

TT CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

The aim of this protocol is to provide useful and agreed-upon steps for conflict resolution within TT. The steps outlined in this protocol should be applied to any and all interpersonal conflicts arising within the TT program. This protocol will also form part of a page for which links to procedures for grievances & complaints, so that everyone knows where to look for information on this subject, what to do at each step of a conflict and feels well-resourced to follow these steps.

1. Before you start:

- Check in with yourself and assess whether this is something that you feel comfortable and able to deal with in your current mental, emotional and physical state. It's important to ensure that you feel willing and able to hold the space for others to express what may be, at times, difficult emotions.
- Please notify the director asap that a situation has arisen by sending an email to cella@transart.org with the subject line: 'Conflict Resolution Protocol Incident [date]'
- You can also either: request a conversation with the director about the situation, and/or ask for assistance in the process of resolving the situation, especially if this is something that you don't feel able to deal with, either because you have been directly affected by the situation, or as a result of other factors.
- If a conflict or issue has arisen in relation to the Director, a notifying email should be sent to: advisory-board@transart.org with the same subject line: 'Conflict Resolution Protocol Incident [date]'

2. Acknowledge that a difficult situation exists as soon as possible with whoever is involved, either via email or in a digital or in-person meeting (depending on circumstances).

- This will avoid any potential perception that the issue is not being addressed.
- Please respond with compassion and curiosity and thank the person or persons who have shared the information with you.
- Raising an issue like this is often not an easy thing to do, so please acknowledge their contribution to this process, either verbally or in writing, whichever is appropriate.

3. Acquaint yourself with what's happened, by either reviewing any recording or transcript available, or by speaking directly to anyone else who may have witnessed the situation but not been involved in it.

- Assure them that their account of the events will remain anonymous and confidential, however please inform them that it may be necessary to share information with other team members and/or the director on a strictly need-to-know basis, to resolve the matter.
- Viewing the situation as a clashing of needs, rather than a situation requiring a value judgment about who is 'good' and 'bad' can help you to take a fair and impartial approach to resolving the issue.

4. **Try to come up with a working definition or a succinct statement of the issue.** The following questions may be useful in relation to the articulation of the issue:

-
- What is the stated issue?
- What is (or has been) the impact on relationships?
- Are cultural differences or differing personality styles part of the situation?
- What potential outcomes can you envisage at this point?
-

5. **Set up a mediation session or listening meeting(s)** to hear the viewpoints of the individual(s) involved.

- Whatever your personal feelings about the matter, it is important not to appear to take sides or make judgemental statements, as this may entrench the conflict.
- Use language that's as calm and non-judgmental as possible.
- Feelings of anger and/or hurt often accompany conflict situations and it's possible that they may be expressed during a meeting. While it's important to acknowledge these difficult emotions, please also ensure that your own boundaries are respected, as it's not appropriate for the participant to take their anger out on you.
- This can sometimes be difficult both for the individuals involved and the person facilitating the process of resolution, however it's really important not to shut down, deflect or diminish the importance of what's being shared with you.
- People also benefit from feeling that they and their views have been seen and heard, so mirror their feelings in your responses wherever possible, e.g. "I can hear that this has affected you deeply, and I want to acknowledge how difficult this situation must have been for you"
- Ensure that you have consent for every action that you would like to suggest as part of the conflict resolution process. It is important that everyone involved retains their agency and shares the perception that they have retained (or regained) their agency.

•

6. **Determine underlying need.** The goal of conflict resolution is not to decide which person is right or wrong; the goal is to reach a solution that everyone can live with.

-
- Look first for needs, rather than solutions. This is a powerful tool for generating win/win options.
- To discover needs, you must try to find out why people want the solutions they initially proposed.
- Once you understand the advantages their solutions have for them, you have discovered their needs.

•

7. **Find common areas of agreement, no matter how small:**

-
- Agree on the situation
- Agree on the procedure to follow
- Agree on best hopes
- Agree on some small change to give an experience of success

-
- 8. **Find solutions to satisfy needs:**
 -
 - Problem-solve by generating multiple alternatives or outcomes
 - Determine which actions will be taken
 - Make sure involved parties buy into actions.
 - Total silence may be a sign of passive resistance, so be sure you get an actual affirmative agreement from everyone.
 - If this seems qualified, even tonally, you may need to revisit individual conversations to determine if there are any substantive unresolved issues.
 -
- 9. **Determine follow-up you will take to monitor actions.** You may want to schedule a follow-up meeting about two weeks afterwards to determine how everyone involved is doing.
- 10. **Determine what you'll do if the conflict goes unresolved.** If the conflict is causing a disruption in the department and it remains unresolved, you may need to explore other avenues. The director retains responsibility for resolving all conflicts. An External Facilitator may be appointed at this stage at the discretion of the director, with input from involved parties.