

M 5.2 (Basisfach) How to tone down a conflict

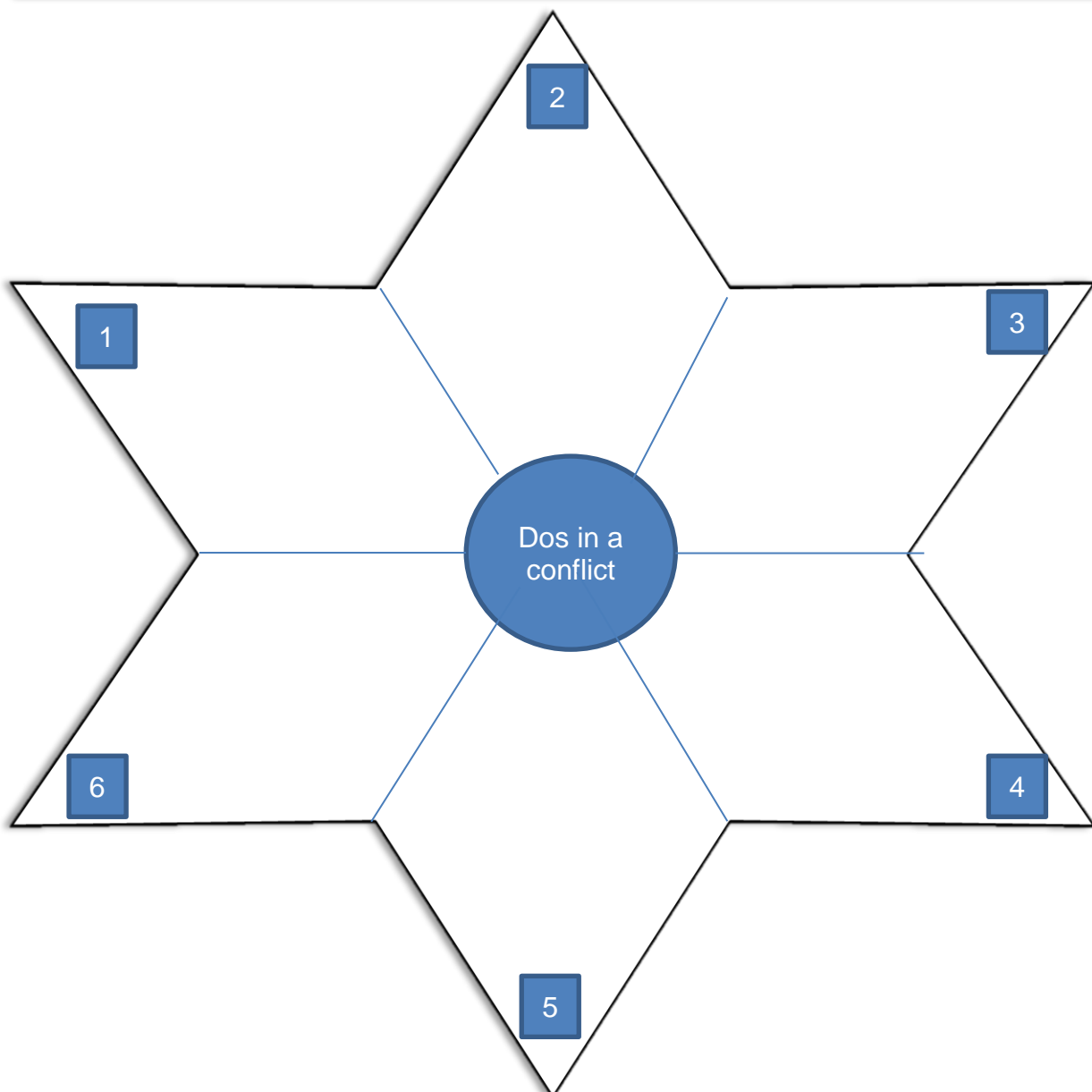
- Look at the Don'ts of toning down a conflict. Go through the short dialogues from "Gran Torino". Write down which of the Don'ts you can find in them: why are the dialogues not very constructive?
- Think of matching Dos for each Don't. Write them down.

Don'ts	Dos
Insulting or threatening your conversation partner; questioning someone's intelligence.	1)
Disrespecting the status of your conversation partner and your relationship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being condescending or patronizing • pretending you are closer to someone than you really are (e.g. by calling someone you hardly know by their first name or asking inappropriate questions) 	2)
Reproaching your conversation partner without being aware of the whole picture, especially if he or she is in a difficult situation.	3)
Saying that feelings your conversation partner has are wrong or not unimportant.	4)
Rejecting any kind of criticism by becoming cynical, ironic or aggressive. Hiding your criticism behind ironical or cynical remarks. Criticizing your conversation partner as a person (e.g. "You are always so loud!").	5)
Being hypocritical/ dishonest.	6)

The conflict star

This star has six points, one for each Do. For each point, write down 1-2 phrases you would like to use to tone down the conflict.

I respect your opinion. But let me show you my perspective on this issue...
 I appreciate your concern, but... How do you feel about...? I can admit to the fact that...
 This is where I have to draw a line. Please understand that...
 It's important for me to understand why...
 I hope you don't mind my being honest with you: ...
 I would be very interested to know when/where/who...
 To me it seems that..., so the only advice I can give you is that...
 I'm absolutely convinced that ... would improve things a lot for you.
 I can see now why you..., but it is also very important for me to let you know how I feel about ...
 I must ask you to respect that... I felt uncomfortable when...
 You are important to me, that's why I want to be honest with you about...
 As far as ... is concerned, I can see why this made you...
 As for ... I'm afraid there has been some misunderstanding/ my view is a different one:...
 I must admit I was really annoyed with you when... It's really hard for me to say this, but frankly, ...



- *Look at the dialogue assigned to you and the Don'ts that the conversation partners make. Look at the corresponding Dos and try to turn this dialogue into a cooperative one.*
- *Practise your dialogue and act it out.*

M 5.2 (Leistungsfach) How to tone down a conflict

- Go through the short dialogues from "Gran Torino". Why are the dialogues not very constructive? Complete the list of Don'ts below.
- Think of matching Dos for each Don't. Write them down.
- Think of helpful phrases that you can use for each "Do".
MORE HELP: Phrases all mixed up!

Don'ts	Dos	helpful phrases
Insulting or threatening your conversation partner; questioning someone's intelligence.		

- Look at the dialogue assigned to you and the don'ts of the conversation partners. Look at the corresponding Dos and try to turn this dialogue into a cooperative one.
- Practise your dialogue and act it out.

MORE HELP: Phrases all mixed up!

For which "Do" in a conflict situation can you use each of the phrases? Write them down in the right section of the chart.

I respect your opinion. But let me show you my perspective on this issue: ...

How do you feel about...?

I can see now why you..., but it is also very important for me to let you know how I feel about ...

I must ask you to respect that...

I can admit to the fact that...

I appreciate your concern, but...

To me it seems that..., so the only advice I can give you is that...

I hope you don't mind my being honest with you: ...

It's really hard for me to say this, but frankly, ...

I'm absolutely convinced that ... would improve things a lot for you.

I would be very interested to know when/where/who...

It's important for me to understand why ...

You are important to me, that's why I want to be honest with you about...

As far as ... is concerned, I can see why this made you....

As for ... I'm afraid there has been some misunderstanding/ my view is a different one: ...

This is where I have to draw a line. Please understand that...

I felt uncomfortable when...

I must admit I was really annoyed with you when...

M 5.2 (Basisfach, Leistungsfach) mögliche S-Antworten

Don'ts	Dos
Insulting or threatening your conversation partner; questioning someone's intelligence.	1) Always show respect for and be open to what your conversation partner has to say, even if you don't agree. Stop people from overstepping your personal boundaries without threatening or insulting them.
Disrespecting the status of your conversation partner and your relationship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being condescending or patronizing • pretending you are closer to someone than you really are (e.g. by calling someone you hardly know by their first name or asking inappropriate questions) 	2) You and your conversation partner are on eye level, which means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you may disagree or give advice, but it is up to your partner to make decisions for him-/ herself • even if you are convinced that you know better, you must respect that your conversation partner has a different opinion It is vital that you respect the boundaries that are set by the kind of relationship between you and your conversation partner (e.g. best friends vs. teacher – student) in the way you address your partner, the questions you ask and the criticism that you voice.
Reproaching your conversation partner without being aware of the whole picture, especially if he or she is in a difficult situation.	3) Top rule: listen to what your conversation partner has to say about an issue. Show that you are not interested in placing the blame, but in finding solutions to a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask questions to find out what exactly a given problematic situation is like • show empathy for your partner's difficulties and feelings in this situation • tell your partner how this situation affects you/ makes you feel • discuss possible solutions or alternatives • if possible, offer your support
Saying that feelings your conversation partner has are wrong or not unimportant.	4) Encourage you partner to tell how he/she feels. Don't judge your partner! Say how you feel (your partner may not know that!) and ask him/her not to judge you. Once feelings are outspoken (even if they're divergent), it is easier to find a solution.
Rejecting any kind of criticism by becoming cynical, ironic or aggressive. Hiding your criticism behind ironical or cynical remarks. Criticize your conversation partner as a person (e.g. "You are always so loud!")	5) Show that you are open to criticism as long as it is constructive. Ask questions about aspects that are unclear to you. Show which aspects of the criticism you understand and which you would like to contradict. It shows strength to admit that you were wrong or that you need help! Voice your criticism openly, but in a way that shows that your criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is not about the person per se, but about his or her behavior in specific situations or events ("I felt uncomfortable when you spoke so loudly about my problem – it was rather personal.") • is not about fault or putting the blame one-sidedly; perhaps you contributed to the problem yourself • intends to improve the situation for everyone
Being hypocritical/ dishonest.	6) Honesty is the key to solving a problem, even if it sometimes seems easier to tell "white lies". Although honesty may destroy the harmony in a relationship momentarily (and must therefore sometimes be postponed), in the long run, it saves relationships from estrangement and polite indifference.

Lösungen (Basisfach, Leistungsfach), wobei im Basisfach nur eine Auswahl getroffen wird**1)**

I respect your opinion. But let me show you my perspective on this issue: ...

I must ask you to respect that...

This is where I have to draw a line. Please understand that...

2)

To me it seems that..., so the only advice I can give you is that...

I'm absolutely convinced that ... would improve things a lot for you.

I appreciate your concern, but...

3)/4

How do you feel about...?

I would be very interested to know when/where/who...

It's important for me to understand why

I can see now why you..., but it is also very important for me to let you know how I feel about ...

5)

I can admit to the fact that...

As far as ... is concerned, I can see why this made you....

As for ... I'm afraid there has been some misunderstanding/ my view is a different one:

I felt uncomfortable when...

I must admit I was really annoyed with you when...

6)

You are important to me, that's why I want to be honest with you about...

It's really hard for me to say this, but frankly, ...

I hope you don't mind my being honest with you: