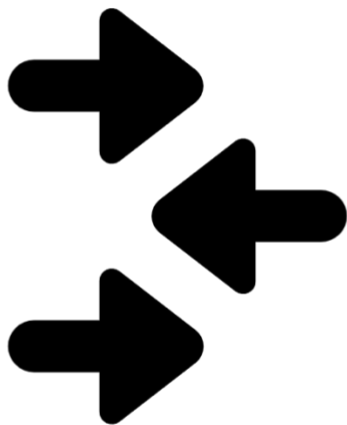




Department of  
**Education**

# Year 12 ATAR Psychology

## Conflict Resolution



OTHERS –  
Relational Influences

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# Year 12 ATAR Psychology

## OTHERS – Relational Influences

### Conflict Resolution

#### Instructions to Students

This resource package provides you with learning materials for the Psychology ATAR Year 12 course. The package focuses on the **Topic OTHERS – Relational Influences – Conflict Resolution**.

This package is designed to support the program you are completing at your school. If feedback is required when completing this package, you should consult your teacher.

#### CONTENTS

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This section is designed to develop the knowledge component of the syllabus. It also includes focus questions and activities to support your understanding.	
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It is recommended that students further investigate concepts covered in this resource package by conducting their own research using the text/s that they use at school or the internet.

#### **Syllabus Points Covered**

- ▶ *Types of solutions to resolve conflict*
  - *imposed*
  - *distributive*
  - *integrative*
- ▶ *Techniques for resolving conflict*
  - *mediation*
  - *negotiation*
  - *Counselling*

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## Learning Content and Activities

### WHAT IS CONFLICT?

Conflict occurs when there is a perception that two parties, whether individuals or groups, have incompatible goals, ideas or behaviour. Even if the goals are not in fact incompatible, the belief that they are is sufficient to result in conflict.

People involved in conflict become enmeshed in a potentially destructive social process that can produce unwanted results and escalation in hostilities. Positive relationships are important for personal well-being and physical survival. Positive relationships may be threatened by conflict.

Parties in conflict tend to form similar distorted perceptions of the other party:

- mirror-image perceptions refer to the reciprocal views of one another often held by parties in conflict; for example, each may view itself as moral and peace-loving and the other as evil and aggressive.
- biased perceptions can lead to escalation of conflict hostility because 'our' motives are positive, and 'their' motives are negative.
- fundamental Attribution Error is that we attribute our actions to the situation, but other people's actions to their personalities.

**ACTIVITY ONE**

1. Is conflict always based on real incompatibilities? Explain why.

2. Fill in the spaces with the following words:

*belief, destructive, perception, incompatible goals, conflict*

\_\_\_\_\_ occurs when there is a \_\_\_\_\_ that two parties, whether individuals or groups, have \_\_\_\_\_, ideas or behaviour. Even though the goals, ideas and behaviour may not be incompatible, the \_\_\_\_\_ that is the case is sufficient to result in conflict. When people are involved in conflict they become enmeshed in a social process that is potentially \_\_\_\_\_ and that can produce results that no one wants.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION – Types of Solutions

- **Imposed** – Dictated solutions
  - One party is stronger and will impose a solution on another
  - One party is dissatisfied and underlying conflict unresolved
  - Can also be third party imposing a solution to a situation, for example a mother settling a dispute between siblings.
- **Distributive** - Compromise
  - Involves compromise or mutual concession
  - Often seen in industrial disputes where employees and employers negotiate terms so both reach a desired (through compromise) agreement.
- **Integrative** – Win/Win
  - Both sides benefit
  - Can be difficult to reach
  - Need to understand both sides values, motives and needs
  - Tries to address motives rather than explicit demands.

Example - Foley (1940) provided a classical example of the types of conflict resolution. Two sisters wanted to have the last orange, one to use the peel to make a cake and one to make a glass of juice.

- Imposed solution – one sister gets the orange, other gets none
- Distributive solution – cut orange in half and they each get half
- Integrative solution – one sister juices the orange for her drink and then gives the sister the leftover peel for her cake.



## CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

**Negotiation** involves parties that have some shared interests and some opposed interests talking to each other to try to reach agreement. Successful negotiation leads to integrative solution (win-win solution). Negotiations break down because parties fail to understand the other's position and goals.

In order for parties to attempt to find solutions to conflict they must communicate and sometimes an intermediary (third party) is needed.

Third party intervention has several benefits:

- make practical arrangements (time, venue) so the conflict is not escalated
- help parties see common ground, bring fresh ideas.

Third party intervention includes:

### Counselling

- Often sought when conflict arises in families
- Tries to help one or both parties improve skills e.g. listening, assertiveness
- Tries to help parties solve their own problems rather than provide solutions.

### Mediation

- Mediation helps parties focus on the issues and try to reach a voluntary solution, either distributive or integrative.
- Facilitates negotiations but has no authority to impose a solution.

### Arbitration

- Involves third party handing down decision after listening to arguments – imposed solution
- Can impose what he thinks is a fair solution to a conflict that both parties are obligated to abide by.



**ACTIVITY THREE**

1. Complete the table below

Conflict Resolution Technique	Explanation	Type of Resolution Achieved
<b>Negotiation</b>		
<b>Counselling</b>		
<b>Mediation</b>		
<b>Arbitration</b>		

## Additional Resources

### Textbook work

If you have a copy *Nelson Psychology WA ATAR Unit 3&4*:

- read pages 44-49
- complete end of chapter questions on page 62 - Terminology 1-2, MCQ 1-2 and SAQ 1.

If you have a copy of *Nelson Psychology WA ATAR Unit 3&4 student workbook*:

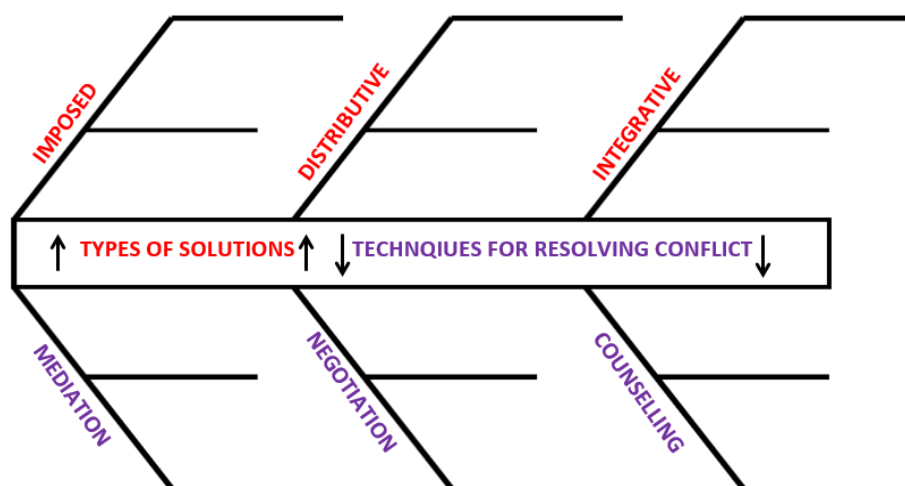
- read and complete pages 55-59.

### Additional reading/weblinks

Check out the additional reading in the following links to help you clarify your understanding.

- Summary of conflict resolution  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/resolution-not-conflict/201211/what-makes-conflict-how-are-conflicts-resolved>
- Use the graphic Organiser template to create a summary of the main points of Conflict Resolution

### Conflict Summary Graphic Organiser



## Exam Practice Questions

Answer the following questions taken from 2015 WACE STAGE 3 Psychology 12 exam paper

Source: <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/further-resources/past-atar-course-exams/psychology-past-atar-course-exams>

- (b) Yasmin and Toby are siblings and are arguing about which television program they will watch. Their mother resolves the conflict by turning off the television and telling them to go to their bedrooms.

(i) Name the type of solution that was used to resolve this conflict. (1 mark)

\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Outline **two** disadvantages of this type of solution. (2 marks)

One: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Two: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Name and outline **one** alternative technique that could be used to resolve this conflict. (3 marks)

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(c) Explain **two** ways in which counselling is different from mediation. (4 marks)

One: \_\_\_\_\_

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Two: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Answers to Activities

## ACTIVITY ONE

1. Is conflict always based on real incompatibilities? Explain why.

No, perceived incompatibilities may be based on belief rather than actual fact

2. Fill in the spaces with the following words:  
*belief, destructive, perception, incompatible goals, conflict*

**Conflict** occurs when there is a **perception** that two parties, whether individuals or groups, have **incompatible goals**, ideas or behaviour. Even though the goals, ideas and behaviour may not be incompatible, the **belief** that is the case is sufficient to result in conflict. When people are involved in conflict they become enmeshed in a social process that is potentially **destructive** and that can produce results that no one wants

## ACTIVITY TWO

1. Angus and Felicity are arguing over which game to play in the yard. Felicity wanted to play catch with the tennis ball but Angus was hoping to play cricket. Their mother yells at them both and tells them no one is playing with the ball and they both must go to their rooms.

- a) Name the type of resolution used to solve the conflict.

Imposed

- b) Outline two disadvantages to this type of conflict resolution.

- neither party may get what they want
- one party 'wins' while the other party 'loses'
- underlying conflict remains unresolved
- parties do not have control over the decision-making
- the parties do not develop skills for resolving conflict

- c) Name and explain the two alternate ways the conflict could have been resolved.

Distributive – half-half solution, compromise, where they get some things they want but also don't get some things. They could divide their play time between the two sports, playing cricket for the first 20mins and catch for the second 20mins.

Integrative – win-win solution, both sides benefit from the decision, must understand both parties' motives/goals. Angus can hit the ball so that Felicity can catch it, thus allowing both kids to play the game they want.

## ACTIVITY THREE

1. Complete the table below

Conflict Resolution Technique	Explanation	Type of Resolution Achieved
<b>Negotiation</b>	Parties share opinions and reach agreement	Normally Integrative
<b>Counselling</b>	Third party helps generally problem solve with individuals	Distributive or Integrative
<b>Mediation</b>	Third party helps to specific resolve issue but does not impose	Distributive or Integrative
<b>Arbitration</b>	Third party decides outcome	Imposed

## Exam Practice Questions Answers

Source: SCSA Past Examinations Marking Key 2015 <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/further-resources/past-atar-course-exams/psychology-past-atar-course-exams>

- (b) Yasmin and Toby are siblings and are arguing about which television program they will watch. Their mother resolves the conflict by turning off the television and telling them to go to their bedrooms.

- (i) Name the type of solution that was used to resolve this conflict. (1 mark)

Description	Marks
Imposed	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>

- (ii) Outline **two** disadvantages of this type of solution. (2 marks)

Description	Marks
One mark for a disadvantage. Maximum two marks. Answers may include, but are not limited to the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• neither party may get what they want</li> <li>• parties do not have control over the decision-making</li> <li>• the parties do not develop skills in communicating or resolving conflict that they could use in future.</li> </ul>	1–2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

- (iii) Name and outline one alternative technique that could be used to resolve this conflict. (3 marks)

Description	Marks
Names and describes a technique relevant to resolving this conflict (referring to the scenario)	3
Names and describes a general technique for resolving conflict	2
Names OR describes a general technique for resolving conflict	1
Correct examples include:  Negotiation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yasmin and Toby to come to an agreement about what program they will watch; one person might get to watch their preferred program today and the other person tomorrow.</li> </ul> Mediation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yasmin and Toby could ask their mother to mediate to so that they can work out a possible solution without arguing.</li> </ul> Counselling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counselling could assist Yasmin and Toby to develop their assertive communication skills to assist them to resolve/avoid conflict in the future.</li> </ul>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

- (c) Explain two ways in which counselling is different from mediation. (4 marks)

Description	Marks
Two marks for each example. Maximum four marks.	
Examples of two mark response (explicitly compares mediation and counselling): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in counselling, the focus might be on dealing with emotions related to the conflict and/or might be about solving the conflict, whereas in mediation the focus is solely on resolving the conflict.</li> <li>in mediation both parties have to be present whereas one or both parties might seek counselling either separately or together.</li> <li>people might learn new skills in counselling that will help them solve problems in the future but in mediation the focus is just on solving the current problem</li> </ul>	2
Examples of one mark response – does not explicitly compare counselling to mediation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in mediation the focus is on solving a specific conflict</li> <li>mediation does not focus on people's feelings.</li> </ul>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>
Accept other relevant answers.	