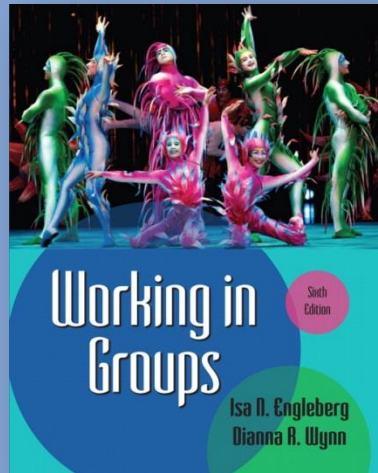


Working in Groups *6th edition*



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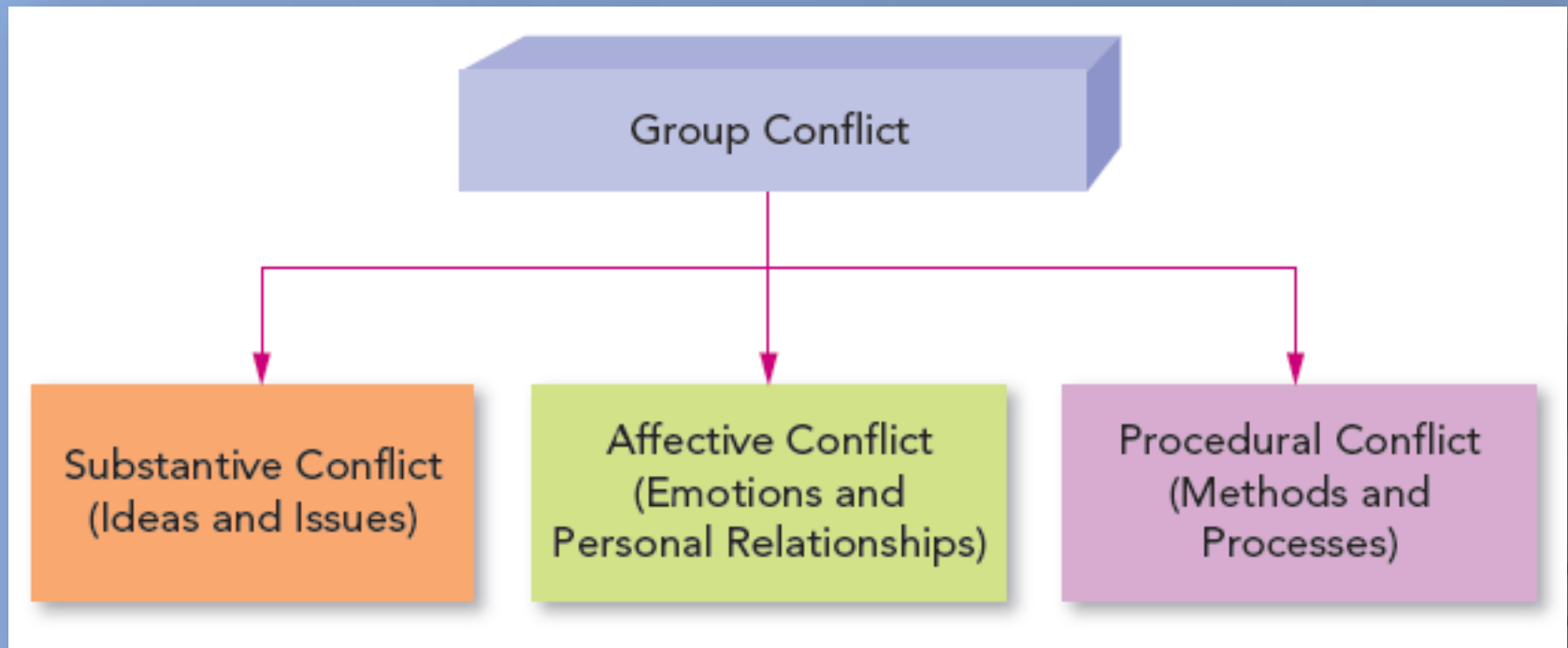
Conflict and Cohesion in Groups

∞ Chapter Eight ∞

Conflict in Groups

The disagreement and disharmony that occurs in groups when differences are expressed regarding group goals; member ideas, behavior, and roles; or group procedures and norms

Sources of Conflict



Match the Types of Conflict

___ Substantive conflict

___ Affective conflict

___ Procedural conflict

- A. Members disagree about the methods or process the group uses to achieve its goals.
- B. Member emotions are aroused by personal disagreements, personality differences, communication styles, and member beliefs and values.
- C. Members disagree about ideas, issue analysis, and potential solutions or actions.

Constructive/Destructive Conflict

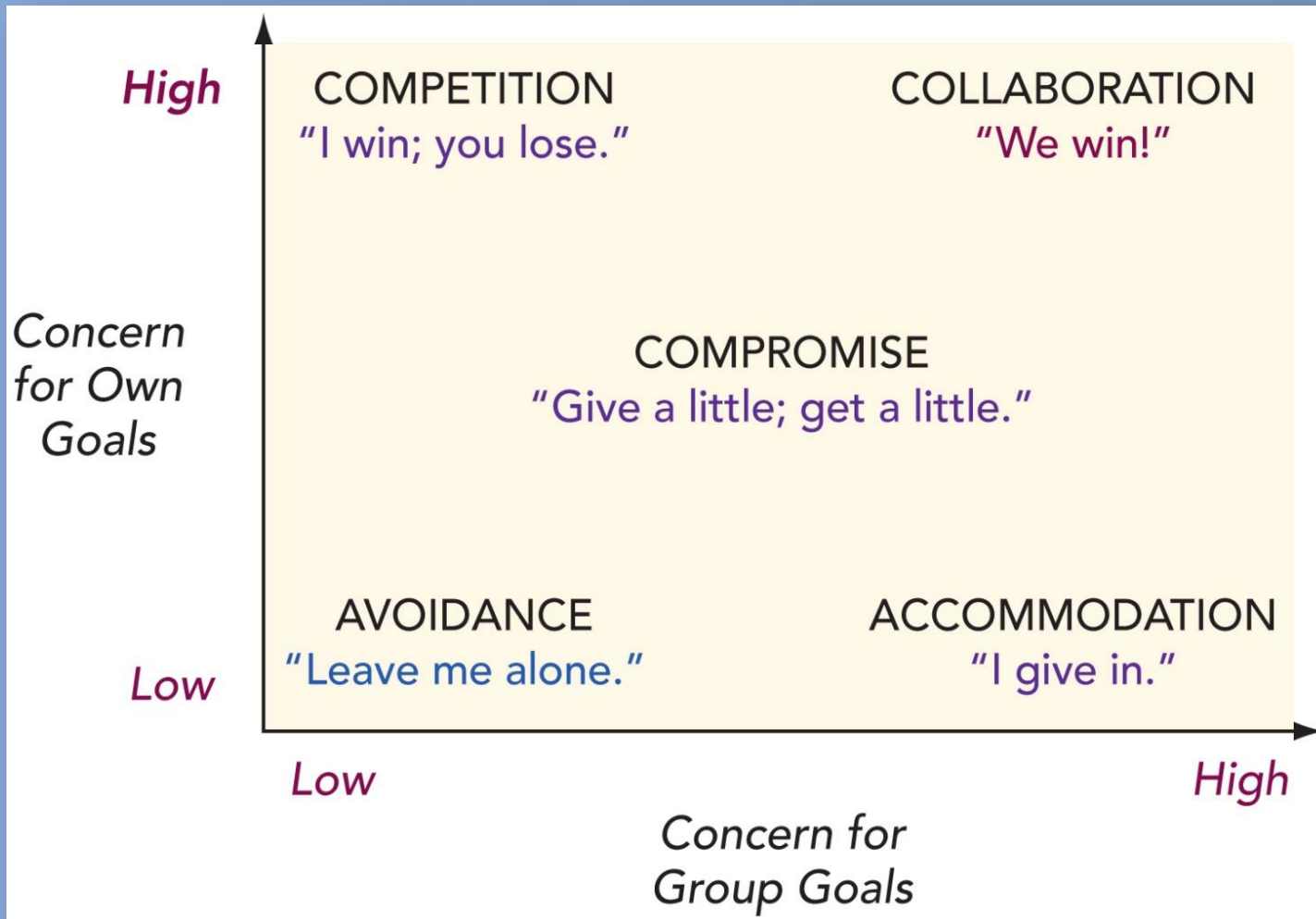
Constructive Conflict

- Group members express disagreement in a way that values everyone's contributions and promotes the group's goal.
- Respect others
- Focus on issues
- Other: _____

Destructive Conflict

- Group members create hostility and prevent achievement of the group's goal.
- Insult others
- Inflexible and uncooperative
- Other: _____

Five Basic Conflict Styles



Avoidance Conflict Style

Members are unable or unwilling to accomplish their own goals or contribute to achieving the group's goal.

Avoidance fails to address the problem and can increase group tensions.

Accommodation Conflict Style

Members give in to other members at the expense of their own goals.

Members believe that giving in helps even when the group would benefit from more analysis and discussion.

Competition Conflict Style

Group members are more concerned with their own goals than with meeting the needs of the group.

Competition may be characterized by hostility, ridicule, and personal attacks.

Compromise Conflict Style

Members give up some goals in order to achieve others.

Members accept losses in exchange for gaining something else.

Better options may be missed if group only uses this style.

Collaboration Conflict Style

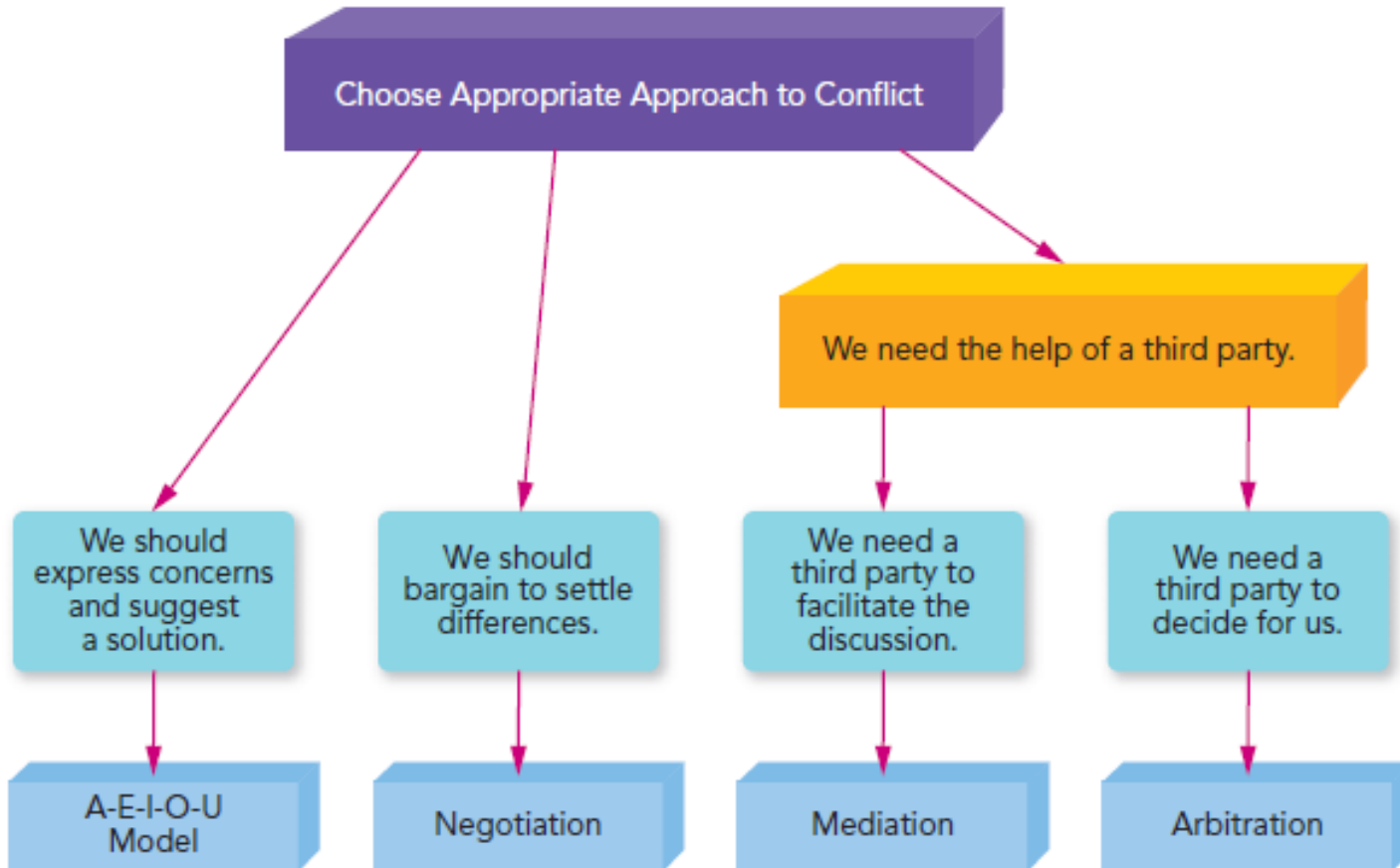
Members search for new solutions that will achieve both individual goals and the goals of the group.

Effective collaboration requires a lot of time and energy for discussions in which all members fully participate.

Choosing a Conflict Style

- How important is the issue to you?
- _____
- How important is it to maintain positive relationships with group members?
- How much time does the group have?
- _____

Conflict Management Strategies



The A-E-I-O-U Method

A

- **A**ssume other members mean well.

E

- **E**xpress your feelings.

I

- **I**dentify what you want to happen.

O

- **O**utcomes you expect are made clear.

U

- A mutual **U**nderstanding is achieved.

Negotiation

Definition

- A process of bargaining in order to settle differences or reach solutions.

Principled negotiation:

- separates people from the problem.
- focuses on group interests, not positions.
- generates a variety of possible solutions.
- insists on objective criteria.

Conflict Mediation

Employs the services of an impartial third party who guides, coaches, and encourages disputants through negotiation to successful resolution and agreement.

William D. Kimsey, Rex M. Fuller, and Bruce C. McKinney,
Mediation and Conflict Management: General Mediation Manual

Arbitration

Involves a third party. After considering all sides, the agreed upon arbitrator decides how to resolve the conflict.

Adapting to Differences

Culture

- Members from cultures that value conformity and collectivism are less likely to express disagreement than those from cultures that place a higher value on individualism.

Gender

- Women tend to avoid conflict; men and women differ in what is expected of them during conflicts.

Group Cohesion

Cohesion is the mutual attraction that holds members of a group together

Cohesive groups have:

- High levels of interaction.
- A supportive communication climate.
- A desire to conform to group expectations.
- The use of creative and productive approaches.
- Satisfied members.

Enhancing Group Cohesion

Establish a group identity and traditions.

Emphasize teamwork.

Recognize and reward contributions.

Respect group members.

Groupthink

The deterioration of group effectiveness that results from in-group pressure

- Highly cohesive groups are at greater risk of succumbing to groupthink.
- Irving Janis identifies 8 symptoms and expressions of groupthink.

Groupthink Symptoms

Invulnerability

- Overly confident; takes big risks

Rationalization

- Makes excuses, ignores warnings

Morality

- Ignores ethical and moral issues

Stereotyping Outsiders

- Considers others too weak or stupid to cause trouble

Groupthink Symptoms

Self-Censorship

- Unwilling to disagree; doubts their own concerns

Pressure on Dissenters

- Pressures members to agree

Illusion of Unanimity

- Believes everyone agrees

Mindguarding

- Shields members from adverse information or opposition

Strategies for Avoiding Groupthink

Ask all members to serve as critical evaluators.

Assign several members to work on the same problem independently.

Discuss the group's progress with someone outside the group.

Invite an expert to join a meeting and encourage constructive criticism.

Before finalizing a decision, give members a second chance to express doubts.

PowerPoint Quiz

Members of a civic association's committee on community safety disagree on whether to install more expensive street lighting throughout the development. What type of conflict is the group experiencing?

- a) Affective
- b) Collaborative
- c) Substantive
- d) Competitive
- e) Procedural

PowerPoint Quiz

When a member gives in on some goals in order to achieve others, what conflict style is the member using?

- a) Compromise
- b) Collaboration
- c) Avoidance
- d) Accommodation
- e) Competition

PowerPoint Quiz

All of the following are mediation strategies for resolving conflict constructively EXCEPT:

- a) Show strength and conviction by supporting your own position.
- b) Speak to be understood rather than win.
- c) Focus on your own perspective rather than criticizing others' behavior.
- d) Explore ideas in new ways.
- e) Recognize that there are many perspectives rather than only two points of view.

Groupthink Examples

1. **Invulnerability:** _____
2. **Rationalization:** _____
3. **Morality:** Secretly torturing prisoners is acceptable in these circumstances.
4. **Stereotyping Outsiders:** _____

Groupthink Examples

5. **Self-Censorship:** _____

6. **Pressure on Dissenters:** Come on

Crystal, you can't fight all of us on this!

7. **Illusion of Unanimity:** _____

8. **Mindguarding:** _____