



Communi-Tea

November 8, 2023

**Conflict Styles and Managing
Expectations of Professionalism,
Courtesy and Respect at WHOI**



WHOI Land Acknowledgement

We collectively acknowledge that Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution is located on the unceded ancestral and contemporary land of the Wôpanâak (Wampanoag people). We acknowledge the Mashpee, Aquinnah, Herring Pond, and Assonet Wampanoag Tribes as the original stewards and protectors of this land and surrounding waters. We recognize the perpetuated detrimental effects that systemic governmental oppressions have had on indigenous communities as a result of colonization. By offering this land acknowledgement we accept our responsibility to understand this history, invest in reconciliation, and build accountable partnerships with these communities.

<https://www.whoi.edu/who-we-are/about-us/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>

Communi-Tea Guidelines

- Be respectful of the others in the room.
 - Be aware of your speaking volume.
 - Use others' correct pronouns and names. If you make a mistake, correct yourself.
 - Refrain from using offensive language.
- Discuss ideas, not people. Please, no personal attacks.
- Do not use names or personal identifiers when talking about past experiences.
- Try to give everyone at your table the opportunity to speak.
- When you share what you learn here with coworkers and friends, please respect everyone's privacy and avoid using personal identifiers.

Circle Process for Discussions

The Circle is an ancient form of meeting that has gathered human beings into respectful conversations for thousands of years.

- Circle is a shape where everyone can see and hear each other.
- Circle is a group process that supports every voice into collaborative decision-making.
- Circle is an experience of sharing story, inviting diverse thinking, and encouraging creative problem solving.

Key elements:

- **Leadership rotates** – allow everyone an opportunity to speak.
- **Do not interrupt** – the person speaking has the floor.
- **Speak with intention** – noting what has relevance to the conversation.
- **Listen with attention** – respectful of the learning process for all members.
- **Tend the well-being of the group** – remaining aware of the impact of our contributions.



Conflict Management Styles : Formal Boundaries in an Informal Space

Alicia Booker, Ph.D.
WHOI Ombuds



OBJECTIVES

Identify

Identify your
primary conflict
style(s)

Learn

Learn when each
style is most
appropriate

Learn
about

Learn about the
challenges of
each style

SESSION OVERVIEW

Program Goal: To build capabilities and confidence to productively manage conflict.

Assumptions:

- Conflict is inevitable in daily interactions.
- Conflict is necessary for organizational change.
- Conflict can promote innovative ideas.
- Conflict can lead to positive outcomes.
- You can learn strategies to effectively address conflict.
- You can address conflict without making things worse.

LINE GAME!



What is your conflict management style?

Conflict Management Styles Assessment

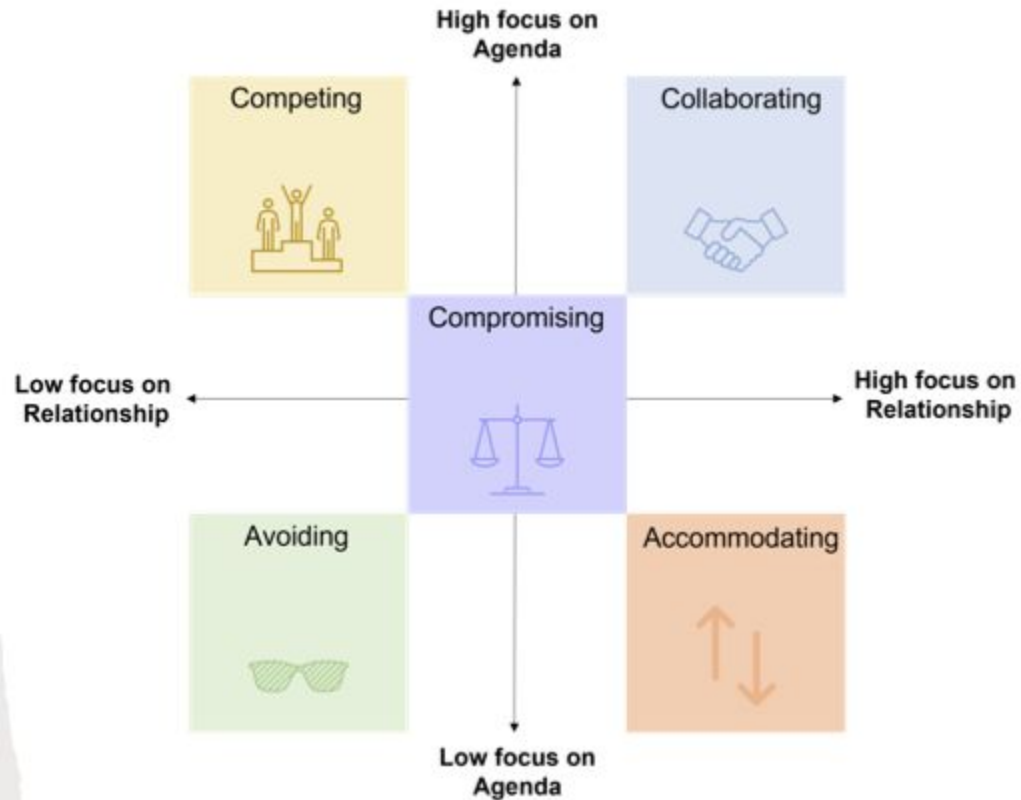
Please **CIRCLE ONE** response that best describes you. Be honest, this survey is designed to help you learn about your conflict management style. There are no right or wrong answers!

Name _____

Date _____

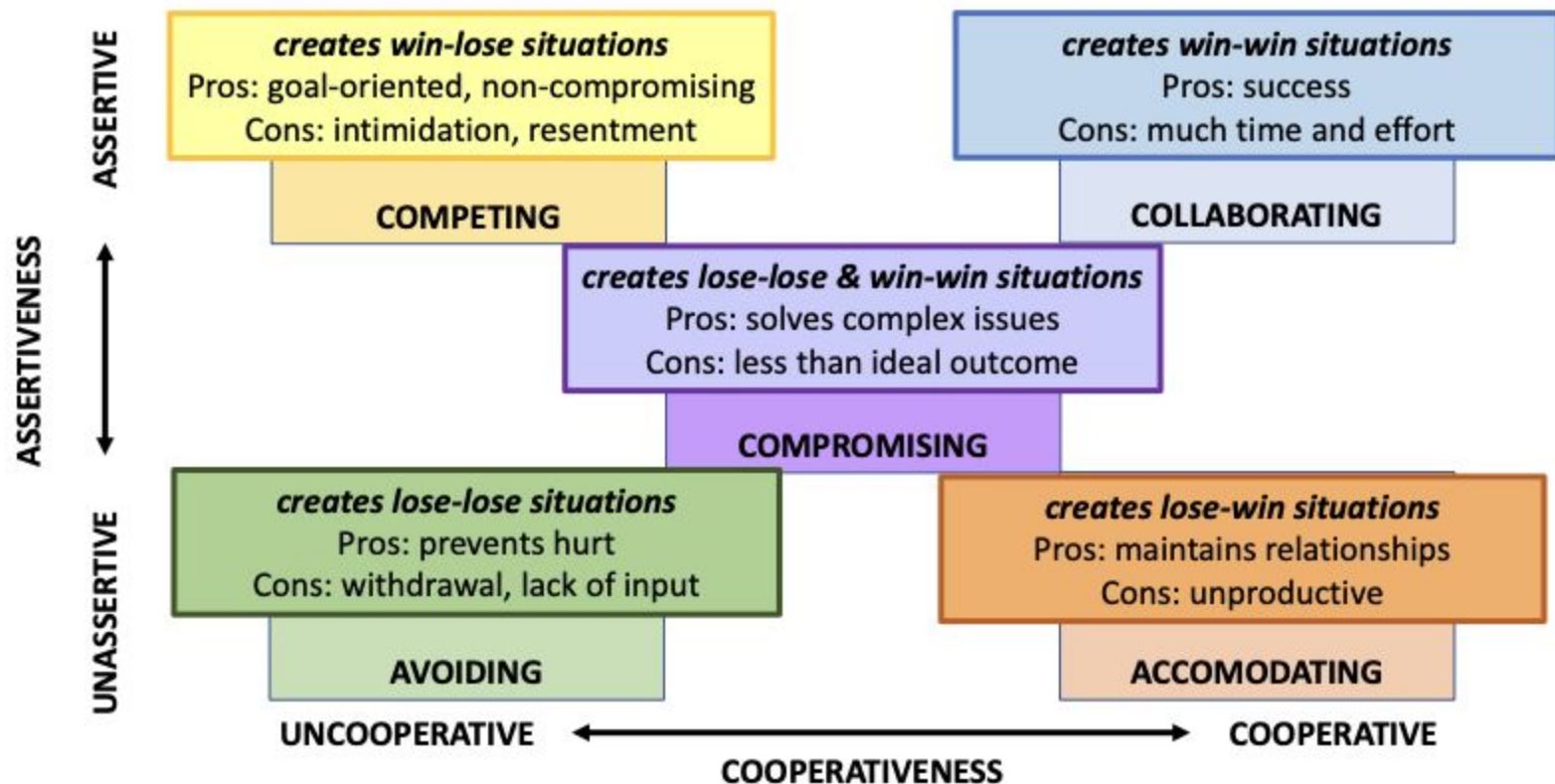
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.	1	2	3	4
2. I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations.	1	2	3	4
3. I try to meet the expectations of others.	1	2	3	4
4. I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.	1	2	3	4
5. When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.	1	2	3	4
6. When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.	1	2	3	4
7. I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved?	1	2	3	4
8. I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.	1	2	3	4
9. I find conflicts exhilarating. I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.	1	2	3	4
10. Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious.	1	2	3	4
11. I try to meet the wishes of my friends and family.	1	2	3	4
12. I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.	1	2	3	4
13. To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.	1	2	3	4
14. I may not get what I want but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace.	1	2	3	4
15. I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.	1	2	3	4

5 Styles of Conflict Management



5 Styles of Conflict Management

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument -- Slide courtesy of Sandra Haudek, PhD



Your results...



ASSERTIVENESS

ASSERTIVE

UNASSERTIVE

COMPETING

COLLABORATING

COMPROMISING

AVOIDING

ACCOMODATING

UNCOOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVENESS

COOPERATIVE

Accommodating
:
Advantages
Disadvantages
Best Used
When

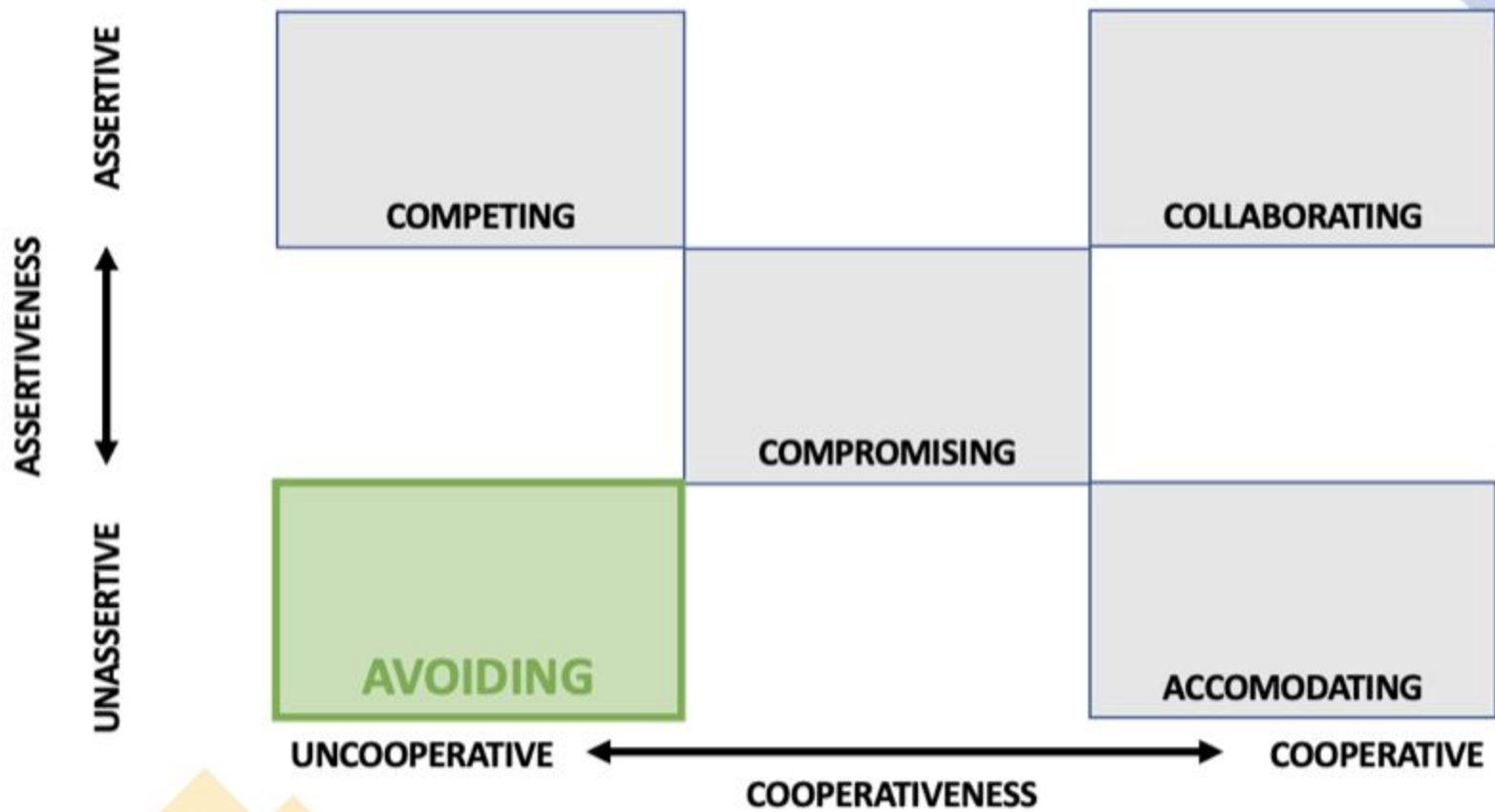
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	BEST USED WHEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooperative / Flexible• Contributes goodwill• Conflict resolved quickly• Team player	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ignores own goals• Unassertive / Gives in• Taken advantage of	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is unimportant• You're outmatched• Time is limited• The relationship is of paramount importance• Harmony or stability is highly valued

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Advantages
Disadvantages
Best Used
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Avoiding:
Advantages
Disadvantages
Best Used When

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May help relationships• Buys time to strategize• Allows "cooling off"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict festers• Uncooperative• Unassertive• Gives in / Gives up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakes are high• Confrontation is risky• Little chance of winning• Costs outweigh benefits• Need more information• Others can resolve it• Factors demand delay

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UNCOOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVENESS

COOPERATIVE

Compromising:
Advantages
Disadvantages
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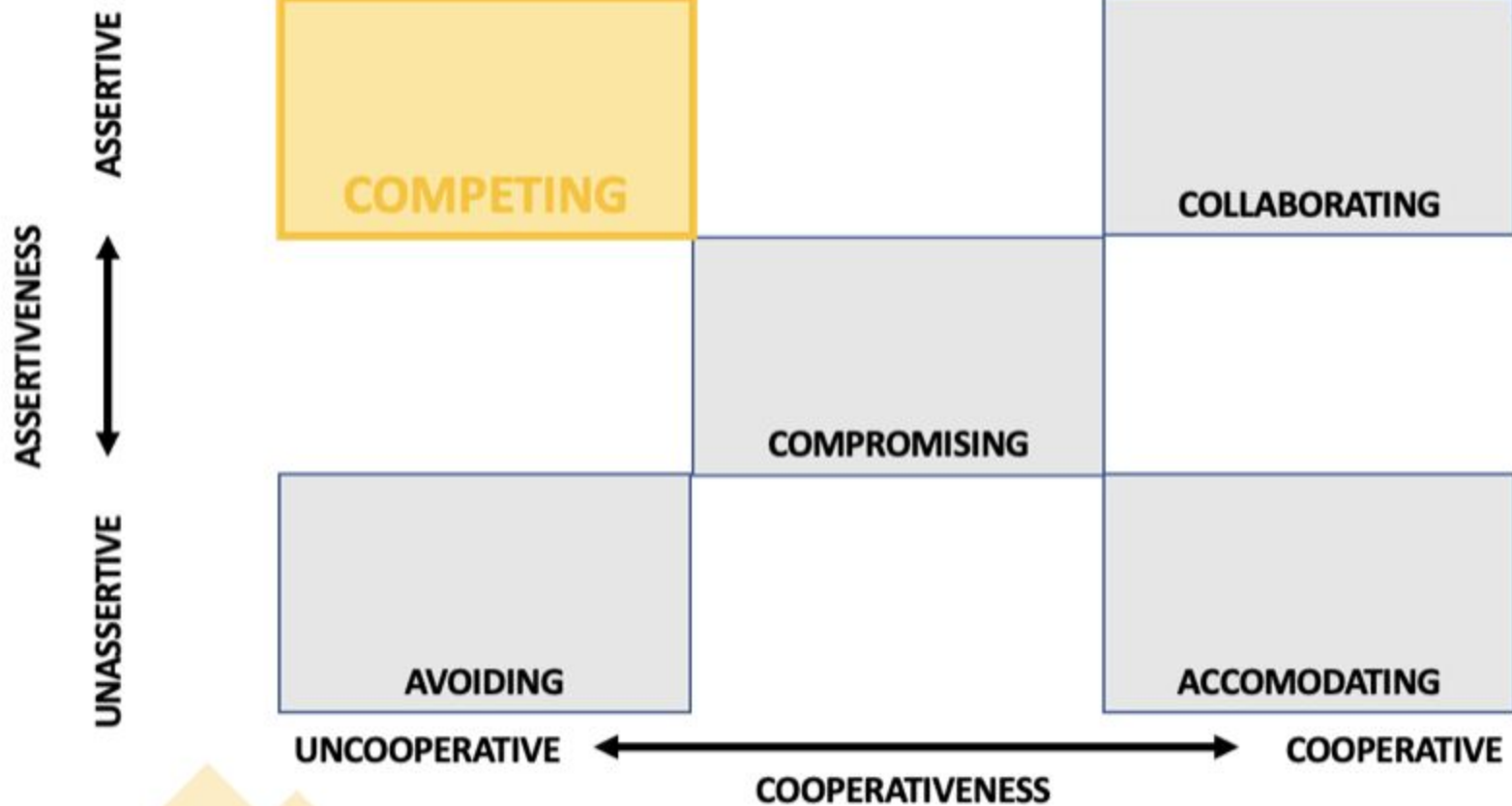
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain relationships• Openness to bargaining• Conflict addressed• Mini-wins / Mini-losses• Lowers tension & stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcomes not ideal• Nobody fully satisfied• Unmet needs• Conflict reemerges• Can prevent creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matter is moderate• Best solution is unclear• People at standstill• Temporary fix is needed• Time not an issue

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly goal oriented• Quick solutions• Take firm stand / clear• Inspires confidence• Sparks motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Damage relationships• Threatening/intimidating• Others' needs unmet• Produces enemies• Further conflict likely• Can result in burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency, crisis, sport• Differences can't be met• Others are competing• Decision is vital• Resolution is URGENT• Unpopular decisions must be implemented

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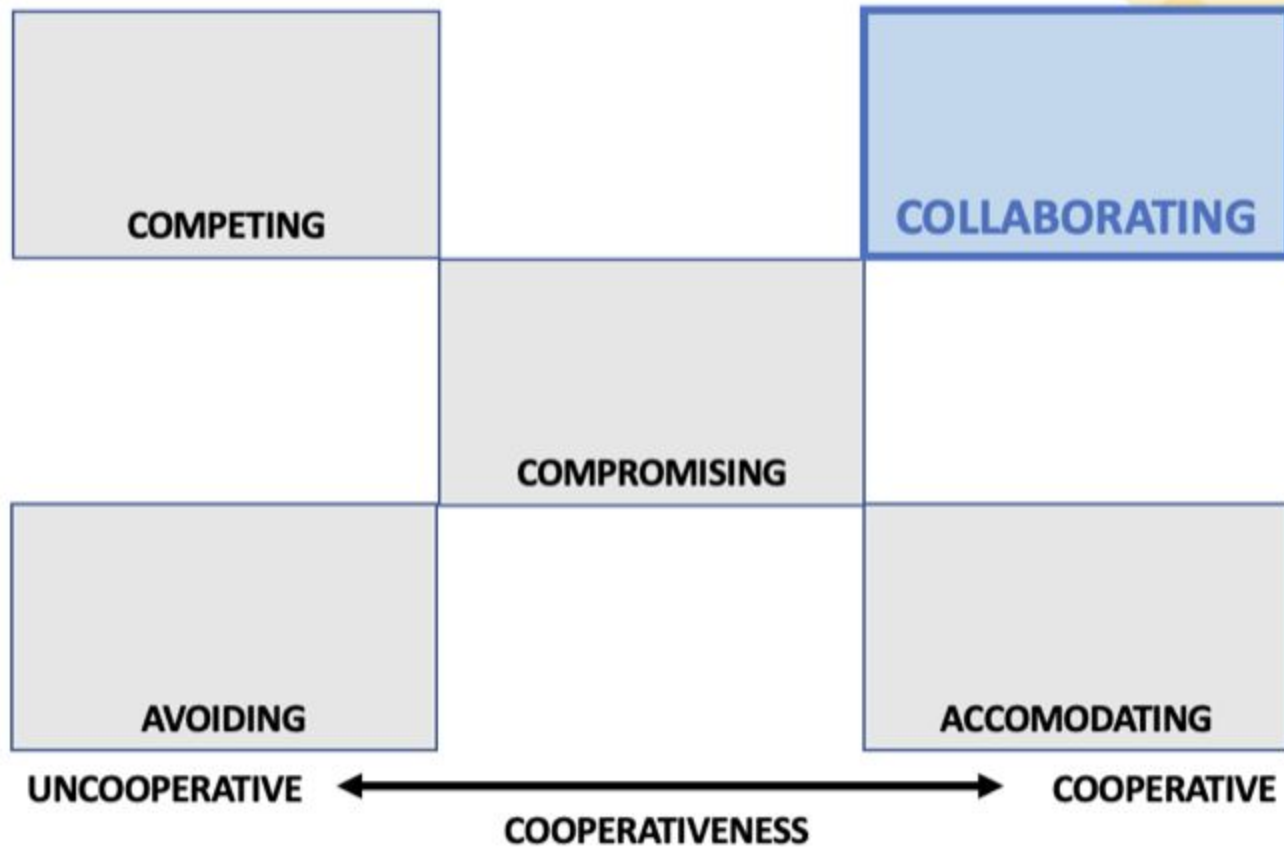
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Collaborating:
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Self Reflection

Do you agree with your results?



Self Reflection

Were you surprised? Why?



Self Reflection

How does this information fit with your past experiences / conflicts?



Break-out Discussions

- A number of topics are provided in the handout for you to discuss
- Discuss at least a couple of those topics in your group
- Please select a person to report back to the full group at the end