

Conflict Definitions

Disagreement means that there is a lack of consensus or agreement; there is a difference of opinions.

i.e. we disagree about which pizza types and toppings are the best

Conflict is a disagreement stemming from deeply-rooted opposing wants and needs; there could also be opposing interests, values, and directions. This is often what a disagreement looks like within collaboration.

i.e. we disagree about which pizza types and toppings are the best AND we need to order food together. There is also a max budget for the order, which means we need to compromise.

Harm is when the actions of a person (or people) or system(s) has a negative impact on a person (or people) that creates unmet needs and obligations. This is often an abuse of power. Keep in mind, there are always power differences, but we can strive to negotiate them equitably and consensually.

i.e. I know your dietary needs and keep ordering food you cannot eat consistently, especially if you do not have resources to order your own food.

Hurt is the activation of a previous harm.

i.e. if you have an open cut that I brush against, I did not create that wound but did activate it. However, if I knew you had an open wound and intentionally hurt it, that would be harmful.

Identifying what is harm versus hurt is not a question of the validity of the pain of the experience, but rather the degree of responsibility the actor has for the pain their actions caused. Most often, both hurt and harm are present at the same time and it is up to us to discern what facet of what we are feeling is which thing.

Sharing Power

*"In general, **power-over** oversteps the responsibility each person has to themselves or their collective; someone decides about something that is not theirs to decide. The flip side of this also exists: if an individual (or a collective) doesn't step into their individual power and defers to the others, it's **power-under**. That's when someone doesn't use their power or believes/pretends that they don't have any power. That's when people complain instead of acting, when they cave in or sacrifice themselves.*

Power under and power over are two sides of the same coin and part of a power game that is out of balance...Collective power relies on everyone using the power they have. Both power-under and power-over weaken the collective..." - Ted Rau in [Collective Power: Patterns for a Self Organized Future](#)

"[P]ower-under ... is not the absence of power but a particular expression of it. It is the power to manipulate, to maintain control of the victim role, to create a context of guilt and obligation in which others respond to our needs" - Steven Wineman in [Power Under: Trauma + Nonviolent Social Change](#)

Centered Accountability

*“Our social norms tend toward polarization, blame, or litigation rather than a nuanced ability to hold complexity and encourage accountability, mending, and justice. **Centered accountability** can hold complexity--both be accountable and know what is not our responsibility, while staying connected and in relationship. Often we will lean toward being under- and over-accountable.*

Over-accountability is taking on blame, responsibility, and fault automatically. It is taking this on for people and situations that we may have wanted to be able to affect (or want to now), yet did not or do not have the power to do so.

Under-accountability is avoidance of, dodging, deflecting, and/or denying accountability. We are under-accountable when we avoid affecting things within our spheres of influence, or don't face mistakes and impacts we have had with good intent and responsibility.” - Staci Haines in [The Politics of Trauma](#)

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