

Keeping Your Self-Respect During Conflicts Using the FAST Technique

Objective

To increase your self-respect during interpersonal conflicts using the FAST technique.

You Should Know

Do you sometimes feel that you are not true to yourself during arguments? Do you ever feel that you are not true to your values when confronted by others?

The FAIR technique can help you achieve more positive outcomes when you find yourself in conflict with others and will help you maintain a sense of self-respect.

FAIR is an acronym for:

- be **F**air
- no **A**pologies
- **S**tick to your values
- be **T**ruthful

Be fair. Being fair involves treating yourself and others in an evenhanded and nonjudgmental way while focusing on the facts.

No apologies. Over-apologizing erodes self-respect. Avoid saying, "I'm sorry," if you have nothing for which to apologize. Apologies imply you are wrong or made a mistake. Avoid apologizing for making a request, having an opinion, or disagreeing. Unwarranted or inappropriate apologizing reduces your self-confidence. In some cases, it is appropriate to apologize, so take responsibility by saying you are sorry.

Stick to your values. Avoid compromising your values just to be liked, avoid conflict, or get what you want. Stand up for what you believe in. Your integrity remains intact when your actions match your values. Sometimes you might be tempted to compromise your integrity to get what you want.

Be Truthful. Avoid dishonest behaviors, such as exaggeration, manipulation, or intentional deception. How can you be honest when expressing that something does not work for you? Be gentle, yet firm, as you clearly communicate your wants or needs.

During conflict, expect others to treat you as you would treat them. Treat others fairly and expect fairness in return. Avoid over-apologizing, and treat others with respect, honesty, kindness, and patience.

What to Do

When dealing with a confrontation or conflict, stay true to yourself. In the past, you might have felt you needed to accommodate someone else and ignore your own needs, but this likely

created stress and additional tension. To maintain your integrity and work toward compromise, trying using the FAST technique.

Think about a situation where you can apply the FAST process. Describe in detail.

When you have compromised your integrity in the past, how did you feel about yourself?

What can you do in this current situation that will cause you to feel good about yourself tomorrow?

What can you do to stay fair in this situation?

How can you express empathy for the other person's views or opinions?

If something is conflicting with your morals or values, avoid giving in or compromising your integrity. In the situation described above, what are values you are going to protect?

Do you anticipate you will have the urge to be dishonest? How can you resist that urge?

In the next week or so, use the following chart to keep track of any situations when you use the FAST process. Describe the situation, with whom you had a confrontation or conflict, the FAST skills you used, and the outcome.

Situation/ With whom?	What was the conflict about?	What FAST skills did you use?	What was the outcome?

Reflections on This Exercise

What parts of the FAST technique worked well for you?

What was the main obstacle you encountered practicing this exercise?

If you struggled with certain aspects, whom can you talk with to review what went well and what did not go well? How would you like to go about asking them for help?

Which FAST skill helped you the most? Explain.

What else can you do to increase your self-respect?

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?
