of labor, or sharing of resources).

4. Feeling of agreement with the ideas of others and a sense of basic similarity in beliefs and values, as well as confidence in one's own ideas and in the value that other members attach to those ideas, are obtained in the cooperative groups.
5. Recognizing and respecting the other by being responsive to the other's needs.
6. Willingness to enhance the other's power (for example, the knowledge, skills, resources, and so on) to accomplish the other's goals increases. As the other's capabilities are strengthened, you are strengthened; they are of value to you as well as to the other. Similarly, the other is enhanced from your enhancement and benefits from your growing capabilities and power.
7. Defining conflicting interests as a mutual problem to be solved by collaborative effort facilitates recognizing the legitimacy of each other's interests and the necessity to search for a solution responsive to the needs of all. It tends to limit rather than expand the scope of conflicting interests. Attempts to influence the other tend to be confined to processes of persuasion.

In contrast, a competitive process has the opposite effects:

1. Communication is impaired as the conflicting parties seek to gain advantage by misleading the other through use of false promises, ingratiation tactics, and disinformation. It is reduced and seen as futile as they recognize that they cannot trust one another's communications to be honest or informative.
2. Obstructiveness and lack of helpfulness lead to mutual negative attitudes and suspicion of one another's intentions. One's perceptions of the other tend to focus on the person's negative qualities and ignore the positive.
3. The parties to the process are unable to divide their work, duplicating one another's efforts such that they become mirror images; if they do divide the work, they feel the need to check what the other is doing continuously.
4. The repeated experience of disagreement and critical rejection of ideas reduces confidence in oneself as well as the other.
5. The conflicting parties seek to enhance their own power and to reduce the power of the other. Any increase in the power of the other is seen as threatening to oneself.
6. The competitive process stimulates the view that the solution of a conflict can only be imposed by one side on the other, which in turn leads to using coercive tactics such as psychological as well as physical threats and violence. It tends to expand the scope of the issues in conflict as each side seeks superiority in power and legitimacy. The conflict becomes a power struggle or a matter of moral principle and is no longer confined to a specific issue at a given time and place. Escalating the conflict increases its motivational significance to the participants and may make a limited defeat less acceptable and more humiliating than a mutual disaster.

   As the conflict escalates, it perpetuates itself by such processes as autistic hostility, self-fulfilling prophecies, and unwitting commitments. Autistic hostility involves breaking off contact and communication with the other; the result is that the hostility is perpetuated because one has no opportunity to learn that it

may be based on misunderstandings or misjudgments, nor to learn if the other has changed for the better.

Self-fulfilling prophecies are those wherein you engage in hostile behavior toward another because of a false assumption that the other has done or is preparing to do something harmful to you; your false assumption comes true when it leads you to engage in hostile behavior that then provokes the other to react in a hostile manner to you. The dynamics of an escalating, destructive conflict have the inherent quality of a folie à deux in which the self-fulfilling prophecies of each side mutually reinforce one another. As a result, both sides are right to think that the other is provocative, untrustworthy, and malevolent. Each side, however, tends to be blind to how it as well as the other have contributed to this malignant process.

In the case of unwitting commitments, during the course of escalating conflict the parties not only overcommit to rigid positions but also may unwittingly commit to negative attitudes and perceptions, beliefs, defenses against the other's expected attacks, and investments involved in carrying out their conflictual activities. Thus, during an escalated conflict, a person (a group, a nation) may commit to the view that the other is an evil enemy, the belief that the other is out to take advantage of oneself (one's group, nation), the conviction that one has to be constantly vigilant and ready to defend against the danger the other poses to one's vital interests, and also invest in the means of defending oneself as well as attacking the other. After a protracted conflict, it is hard to give up a grudge, to disarm without feeling vulnerable, as well as to give up the emotional charge associated with being mobilized and vigilant in relation to the conflict.

As Johnson and Johnson (1989) have detailed, these ideas have given rise to a large number of research studies indicating that a cooperative process (as compared to a competitive one) leads to greater group productivity, more favorable interpersonal relations, better psychological health, and higher self-esteem. Research has also shown that more constructive resolution of conflicts results from cooperative as opposed to competitive processes.

For understanding the nature of the processes involved in conflict, this last research finding is of central theoretical and practical significance. It suggests that constructive processes of conflict resolution are similar to cooperative processes of problem solving, and destructive processes of conflict resolution are similar to competitive processes. Since our prior theoretical and research work gave us considerable knowledge about the nature of the processes involved in cooperation and competition, it is evident that this knowledge provides detailed insight into the nature of the processes entailed in constructive and destructive conflict resolution. This kind of knowledge contributes to understanding what processes are involved in producing good or bad outcomes of conflict. There are many ways of characterizing the outcomes of a conflict: satisfaction-dissatisfaction of the parties, material benefits and costs, improvement or worsening of their relationship, effects on self-esteem and reputation, precedents set, kinds of lessons learned, effects on third-parties (such as children of divorcing parents), and so on. Thus, there is reason

to believe that a cooperative-constructive process of conflict resolution leads to such good outcomes as mutual benefits and satisfaction, strengthening relationship, positive psychological effects, and so on, while a competitive-destructive process leads to material losses and dissatisfaction, worsening relationship, and negative psychological effects in at least one party (the loser if it is a win-lose outcome) or both parties (if it is a lose-lose outcome).

Constructive and Destructive Competition

Competition can vary from destructive to constructive: unfair, unregulated competition being at the destructive end; fair, regulated competition being in between; and constructive competition being at the positive end. In constructive competition, the losers as well as the winners gain. Thus, in a tennis match that takes the form of constructive competition, the winner suggests how the loser can improve her game, offers an opportunity for the loser to learn and practice skills, and makes the match an enjoyable or worthwhile experience for the loser. In constructive competition, winners see to it that losers are better off, or at least not worse off than they were before the competition.

   The major difference, for example, between constructive controversy and competitive debate is that in the former people discuss their differences with the objective of clarifying them and attempting to find a solution that integrates the best thoughts that emerge during the discussion, no matter who articulates them (see Chapter Three for a fuller discussion). There is no winner and no loser; both win if during the controversy each party comes to deeper insights and enriched views of the matter that is initially in controversy. Constructive controversy is a process for constructively coping with the inevitable differences that people bring to cooperative interaction because it uses differences in understanding, perspective, knowledge, and world view as valued resources. By contrast, in competitive contests or debates there is usually a winner and a loser. The party judged to have "the best"—ideas, skills, knowledge, and so on—typically wins, while the other, who is judged to be less good, typically loses. Competition evaluates and ranks people based on their capacity for a particular task, rather than integrating various contributions.

   By my emphasis throughout this chapter, I do not mean to suggest that competition produces no benefits. Competition is part of everyday life. Acquiring the skills necessary to compete effectively can be of considerable value. Moreover, competition in a cooperative, playful context can be fun. It enables one to enact and experience, in a nonserious setting, symbolic emotional dramas relating to victory and defeat, life and death, power and helplessness, dominance and submission; these dramas have deep personal and cultural roots. In addition, competition is a useful social mechanism for selecting those who are more able to perform the activities involved in the competition. Further, when no objective, criterion-referenced basis for measurement of performance exists, the relative performance of students affords a crude yardstick. Nevertheless, serious problems are associated with competition when it does not occur in a cooperative context and if it is not

effectively regulated by fair rules (see Deutsch, 1973, pp. 377–388, for a discussion of regulating competition).

Initiating Cooperation and Competition

If we know that cooperative and competitive processes have important effects on conflict resolution, a question follows: What initiates or gives rise to one or the other process? We did much research (see Deutsch, 1973) in an attempt to find the answer. The results of our many studies fell into a pattern I slowly began to grasp. They seemed explainable by an assumption I have immodestly labeled "Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations":

> The characteristic processes and effects elicited
> by a given type of social relationship also tend to
> elicit that type of social relationship.

Thus, cooperation induces and is induced by perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes, readiness to be helpful, openness in communication, trusting and friendly attitudes, sensitivity to common interests and deemphasis of opposed interests, orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences, and so on. Similarly, competition induces and is induced by use of tactics of coercion, threat, or deception; attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other; poor communication; minimization of the awareness of similarities in values and increased sensitivity to opposed interests; suspicious and hostile attitudes; the importance, rigidity, and size of issues in conflict; and so on.

In other words, if one has systematic knowledge of the effects of cooperative and competitive processes, one has systematic knowledge of the conditions that typically give rise to such processes, and by extension to the conditions that affect whether a conflict takes a constructive or destructive course. My early theory of cooperation and competition is a theory of the effects of cooperative and competitive processes. Hence, from the Crude Law of Social Relations, it follows that this theory brings insight into the conditions that give rise to cooperative and competitive processes.

This law is certainly crude. It expresses surface similarities between effects and causes; the basic relationships are genotypical rather than phenotypical. The surface effects of cooperation and competition are due to the underlying type of interdependence (positive or negative) and type of action (effective or bungling), the basic social psychological processes involved in the theory (substitutability, attitudes, and inducibility), and the cultural or social medium and situational context in which these processes are expressed. Thus, how a positive attitude is expressed in an effective, positively interdependent relationship depends on what is appropriate to the cultural or social medium and situational context; that is, presumably one would not seek to express it in a way that is humiliating or embarrassing or likely to be experienced negatively by one's partner.

Similarly, the effectiveness of any typical effect of cooperation or competition as an initiating or inducing condition of a cooperative or competitive process is not due

to its phenotype but rather to the inferred genotype of type of interdependence and type of action. Thus, in most social media and social contexts, "perceived similarity in basic values" is highly suggestive of the possibility of a positive linkage between oneself and the other. However, we are likely to see ourselves as negatively linked in a context that leads each of us to recognize that similarities in values impel seeking something that is in scarce supply and available for only one of us. Also, it is evident that although threats are mostly perceived in a way that suggests a negative linkage, any threat perceived as intended to compel you to do something that is good for you or that you feel you should do is apt to be suggestive of a positive linkage.

Although the law is crude, my impression is that it is reasonably accurate; phenotypes are often indicative of the underlying genotypes. Moreover, it is a synthesizing principle, which integrates and summarizes a wide range of social psychological phenomena. The typical effects of a given relationship tend to induce that relationship, similarly, it seems that any of the typical effects of a given relationship tend to induce the other typical effects. For example, among the typical effects of a cooperative relationship are positive attitudes, perception of similarities, open communication, and orientation toward mutual enhancement. One can integrate much of the literature on the determinants of positive and negative attitudes in terms of the other associated effects of cooperation and competition. Thus, positive attitudes result from perceptions of similarity, open communication, and so on. Similarly, many of the determinants of effective communication can be linked to the other typical effects of cooperation or competition, such as positive attitudes and power sharing.

Summary of the Theory of Conflict Resolution

In brief, the theory equates a constructive process of conflict resolution with an effective cooperative problem-solving process in which the conflict is the mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively. It also equates a destructive process of conflict resolution with a competitive process in which the conflicting parties are involved in a competition or struggle to determine who wins and who loses; often, the outcome of the struggle is a loss for both parties. The theory further indicates that a cooperative-constructive process of conflict resolution is fostered by the typical effects of cooperation. The theory of cooperation and competition outlined in the beginning of this chapter is a well-verified theory of the effects of cooperation and competition and thus allows insight into what can give rise to a constructive or destructive process.

The theory cannot serve as a "cookbook" for a practitioner in the field of conflict resolution. It is a general intellectual framework for understanding what goes on in conflicts and how to intervene in them. Additionally, understanding and intervening in a specific conflict requires specific knowledge about the conflicting parties, their social contexts, their aspirations, their conflict orientations, the social norms, and so on.

Cooperation-competition, although of central importance, is only one factor influencing the course of conflict. The other chapters in this volume detail some of

the other ingredients affecting conflict: power and influence, group problem solving, social perception and cognition, creativity, intrapsychic conflict, and personality. A practitioner must develop a mosaic of theories relevant to the specific situation of interest, rather than relying on any single one. The symptoms or difficulties in one situation may require emphasis on the theoretical theme related to power; in another, it may require focusing on problem-solving deficiencies.

Implications of the Theory for Understanding Conflict

Kurt Lewin, a famous psychologist, used to tell his students, of whom I was one, that "there is nothing so practical as a good theory." To this point, I have presented the basic ideas of a good theory; in what follows, I indicate their usefulness in conflict situations.

The Importance of a Cooperative Orientation

The most important implication of cooperation-competition theory is that a cooperative or win-win orientation to resolving a conflict enormously facilitates constructive resolution, while a competitive or win-lose orientation hinders it. It is easier to develop and maintain a win-win attitude if you have social support for it. The social support can come from friends, coworkers, employers, the media, or your community.

To have a win-win attitude in a hostile environment, it is valuable to become part of a network of people or a member of groups with similar orientations that can extend social support to you. It is also helpful to develop the personal strengths and skills that are useful in bucking the tide.

If you are the manager in a system (for example, a principal in a school, a CEO in a company, a parent in a family), it is worthwhile to recognize that basic change in the system involves more than educating students, employees, or children to have a win-win orientation. It also involves educating yourself and other key people in the system such as supervisors, staff, teachers, and parents so that their actions reflect and support a win-win orientation. Additionally, it often requires fundamental change in the incentive structure so that the rewards, salaries, grades, perks, etc., in the system do not foster a win-lose relationship among the people in it.

Reframing

The second most important implication of the theory has to do with the cooperative process that is involved in constructive conflict resolution. At the heart of this process is reframing the conflict as a mutual problem to be resolved (or solved)

through joint cooperative efforts. Reframing helps to develop a cooperative orientation to the conflict even if the goals of the conflicting parties are seen, initially, to be negatively interdependent. A cooperative orientation to what is initially a win-lose conflict leads the parties to search for just procedures to determine who is the winner as well as for helping the loser gain through compensation or other means. Reframing has inherent within it the assumption that whatever resolution is achieved, it is acceptable to each party and considered to be just by both. This assumption is made explicit when one or both parties to a conflict communicate to the other something like, "I won't be satisfied with any agreement unless you also feel satisfied with it and consider it to be just, and I assume that you feel the same way. Is my assumption correct?"

Thus, consider a school that is developing site-based management procedures but faces a conflict. One group of teachers, mainly white, insists on having teachers elected to the SBM executive committee from the various academic departments by majority vote. Another group of teachers, the Black Teachers Caucus, demand that several members of the committee be from minority groups to represent their interests. This conflict can be reformulated as a joint problem: "How to develop SBM procedures that empower and are responsive to the interests and needs of faculty, parents, and students from minority groups without abandoning the regular democratic procedures whereby teachers are elected to the SBM committee by their respective departments?"

This joint problem is not easy to solve, but similar problems have been faced and resolved in many organizations. There is reason to believe that if the conflicting groups—the SBM committee members elected by their departments and the BTC—define the conflict as a joint problem to be resolved cooperatively, they can come up with a solution that is mutually satisfactory.

The Norms of Cooperation

Of course, the parties are more apt to succeed in reframing their conflict into a mutual problem if the participants abide by the norms of cooperative behavior, even when in conflict, and have the skills that facilitate effective cooperation. The norms of cooperative behavior basically are similar to those for respectful, responsible, honest, empowering, and caring behavior toward friends or fellow group members. Some of these norms, particularly relevant to conflict, are the following:

- Place the disagreements in perspective by identifying common ground and common interests.
- When there is disagreement, address the issues and refrain from making personal attacks.
- When there is disagreement, seek to understand the other's views from his or her perspective; try to feel what it would be like if you were on the other's side.

- Build on the ideas of the other, fully acknowledging their value.
- Emphasize the positive in the other and the possibilities of constructive resolution of the conflict. Limit and control expression of your negative feelings so that they are primarily directed at the other's violation of cooperative norms (if that occurs), or at the other's defeatism.
- Take responsibility for the harmful consequences—unwitting as well as intended—of what you do and say; seek to undo the harm as well as openly accept responsibility and make sincere apology for it.
- If the other harms you, be willing to forgive if the other accepts responsibility for doing so, sincerely apologizes, and is willing to try to undo it; seek reconciliation rather than nurturing an injury or grudge.
- Be responsive to the other's legitimate needs.
- Empower the other to contribute effectively to the cooperative effort; solicit the other's views, listen responsively, share information, and otherwise help the other—when necessary—be an active, effective participant in the cooperative problem-solving process.
- Be appropriately honest. Being dishonest, attempting to mislead or deceive, is of course a violation of cooperative norms. However, one can be unnecessarily and inappropriately truthful. In most relationships, there is usually some ambivalence, a mixture of positive as well as negative thoughts and feelings about the other and about oneself. Unless the relationship has developed to a very high level of intimacy, communicating every suspicion, doubt, fear, and sense of weakness one has about oneself or the other is apt to be damaging to the relationship— particularly if the communication is blunt, unrationalized, and unmodulated. In effect, one should be open and honest in communication but appropriately so, realistically taking into account the consequences of what one says or does not say and the current state of the relationship.
- Throughout conflict, remain a moral person—therefore, a person who is caring and just—and consider the other as a member of one's moral community— therefore, as a person who is entitled to care and justice.

In the heat of conflict, there is often a tendency to violate the norms of cooperation. For example, you begin to attack the other as a person ("you're stubborn," "you're selfish," "you're unreasonable," "you're inconsiderate," "you're narcissistic," "you're paranoid"). Recognize when you start to do this, stop, apologize, and explain what made you angry enough to want to belittle and hurt the other. If the other starts to do this to you, then interrupt, explain why you are interrupting, and try to resume a mutually respectful dialogue ("You're calling me names; that's making me angry and makes me want to retaliate, so pretty soon we'll be in a name-calling contest and that will get us nowhere. Let's stick to the issues and be respectful of one another. If you're angry with me, tell me why. If I'm at fault, I'll remedy it.").

It is wise to recognize that you, as well as the other, have hot buttons that, if pressed, are likely to evoke strong emotions. The emotions evoked may be anxiety, anger, rage, fear, depression, withdrawal, and so on. It is important to know your own hot buttons and how you tend to react when they are pressed, so that you can

control your reactions in that event. Sometimes you need to take time out to control your emotional reactions and to consider an appropriate response to what elicits them. Similarly, it is valuable to know the other's hot buttons so as to avoid pressing them and provoking disruptive emotions in the other.

The Values Underlying Constructive Conflict Resolution

The norms of cooperation and constructive conflict resolution reflect some basic values, to which people who are "profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines" can adhere (Rawls, 1996, p. xxxix). A reasonable doctrine includes conceptions of the values and norms with regard to conflict that people who adhere to another reasonable doctrine (as well as those who adhere to one's own) can endorse and be expected to follow during conflict. Thus, "pro-life" and "pro-choice" advocates in the abortion conflict may have profoundly differing views, but they are both components of reasonable doctrines if the adherents to each are willing to follow common values in dealing with their conflict about abortion. Among such values are reciprocity, human equality, shared community, fallibility, and nonviolence. A brief discussion of these interrelated values follows.

Reciprocity. This is the value involved in the maxim "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." My understanding of the maxim as it applies to conflict requires each party to treat the other with the fairness that it would normatively expect if in the other's position. It assumes reciprocity from the other—fairness to and from the other. The fairness in behavior, in process, and in outcomes expected is normative. As defined by one's culture, it is how the conflicting parties should or should not behave toward one another if they are, at a minimum, to avoid a destructive conflict or, more positively, to promote constructive management of their conflict. The norms against violence, disrespect, deceit, and irresponsibility are widespread standards for avoiding destructive conflict.

Human Equality. This value implies that all human beings are equally entitled to just and respectful treatment, with consideration for their needs, and entitled to such basic liberties as freedom of conscience, thought, and expression, as well as freedom from coercion. You are entitled to this from the other, but the other is entitled to this from you too. Human equality does not imply that people necessarily have the same status, privileges, power, needs, or wealth. It does imply that such differences are not the consequence of one's violation of the other's entitlements.

Shared Community. Implicit in constructive conflict resolution is mutual recognition of being part of a broader community that members wish to preserve, a community sharing some key values and norms; such recognition occurs despite important differences between oneself and the other.

Fallibility. The sources of disagreement between reasonable people are manifold. Disagreements may arise from such sources as the nature of the evidence, the weight to be given to types of evidence, and the vagueness of the moral or other concepts involved, as well as from differences in basic values or worldviews. Reasonable

people understand that their own judgment as well as the judgment of others may be fallible.

Nonviolence. This value implies that coercive tactics are not employed, by you or the other, to obtain agreement or consent. Such tactics include physical or psychological violence (for example, humiliation), destruction of property or other valued goods, harm to one's life chances (a potential career), harm to one's loved ones, and so on.

Implications for Managing Conflict

In prior sections, discussion focused on the attitudes, norms, and values that foster cooperation. These are necessary but not in themselves sufficient. Knowledge and skills are also important in promoting constructive resolution of a conflict. Knowledge of the theory presented earlier in this chapter offers a useful framework for organizing one's thinking about the social psychological consequences of cooperation and competition as well as the conditions that lead to one rather than the other. It is a way of orienting oneself to situations not previously encountered. Along with the other theories discussed in this book, it enlarges one's knowledge of the range of conditions to be considered as one wishes to develop and maintain a constructive, cooperative process of conflict resolution and to prevent developing a destructive process.

Skills are also vitally important if one wishes to develop and implement successfully an effective, cooperative problem-solving process. There has not been much systematic discussion of the skills involved in constructive solutions to conflict. There are, I believe, three main kinds useful to the participants in a conflict as well as to third parties (such as mediators, conciliators, counselors, or therapists) who are called on to provide assistance to conflicting parties. For convenience, I label them "rapport-building skills," "cooperative conflict resolution skills," and "group process and decision-making skills."

First, there are the skills involved in establishing effective working relationships with each of the conflicting parties, and between the conflicting parties if you are the mediator; or with the other, if you are a participant. Some of the components of this broad category include such skills as breaking the ice; reducing fears, tensions, and suspicion; overcoming resistance to negotiation; establishing a framework for civil discourse and interaction; and fostering realistic hope and optimism. Thus, before negotiations begin between two individuals or groups perceiving each other as adversaries, it is often useful to have informal social gatherings or meetings in which the adversaries can get to know one another as human beings who share some similar interests and values. Skill in breaking the ice and creating a safe, friendly atmosphere for interaction between the adversaries is helpful in developing the prenegotiation experiences likely to lead to effective negotiations about the issues in dispute.

A second, related set of skills concerns developing and maintaining a cooperative conflict resolution process among the parties throughout their conflict. These

are the skills that are usually emphasized in practicum courses or workshops on conflict resolution. They include identifying the type of conflict in which you are involved; reframing the issues so the conflict is perceived as a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively; active listening and responsive communication; distinguishing between needs and positions; recognizing and acknowledging the other's needs as well as your own; encouraging, supporting, and enhancing the other; taking the perspective of the other; identifying shared interests and other similarities in values, experiences, and so on; being alert to cultural differences and the possibilities of misunderstanding arising from them; controlling anger; dealing with difficult conflicts and difficult people; being sensitive to the other's anxieties and hot buttons and how to avoid pressing them; and being aware of your own anxieties and hot buttons as well as your tendencies to be emotionally upset and misperceiving if they are pressed so that these can be controlled.

A third set of skills are involved in developing a creative and productive group problem-solving and decision-making process. These include skills pertinent to group process, leadership, and effective group discussion, such as goal and standard setting; monitoring progress toward group goals; eliciting, clarifying, coordinating, summarizing, and integrating the contributions of the various participants; and maintaining group cohesion. The third set also includes such problem-solving and decision-making skills as identifying and diagnosing the nature of the problem confronting the group; acquiring the relevant information necessary for developing possible solutions; creating or identifying several possible, alternative solutions; choosing the criteria for evaluating the alternatives (such as the "effects" on economic costs and benefits, on relations between the conflicting parties, and on third parties); selecting the alternative that optimizes the results on the chosen criteria; and implementing the decision through appropriate action.

People are not novices with regard to conflict. From their life experiences, many people have developed some of the component skills involved in building rapport, constructive conflict resolution, and effective group process and problem solving. However, some are not aware that they have the skills; nor are they aware of how and when to use them in a conflict. The fact that everyone has been a participant and observer in many conflicts from childhood on results in implicit knowledge, preconceptions, attitudes, and modes of behavior toward conflict that may be deeply ingrained before any systematic training occurs. Many of a person's preexisting orientations to conflict, and modes of behavior in it, reflect those prevalent in his or her culture, but some reflect individual predispositions acquired from unique experiences in the contexts of family, school, watching TV, and the like.

Before students can acquire explicit competence in conflict resolution, they have to become aware of their preexisting orientations to conflict as well as their typical behaviors. Awareness and motivation are developed by having a model of good performance that students can compare with their preconscious, preexisting one. Internalization comes from guided and repeated practice in imitating the model. Feedback on the students' successfulness gradually shapes their behavior to be consistent with the model, and frequent practice leads to its internalization. Once the model has been internalized, recurrence of earlier incompetent orientations to

conflict is experienced as awkward and out of place because there are internal cues to the deviations of one's behavior from the internalized model. In tennis, if you have internalized a good model of serving, internal cues tell you if you are deviating from it (say, by throwing the ball too high). If self-taught tennis students have internalized poor serving models, training should be directed at making them aware of this and providing a good model. So too in conflict resolution.

In summary, the discussion in this and the preceding sections has centered on the orientation, norms, values, and skills that help to develop a cooperative, constructive process of conflict resolution. Without competence in the skills, having a cooperative orientation and knowledge of conflict processes is often insufficient to develop a cooperative process of conflict resolution. Similarly, having the skills is insufficient to develop a cooperative process, without the cooperative orientation and motivation to apply the skills, or without the knowledge of how to apply the skills in various social and cultural contexts.

Implications for Training

There are, for training, several implications of the material presented in the preceding parts of this chapter. They center on the social context of learning, the social context of applying one's learning, the substantive content of the training, and the reflective practitioner.

The Social Context of Learning

The theory described in this chapter suggests that the social context of learning be one in which cooperation, constructive conflict resolution, and creative controversy are strongly emphasized. The teaching method employed should take the form of cooperative learning, and the conflictual interactions within the classroom or workshop between teacher and students and among students should model those of creative controversy and constructive conflict resolution. The social context of learning should walk the talk, and in so doing offer students the experiences that support a cooperative orientation, exemplify the values and social norms of cooperation, and model the skills involved in constructive management of conflict.

The Social Context of Application

It can be anticipated that many social contexts are unfavorable to a cooperative orientation and the use of one's skills in constructive conflict resolution. In some social contexts, an individual who has such skills may expect to be belittled by friends or associates as being weak, unassertive, or afraid. In other contexts, she may anticipate accusations of being "disloyal," a "traitor," or an "enemy lover" if she tries to develop a cooperative problem-solving relationship with the other side.

In still other contexts, the possibility of developing a constructive conflict resolution process seems so slim that one does not even try to do so. In other words, if the social context leads you to expect to be unsuccessful or devalued in employing your skills, you are not apt to use them; you will do so if it leads you to expect approval and success.

The foregoing suggests that, in unfavorable social contexts, as a skilled conflict resolver you often need social support as well as two additional types of skill. One relates to the ability to place yourself outside or above your social context so that you can observe the influences emanating from it and then consciously decide whether to resist them personally or not. The other type involves the skills of a successful change agent, someone who is able to help an institution or group change its culture so that it facilitates rather than hinders constructive conflict resolution. I mention these additional skills because it is important to recognize that institutional and cultural changes are often necessary for an individual to feel free to express his or her constructive potential.

The common need for social support after training has occurred has implications for who is trained and for posttraining contacts. There are several ways to foster a social context that is supportive: train all of the participants in it, train the influential people, or train a cohort of people of sufficient size to provide effective mutual support in the face of resistance. Posttraining contacts with the training institution and its trainers may also yield the social support necessary to buttress the individual in a hostile environment.

The Substantive Content of Training

In prior parts of this chapter, I have outlined what I consider to be the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that amount to a framework for education in constructive conflict resolution. A skillful trainer fleshes out such a framework with substantive content that is sufficiently vital and intellectually compelling to engage the interest and motivation of the student, is relevant to his or her most common and most difficult conflicts, and is sufficiently diverse in content and social context to facilitate generalizing and applying the training in a variety of situations. To accomplish these objectives, a trainer must not only have a clear framework for training but must also be open and creative so that he or she can respond to the students' needs effectively.

The Reflective Practitioner

One of the important goals of education in this area is to help the student, as well as the trainer, become a reflective practitioner of constructive conflict resolution. I refer to two kinds of reflection: on managing the conflicts that you are experiencing, and on the framework of conflict resolution that you are employing. Self-reflection about how you are handling conflicts is necessary to continuing improvement and also to prevent old habits, your hot spots, social pressure, and the like from making you regress to less constructive modes of conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution as a field of study is relatively young; it is going through a period of rapid intellectual development. It is experiencing an upsurge in research, theoretical development, and practical experience that, we hope, result in improvement of the frameworks that are used for training in conflict resolution. The reflective practitioner, by reflecting on his or her practice, can learn from as well as contribute to this growing body of knowledge and reflected-on experience.

Conclusion

The central theme of this chapter is that a knowledgeable, skillful, cooperative approach to conflict enormously facilitates its constructive resolution. It is well to realize, however, that there is a two-way relation between effective cooperation and constructive conflict resolution. Good cooperative relations facilitate constructive management of conflict; the ability to handle constructively the inevitable conflicts that occur during cooperation facilitates the survival and deepening of cooperative relations.

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