



The Heart of Yew Conflict Resolution Strategy: Guardians' Role in Mental Health and Well-being

At The Heart of Yew, we strive to create a community rooted in respect, understanding, and compassion. As Guardians, responsible for the mental health and well-being of our members, it is crucial that we approach conflict resolution with care, sensitivity, and a commitment to fostering harmony within the group. This strategy outlines the steps and principles Guardians should follow to ensure conflicts are addressed effectively while prioritizing mental health and emotional safety.

Principles of Conflict Resolution

1. **Compassionate Listening:**

- Guardians should actively listen to all parties involved in a conflict without judgment or interruption. The aim is to ensure that everyone feels heard and understood.
- Listen for underlying emotions or concerns that may be driving the conflict, such as fear, anxiety, or past traumas.

2. **Neutrality and Non-Judgment:**

- Guardians must remain neutral, avoiding taking sides or making assumptions. Their role is to facilitate understanding and communication, not to place blame.
- Approach all conflicts with an open mind, acknowledging that multiple perspectives may coexist.

3. **Empathy and Emotional Support:**

- Show empathy and compassion to all members involved, recognizing that conflict can be emotionally challenging and may trigger mental health issues.
- Ensure that individuals feel emotionally safe, and offer support or resources if needed (e.g., grounding exercises, calming techniques, or access to mental health resources).

Steps for Conflict Resolution

1. **Initial Response:**

- **Calm the Situation:** If emotions are running high, Guardians should first seek to de-escalate the situation. This may involve inviting the individuals to step away from the group and take a few moments to breathe or reflect.

- **Private Discussion:** Arrange a private space where the parties involved can discuss the issue in a calm and supportive environment. Avoid addressing conflicts publicly unless necessary to ensure privacy and dignity.

2. Understanding the Root of the Conflict:

- **Identify Concerns:** Ask each person to explain their perspective and what they feel is the core issue. Encourage them to express their feelings and concerns honestly, using "I" statements to avoid blaming language.
- **Mental Health Considerations:** Be attentive to signs that the conflict may be linked to deeper mental health struggles, such as anxiety, depression, or past trauma. Offer appropriate mental health resources if necessary.

3. Facilitation of Dialogue:

- **Mediation:** Act as a mediator, helping each party communicate their needs and concerns clearly. Guardians should encourage mutual respect and keep the conversation focused on finding a resolution rather than revisiting past grievances.
- **Finding Common Ground:** Help both parties explore shared goals or values that may guide them toward compromise or understanding. Reframe the conflict in terms of learning and growth for all involved.

4. Exploring Solutions:

- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Encourage both parties to suggest possible solutions, and help them explore options that prioritize the well-being of everyone involved.
- **Focus on Future Actions:** Rather than dwelling on the past, emphasize actions that can improve the situation moving forward, promoting accountability and commitment to positive change.

5. Mental Health Support:

- **Offer Resources:** If a member's mental health has been impacted by the conflict, offer information on available resources, such as counselling, support groups, or mindfulness practices within the community.
- **Follow-up Care:** Check in with individuals after the conflict has been resolved to ensure their emotional well-being is being maintained and offer on-going support if needed.

Guardian Responsibilities

1. Creating a Safe Space:

- Guardians are responsible for fostering an environment where members feel safe to express themselves and engage in conflict resolution without fear of judgment or exclusion.

2. Recognizing Signs of Mental Distress:

- Guardians should be trained to recognize signs of mental health struggles, such as withdrawal, excessive anger, or signs of trauma, and respond appropriately by offering support or connecting individuals with resources.

3. Confidentiality:

- Guardians must maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive personal information shared during conflict resolution. Breaching this trust can further harm mental health and damage relationships within the community.

4. Boundary Setting:

- Guardians should be aware of their own emotional boundaries and mental health, seeking support if needed. They are encouraged to ask for assistance or refer to another Guardian if a conflict feels too personal or difficult to mediate.

5. Training and Education:

- Guardians will regularly receive training on mental health awareness, conflict resolution techniques, and compassionate communication to ensure they are equipped to handle conflicts with care and understanding.

Mediation Escalation

1. Involvement of Head/Additional Guardians or Directors:

- If the conflict is complex or the emotional intensity is high, or there is a safety concern for the members, or to the person with conflict a second Guardian/head guardian or Director may be called upon to co-facilitate the discussion, offering additional perspectives and support.

2. External Mediation:

- If internal mediation is not sufficient to resolve the conflict, The head Guardian or Director may suggest mediation external of the event.
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Conclusion

By adhering to this conflict resolution strategy, Guardians of The Heart of Yew ensure that conflicts are addressed in a way that honours the mental health and well-being of all community members. The aim is to resolve disputes with compassion, maintain emotional safety, and foster a spirit of understanding and growth within the community.

However the Heart of Yew Directors have the right to intervene at any time during the process, if there are concerns greater than the given conflict, if, there is deemed a safety risk to members, property or said persons.

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