Course Description and Objectives
This course is designed for those who desire greater nuance in addressing interpersonal conflict. We will examine how to navigate highly challenging interactions in work, home and public life.

Through this course participants will learn specific techniques for addressing misunderstandings, establishing boundaries, addressing offensive behavior, managing power differences and preventing, diffusing, and settling conflict. Participants will learn the distinction between conflict management and conflict resolution, and will learn how to ask effective and creative questions, identify discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal messages, and distinguish between what people say and what they might mean.

Through class discussions, participation in role plays and case studies, viewing example video clips and TED Talks, and receiving feedback, students will develop a greater understanding of the behind-the-scenes rules that can drive people’s communication behavior, and will learn how to respond most effectively and productively.

Assignments

Readings
For this course I chose readings that are interesting, relevant and useful, including very new, forward-looking articles and book excerpts. Many foundational and seminal readings in the field of Communication are also included in the reading list.

Options for Self-Reflection Paper
There will be one 3 to 5 page paper, due during the 6th week of class. In this paper you will address either a past or a current conflict in your life. Details will be handed out during the third class period.

One Class Presentation
At the end of the quarter, you will share with the class at least two concepts that you have found particularly relevant and useful. I will provide you with basic information on how to present information in a cogent and coherent manner. Your presentation will be two to three minutes.

Class Policies
1) Most classes will be recorded, but to get the full benefit from this class – such as synchronous feedback on in-class exercises and sessions – you must attend live from start to finish 7 of the 8 classes and complete all of the assignments in order to receive credit for the course. The recordings are available for those who miss class and want to see what was discussed, but they do not substitute for missed classes. FYI, students can request at any time that any particular sharing not be recorded for privacy purposes.

2) During class, please turn off all notifications and cell phones, and please completely refrain from text-messaging. I know this can be challenging, but considering the nature of this course, being fully present will help everyone get the most out of the course – particularly you!

3) Please log in to class at least five minutes before it is set to begin.
COURSE CALENDAR

(You should have the following reading/homework assignments completed by the date listed. Note: Due dates, assignments, and topics may change during the quarter).

**Week One**
Intro class and selves; Definition of Conflict and Its Consequent Approaches; Listening lecture and exercises; Grice’s Maxims
Read: The Art of Listening; Characteristics of Effective Listening
TED Talk: Julian Treasure – Five Ways to Listen Better

**Week Two**
Types of Conflict; Langue and Parole as Applied to Misunderstandings; Boundaries and Capacity
Read: CMM Theory Handout

**Week Three**
The Seeds of Conflict; Content and Relational Messages; Identity and Conflict
Read: Direct versus Indirect Comm; Searle’s Speech Act Theory; Vertical vs Lateral Thinking (Welcome Chance Intrusions); Content and Relational Comm article
TED Talk: John Gottman

**Week Four**
Attribution Theory; Perception; Stories We Tell About Our Conflicts
Read: Attribution Theory Summary; Motivational Interviewing Ch. 1; Perception Chapter
Storyboarding a Conflict Exercise

**Week Five**
Judgment and Praise, Attribution Theory cont.; Asking Questions
Read: Judgment article; Two Praise articles; Question Typology Handout; Circular Questioning Handout
TED Talk: Brene Brown – The Power of Vulnerability

**Week Six**
Conflict and Power; How to Deal With, and Give, Criticism
Read: Managing Conflict in Relationships; Asserting Yourself; Getting to Yes; Circular Questioning revisited
TED Talk: William Ury – The Third Side (Dealing with Public Incivility)
Video: Power Critique
SELF-REFLECTION PAPER DUE

**Week Seven**
Non-Verbal Communication; Apologizing and Forgiving
Read: Non-Verbal Communication; Motivational Interviewing Ch. 3; Two Apology articles; Nine Steps to Forgiveness
Video: Forgiveness

**Week Eight**
Presentations
Course Wrap-Up

Full reference list provided to those enrolled in the course after the third week.

Please note: this class cannot be taken for a letter grade.