

# GETTING UN STUCK



**SESSION 4**  
HANDOUTS



# SESSION 4

## GETTING UNSTUCK



### Introduction

This session examines an essential approach that helps overcome an impasse and enables people to collaborate towards a resolution. The session considers the value of moving beyond the positional 'What I want' in relation to an issue by exploring 'The reasons why I want it' that underlie people's concerns. It also recognises that this becomes more challenging as the level of intensity escalates.

### Session Objectives

- To understand the role and potential of negotiation in problem-solving and breaking an impasse.
- To recognise the tendency to get entrenched in position-based negotiation, and the richer possibilities of negotiation based on underlying concerns.
- To develop basic skills in breaking an impasse that can be used in small-scale and large-scale disagreements and conflict.
- To reflect on participants' experience of conflict or disagreement, and the potential impact of using a principled negotiation approach to identify options for resolution.
- To touch on the idea of conflict escalation, and to recognise the limits of principled negotiation as an approach when tensions rise to a high temperature.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session participants will have:

- Practised identifying underlying concerns of positional statements.
- Experienced and articulated the layered nature of positional statements: positions, underlying concerns, and deeper needs.
- Reflected on the underlying concerns in an active disagreement or conflict in their own lives.
- Considered the basic elements of principled negotiation, and explored how it differs from position-based negotiation.
- Identified the stages of conflict escalation and considered the appropriate timing for practising principled negotiation.
- Worked to address a conflict (fictional or real example) by identifying underlying concerns, common ground, and potential options.
- Represented their key learning from the session in a creative way.

### Overview of Session Segments

Welcome:	Arrivals and introduction to this session
Way in:	Breaking an impasse with an orange
Pointer 1:	The layers of positional statements
Explore 1:	Identifying underlying concerns behind positional statements
Pointer 2:	Using principled negotiation to get unstuck
Explore 2:	Practising principled negotiation
Pointer 3:	Escalating tension and conflict dynamics
Review:	Looking back over the session
Feedback:	Completing written feedback

### Handouts

Handout 1:	Introduction and overview of Session 4
Handout 2:	Exploring underlying concerns
Handout 3:	Positional and principled negotiation
Handout 4:	St Michael's: a case study in church conflict
Handout 5:	St Michael's: case study outcomes
Handout 6:	Some strategies for exploring underlying concerns
Handout 7:	The escalation of conflict
Handout 8:	Feedback form for participants (for return to course leader)



# EXPLORING UNDERLYING CONCERNS



## Remember

A **position** = a person's *solution* to an issue, *what* they say they want to happen.

An **underlying concern** = a *reason* behind the position, *why* they want something to happen.

Positions are up front and easy to see. Underlying concerns are less obvious and more hidden.

1. Think about a disagreement, dispute or low-level conflict that you've been party to, whether in a home, work or church context. (It's helpful if it was primarily with only one or two other people).

- What was the **issue**?

- What was the **position you took** on the issue?

- What was the **position taken by the other person** on the issue?

2. Consider your own position, and that of the other person. Why did you want your stated outcome? Why did the other person want their stated outcome? What concerns would be satisfied by your respective preferred outcomes? Try to identify your **respective underlying concerns**.

YOUR UNDERLYING CONCERNS	OTHER PERSON'S UNDERLYING CONCERNS

**EITHER (IF THE ISSUE HAS BEEN RESOLVED)**

3. How was the issue eventually resolved? Was it **a mutually satisfactory outcome** for you and the other person? If it wasn't, in the light of the underlying concerns you identified, **can you now see any other outcomes which might have satisfied both of you?**

**OR (IF THE ISSUE IS STILL UNRESOLVED)**

4. Looking at the two sets of underlying concerns, **begin to generate some ideas for resolution which might address both sets of concerns:**

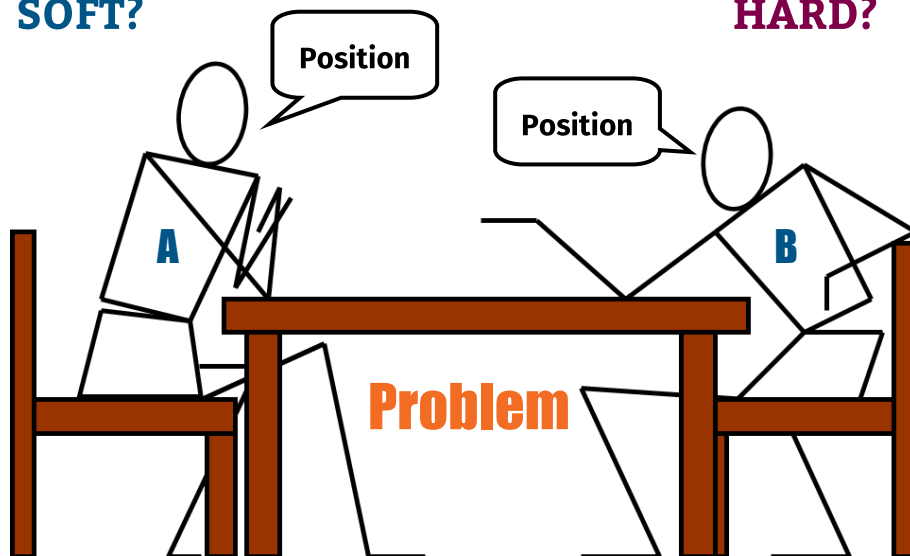
# POSITIONAL AND PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION



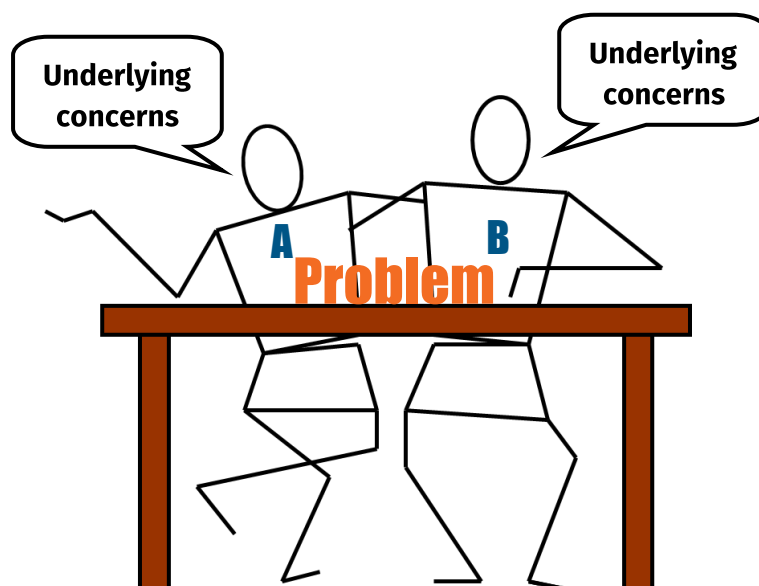
## POSITIONAL NEGOTIATION

**SOFT?**

**HARD?**



## PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION



Positional Negotiation		Principled Negotiation
SOFT	HARD	
Participants are friends	Participants are adversaries	Participants are problem-solvers
The goal is agreement	The goal is victory	The goal is a wise outcome, reached efficiently and amicably
Make concessions to cultivate the relationship	Demand concessions as a condition of the relationship	Separate out the people from the problem
Trust others	Distrust others	Proceed independent of trust
Change your position easily	Dig in your position	Focus on underlying concerns, not positions
Make offers	Make threats	Explore underlying concerns
Disclose your bottom line	Mislead as to your bottom line	Avoid needing a bottom line
Accept one-sided losses to reach agreement	Demand one-sided gains as the price of agreement	Propose options which benefit both parties
Search for the single answer: the one they can accept	Search for the single answer: the one you can accept	Develop various options to choose from; decide later
Insist on agreement	Insist on your position	Insist on using objective criteria
Try to avoid a contest of wills	Try to win a contest of wills	Try to reach a result based on standards that are independent of wills
Yield to pressure	Apply pressure	Reason and be open to reason; yield to principle, not to pressure

# ST MICHAEL'S

## A Case Study in Church Conflict



In the mid-1980s, St Michael's, an inner city church in the North of England, faced a conflict about Remembrance Sunday.

In St Michael's parish church hung the colours of the Home Guard, who formed part of the Civil Defence units during World War II. An annual Remembrance Day service was traditionally held at St Michael's, involving former members of the Home Guard and war veterans belonging to the Royal British Legion.

The regular worshipping congregation at St Michael's, an Anglican church, was largely composed of Christians who saw themselves within the evangelical tradition, and with strong social and political concern. Worship was fairly informal. A number of families with young children had joined the church. Many members of the church were concerned about nuclear weapons and war. In 1985 the Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine, had donned his flak jacket and visited Molesworth cruise missile base, affirming the Government's support for nuclear weapons. James, the Vicar of St Michael's, had joined Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament as a way of expressing his opposition to such weaponry.

On a normal Sunday, there was no conflict over the service. But how should Remembrance Sunday be handled? The old veterans, who otherwise never attended St Michael's, expected that it would be 'their day'. They would shuffle along with their old flags, and wanted the hymn 'O God our help in ages past' to be sung. The regular members of the congregation, especially those with children, considered that this ignored the present reality, and was an offence to their children, as they were excluded from the service. James, the Vicar, planned the service but with trepidation: what would the old veterans say?

After the service, during coffee time, Alfred, from the local branch of the British Legion asked if he could say something to everybody. Alfred was deeply upset by the service. The Vicar had said nothing about remembrance in his sermon. The Vicar wasn't wearing a poppy. The woman who led the intercessions had worn three poppies on her lapel, two red ones, but the third was white. The whole thing was an insult.

Members of the church reacted strongly. Some felt that Remembrance Sunday glorified war, and supported the approach that the Vicar, James, had taken. Others felt that the old veteran, Alfred, was wrong in his manner, but his message should be heard: he had been rude, but right.

# The Two Sides to the Dispute

St Michael's Church	The Home Guard and British Legion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evangelicals with social conscience and a strong commitment to peace issues.</li> <li>• Lots of children attend church, some without their parents.</li> <li>• Note: there's a large immigrant population in the area, most of whom are not Christians.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Michael's is 'the Garrison Church' for those who served in the Home Guard.</li> <li>• Longstanding tradition of holding 'their' service on Remembrance Sunday.</li> </ul>
TYPICAL QUOTES	TYPICAL QUOTES
<p>'Who are these people who invade our church once a year, with their gloomy songs, grim-faced procession, and old flags?'</p> <p>'We care more about peace NOW than about old war memories.'</p> <p>'They only show up on Remembrance Sunday: we never see them again during the rest of the year.'</p> <p>'We have to keep our children out of church that day. It excludes them and offends us.'</p> <p>'Whose church is this anyway? We're the ones who keep it going throughout the year, and it's our money that supports it.'</p>	<p>'These people just don't know what it was like. We were in the WAR. Many of our friends DIED.'</p> <p>'Pacifism? They're talking nonsense. This generation is too young to understand.'</p> <p>'For us, this is the most important day of the year.'</p> <p>'What's the matter with the Vicar? Why isn't he on our side? We have our rights, and last year's service was a disgrace. This is our garrison church.'</p> <p>'The Vicar didn't wear a red poppy at last year's service. What complete disrespect!'</p>
POSITION	POSITION
<p>'It's our church after all. They offend us and our children. Their annual service should be stopped.'</p>	<p>'It's our church, and we've always had our Remembrance services here.'</p>

# ST MICHAEL'S

## Case Study Outcomes



The Vicar, James, proposed a number of meetings with representatives from both sides, with the focus being on listening and understanding the experiences and perspectives of everyone involved. After this listening process, the group listed what they called their shared values.

### Shared Values (or Underlying Concerns)

We agree that we want the next Remembrance Day Service:

- To unite rather than divide the two groups.
- To give due space to remembrance of the past.
- To present a vision for peace.
- To welcome and include children as well as all of the visitors.
- To be an act of worship centred on God in Jesus Christ.

They then worked together on a service plan in the light of these common interests, and came up with the following:

### Service Plan

Procession into church.

Song – 'Kyrie Eleison'.

Procession led by three Iraqi children carrying flowers for the altar. Standards and wreaths carried by Home Guard and British Legion members.

Prayer for peace in the world.

Short testimonials:

- Former Home Guard veteran.
- British Legion veteran.
- Member of the church: an ex-Normandy infantryman.

Silence (two minutes at 11:00am).

Hymn – 'O God Our Help in Ages Past'.

Traditional readings and words of remembrance, presented by younger generation of parents.

Recessional: wreaths and flowers.

Recessional song: 'Where Have All the Flowers Gone?'

### Evaluation

Subsequently those involved evaluated the process they had engaged in, and said:

- We spent hours on this – but it was worth it.
- The rewards are much greater than just the one service.
- We tested our unity, and strengthened it through the process.
- We learned to listen to each other.
- We now respect one another more.
- We worked together and came out with something good.
- We found common ground on an issue of conflict in our city and society.
- We found that it's no solution to the problem to separate remembrance and peace: we brought them together so that we could hear what God is saying to the church.



# SOME STRATEGIES FOR EXPLORING UNDERLYING CONCERNS



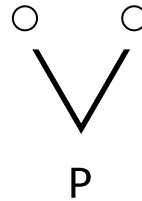
1. **Make a list of each side's underlying concerns**, as they surface. (This might also include identifying and listing deeper needs.) You could:
  - a. Ask each person to make their own notes on a sheet about what they can discern of possible underlying concerns, both for themselves and others. Then pool those reflections.
  - b. Check your understanding of each underlying concern as it emerges, then ask your co-facilitator to record each publicly on a flip chart sheet. Then post the list up on the wall so that the concerns are visible to everyone in the meeting.
  
2. **Re-frame positions as concerns**. So, for example:
  - a. 'The 8:00am service according to the Book of Common Prayer has to stop!'might become:
  - b. 'So you're concerned that the 8am BCP service isn't meeting many people's needs, and is taking up too much significant clergy time and resource?'
  
3. **Fish for more**: explore why a particular demand is being made, in order to draw out underlying concerns. For example, you might say:
  - a. 'Tell me more about why that is important to you.'Or
  - b. 'What effect or impact is the current situation is having on you?'Or
  - c. 'Help us understand how this will meet your objectives.'Or
  - d. 'What is at stake for you here?'

4. **Explore why a particular proposal is unacceptable**, in order to understand the problem better. You might ask something like:
  - a. 'Say more about what seems unfair or unworkable here.'Or
  - b. 'Help me to understand why this doesn't seem a good solution to you.'
  
5. **Highlight similar or shared concerns**. You might begin with:
  - a. 'You both seem concerned that...'Or, for example, you might affirm:
  - b. 'Better communication is really important to both of you, by the sound of it. Is that right?'
  
6. **Invite new ideas and solutions** which could address underlying concerns. You might say:
  - a. 'What thoughts or ideas do you have for meeting both your concerns and those of others?'
  
7. **Explore what would need to change**, in order to make a proposal acceptable. You might ask:
  - a. 'What would make you feel more positive about moving in this sort of direction with the issue we are facing?'Or
  - b. 'How would this proposal have to change for you to be able to live with it?'

# THE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT



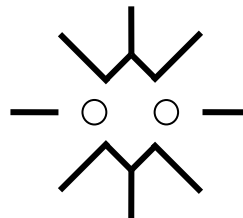
**Stage 1: Problem focused**



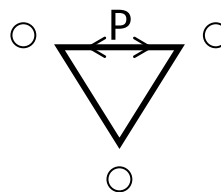
**Stage 2: Person focused**



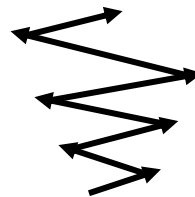
**Stage 3: Issue proliferation**



**Stage 4: Triangling**



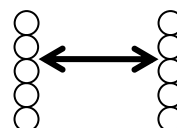
**Stage 5: Reacting to the last reaction**



**Stage 6: Hostility**



**Stage 7: Polarisation**





## SESSION 4

# GETTING UNSTUCK



### Participant Feedback Form

Please complete this form at the end of the session. Thank you.

**1. Please circle your evaluation of the following aspects of the session where 1=Unhelpful and 6=Very Helpful:**

A. The content provided in the session 1 2 3 4 5 6

B. The way the session enabled you to learn 1 2 3 4 5 6

C. How your leaders led and facilitated the session 1 2 3 4 5 6

D. How participants worked and interacted together 1 2 3 4 5 6

E. THE SESSION OVERALL 1 2 3 4 5 6

**2. What you most appreciated or found helpful about the session was:**

**3. One thing you see yourself applying or using from the session is:**

**4. What you would change or like to be different about the session (either the content, or the way learning was facilitated, or both) was:**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.

**GROUP:**

**COURSE LEADERS:**



## SESSION 4

# GETTING UNSTUCK



### Course Leader's Feedback Form

Please complete a form at the end of each session. Please respond to question 5 after reading your participants' feedback forms. Thank you.

**1. Please circle your evaluation of the following aspects of the session where 1=Unhelpful and 6=Very Helpful:**

A. Guidance provided in the Leader's Guide	1	2	3	4	5	6
B. PowerPoint slides, handouts, scripts, and other materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
C. Quality and appropriateness of the content	1	2	3	4	5	6
D. Process offered for presenting content and enabling learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
E. How you led and facilitated this session	1	2	3	4	5	6
F. How participants worked and interacted together in this session	1	2	3	4	5	6
G. THE SESSION OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6

**2. What you most appreciated or found helpful about the materials provided for you was:**

Thank you for taking time to complete this feedback form. Please then scan it as a PDF file, and email it to Bridge Builders:  
**bb@bbministries.org.uk**

Only send the course leaders' feedback form.

Bridge Builders will seek to improve Growing Bridgebuilders in the light of feedback from all the course leaders.

**COURSE LEADERS:**

**LOCATION:**

**GROUP SIZE:**

**TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS:**

**3. What you most struggled with in leading the session was:**

**4. What you would change or like to be different about the materials provided for you is:**  
**(Note: this could relate either to the content, or to the process for facilitating learning, or both)**

**5. Having read all the participants' feedback comments what you would most draw attention to is:**

**6. Any other comments:**

# SCRIPT FOR ESCALATING TENSION AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS



## Background to the Scenario

The Sunday School room was left messy by the youth group on Saturday night. In Take 1, the Sunday School Teacher and the Youth Worker meet to discuss problem. When things are not resolved, we see how the tension gradually escalates.

## Setting up the Scenario

Identify in advance two people to play the two characters, and give them a chance to rehearse the script. Explain that there will be a pause, and a short de-brief after each of the scripts. Make sure they're clear about the 'turning to their supporters' element of Take 7 (polarisation).

A third person is needed to play the non-speaking part of the minister. This might be taken by the group leader. You also need to designate some of the group of participants as supporters of the Sunday School Teacher, and others as supporters of the Youth Worker. (Neither group needs to speak, but is welcome to cast dirty looks at the other when the time comes.)

### TAKE 1. (PROBLEM FOCUSED)

- SST: 'Please can we could talk about the state of the Sunday School room, and how it is left after youth group meetings.'
- YW: 'Yes, I'm willing to do that. I'd also like to talk about our use of the space more generally. However, I'm in a real rush now: please can we fix another a time to meet and chat?'

### TAKE 2. (PERSON FOCUSED)

- SST: 'What is this with the state of our room? You don't seem to care about me, or show me any respect. You think it's no big deal to have to come in early to clean up before our Sunday School.'
- YW: 'You don't understand what today's teenagers are like. You don't realise they push till the last minute and I barely catch the last train home. You think cleaning up is more important than listening to them.'

### TAKE 3. (ISSUE PROLIFERATION)

- SST: 'Your careless attitude towards others comes out in how you sit at the back with the youth and laugh during the quiet time before worship.'
- YW: 'Talk about lack of respect for others: do you think I like it that our room has the walls plastered with childish posters? There isn't a square inch left for images that the youth might connect with. You don't care about helping them feel part of this church.'

#### TAKE 4. (TRIANGLING)

YW to Minister

'I'm feeling persecuted by the Sunday School Teacher who shares my room. I can't seem to do anything right. Has she always got her way around here? Do the rooms she uses suddenly become her private domain? I tell you, she's got some major issues that you need to deal with.'

#### TAKE 5. (REACTING TO THE LAST REACTION)

SST: 'So you went to the Minister? Well, I was then asked if I was facing any personal difficulties. That was a great way to try to shift the focus off your disrespect and sloppiness – making it look like I'm the one with the problems.'

YW: 'Disrespect you say – I'll tell you about how you disrespect other people – by demanding that everything be done exactly your way.'

SST: 'I suppose you think I'm looking for my way when all I want is a clean and tidy space. That isn't much to ask. If anyone's getting their own way around here it's the teenagers. The music in Sunday worship services is all focused on their tastes. Not to mention the amateur drama. It feels more like a youth club on Sunday morning, than a place where we meet God.'

YW: 'Well at least a youth club is more alive than the cold, lifeless, regimented place that you seem to want this church to be.'

#### TAKE 6. (HOSTILITY)

SST: 'I've had enough. I can't stand working with you any more.'

YW: 'The feeling is entirely mutual. I'd be glad to see the back of you.'

#### TAKE 7. (POLARISATION)

SST to supporting group:

'At least you understand what it's like, and what a really bad influence that Youth Worker is. I don't know why we're spending good money employing someone like that. It's a total waste. We need to raise the matter with the church leadership. I trust that you'll join me in signing my petition to them.'

YW to supporting group:

'At least you understand what it's like, and how I can't go on with that Sunday School teacher. I can't see any other way than to join The Big Church down the road. And their minister has told me that he'd welcome our youth joining them, as they're expanding their youth ministry. (Pause) Now, I don't want you to feel that you should leave too – but, of course I'd fully understand it if you did. And I'm sure the minister there would really welcome you also.'