

# Conflict Coaching Cheat Sheet

## Avoiding

*They haven't talked to the other person and are hesitant or unwilling to do so.*

Coaching Focus:

- Address specific fears and play out worst-case scenarios
- Focus on how addressing directly can help the relationship
- Come up with specific language to start the conversation, describe the issue, and show care

Coaching Questions:

- How will this continue to impact you if nothing changes?
- What are some good things that could come from having this conversation?
- What are you most afraid will happen? If that happened, what would you do?
- If the situation were reversed and they were bringing up this issue, how would you want to be approached? Do you think they have similar preferences?
- What question(s) could you ask to start the conversation?
- What can you do if you feel the conversation starting to get heated or unproductive?

## Assuming

*They assume full understanding of a situation and a person.*

Coaching Focus:

- Encourage curiosity
- Introduce the possibility of new information and other explanations / experiences
- Share impact, ask about (instead of assuming) intent

Coaching Questions:

- What would you like to better understand about this situation? How could that help you or change how you approach it?

- How would [the other person] describe what's going on?
- What do you think [other person] would need for this issue to be resolved well?
- Can you help me understand how you've connected that X means Y?
- Is it possible that there's another explanation / there's more to the story / that doesn't necessarily mean what you think it does?
- How would you share the impact of this issue on you, without commenting on why you think they're doing it? (examples below)
  - *Assuming Intent: When you leave the door unlocked when no one's home, I feel like you don't care about me or my stuff getting stolen.*
  - *Sharing Impact: When the door is unlocked when no one's home, I feel scared that someone will steal my stuff. A few times this week, I've felt so anxious about it that I came back in the middle of the day to check if the door was locked.*

## Antagonizing

*They believe that the roommate is the problem.*

*Coaching Focus:*

- Separate the person and the problem
- Normalize complexity of motivations, intentions, etc.
- Explore contributors to a problem, rather blame or fault

*Coaching Questions:*

- What could be a rational or positive reason that would lead them to act like this?
- If you were to lead with saying [their personalized description of the problem], how do you think they would react?
- How could you phrase the issue in a way that they would agree with?
- If I asked [the other person], how do you think they would describe what's going on?
- What are some things you could do to demonstrate that you want to work with them to address the issue?
- Beyond [the other person], what else could be contributing to this issue? [circumstances, other people, environment, etc.]
- Are there any ways that you might potentially be contributing to how things are going, even if it's not on purpose?