# Everyday Collaborative Conflict Resolution

## A Quick-Study Tutorial

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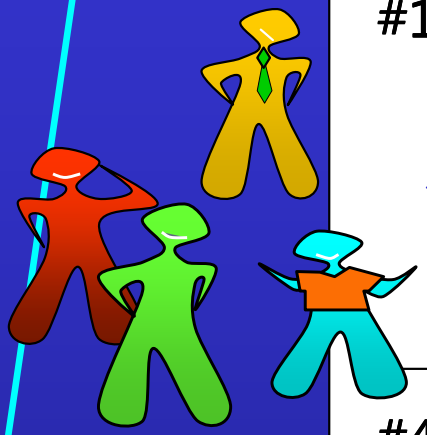
*Hi. I'm going to guide you through a quick tutorial in collaborative conflict resolution with the help of my friends over there.*

*Let's make it real. Think of a recent dispute. Take out a piece of paper & mark it in quadrants as shown. Write the issue in #1. Click to the next slide when you're ready.*



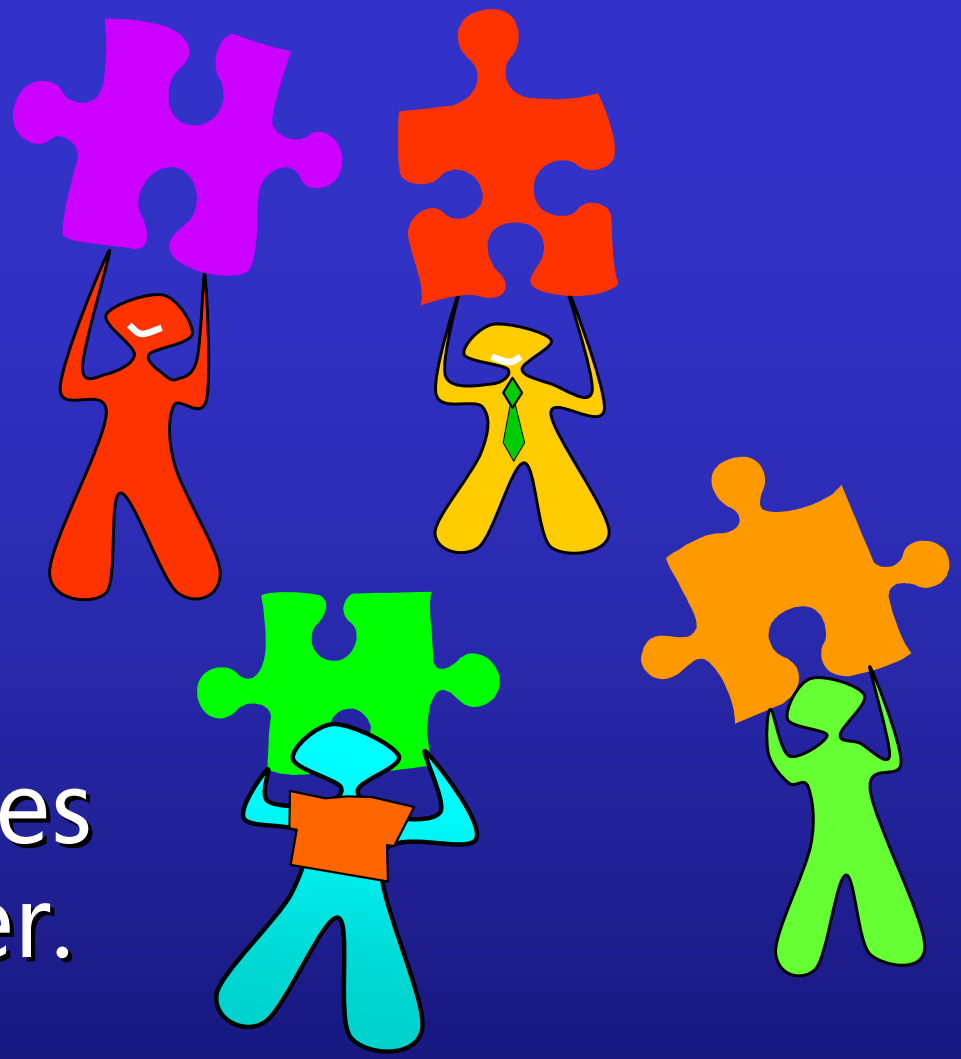
| #1 Issue in Dispute | #2 Positions |
|---|---|
| *Write the issue here* | |
| #4 Issue Reframed | #3 Concerns |

*If no immediate conflict comes to mind, think of the last time you decided to go out to eat with a spouse or a friend & could not agree on a place. Tension?*

Conflict
is like a puzzle.

Every party
brings a piece.

The key is
discovering the pieces
to put them together.



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Opportunityisnowhere!

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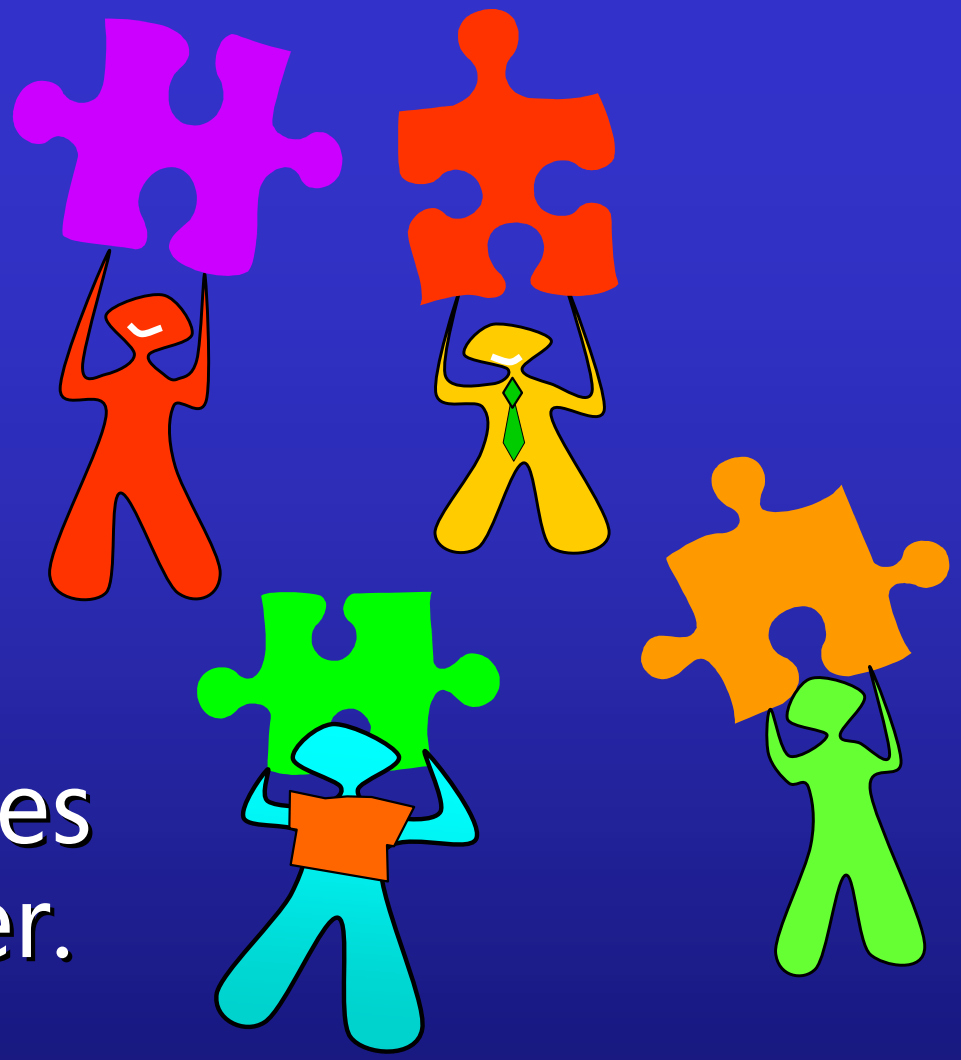
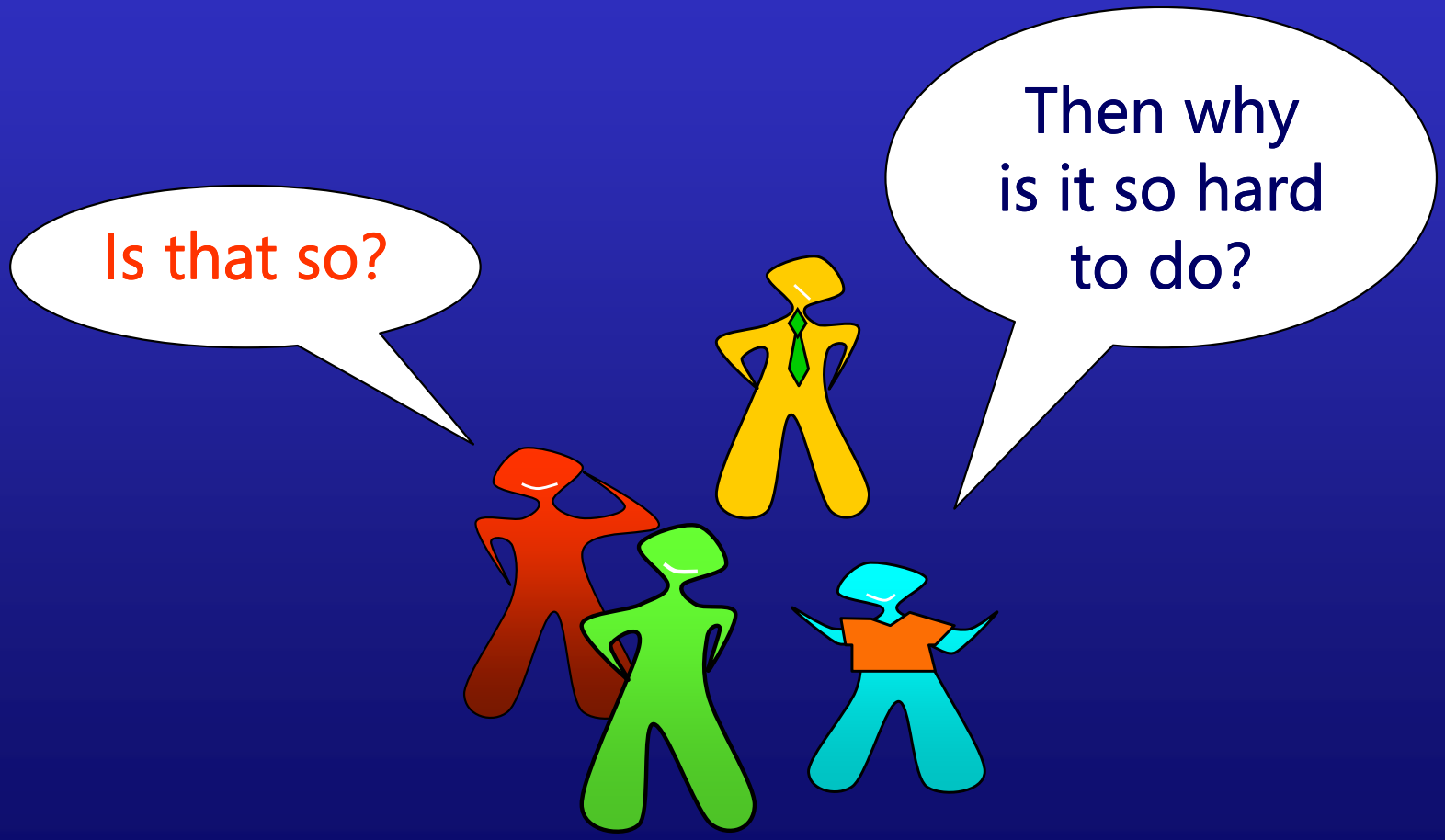


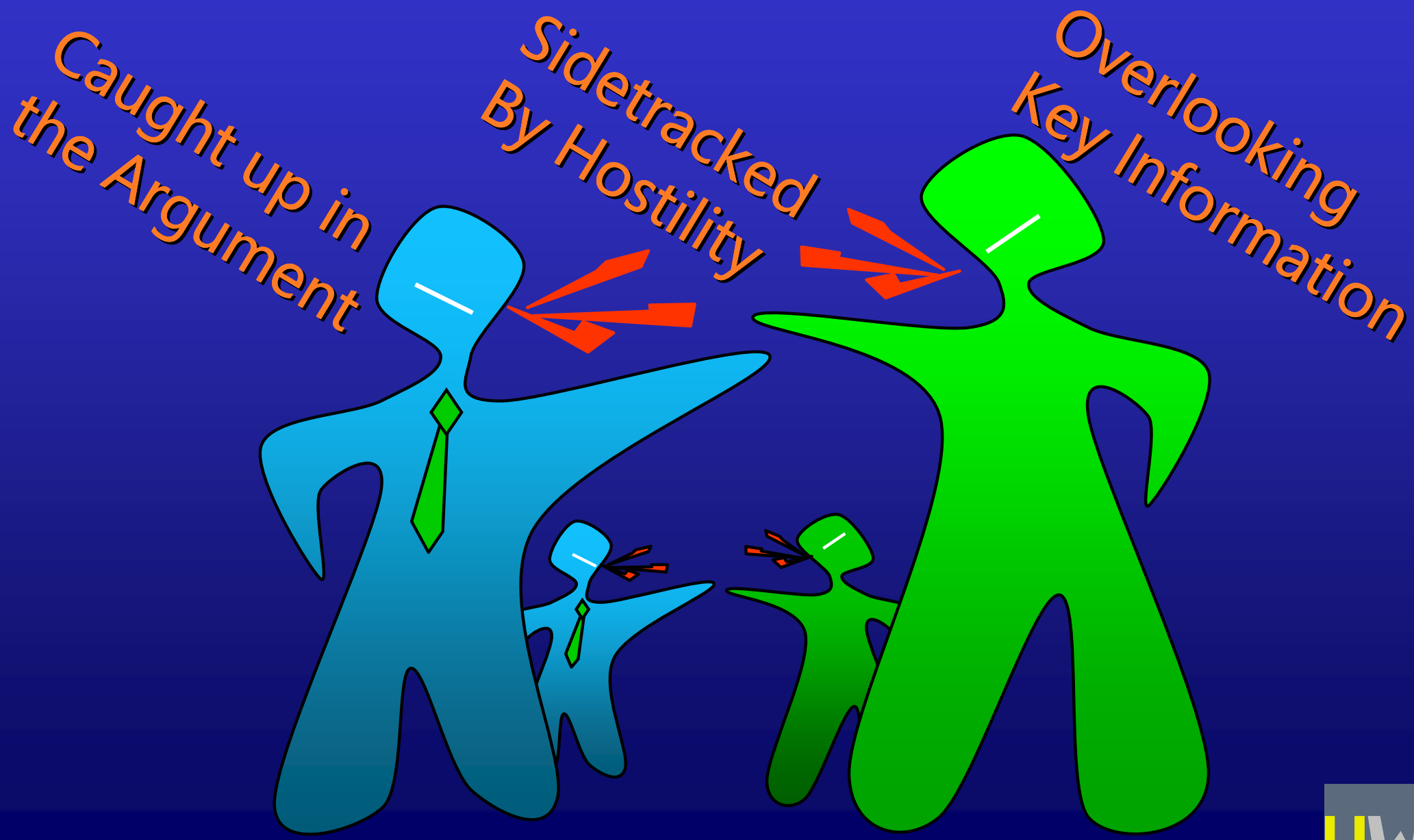
Success is in the conversation!

Opportunity is now here!

# Many conflicts can be resolved in a way that works for everyone.



# Because people block progress…



# People argue from Positions

**Position**

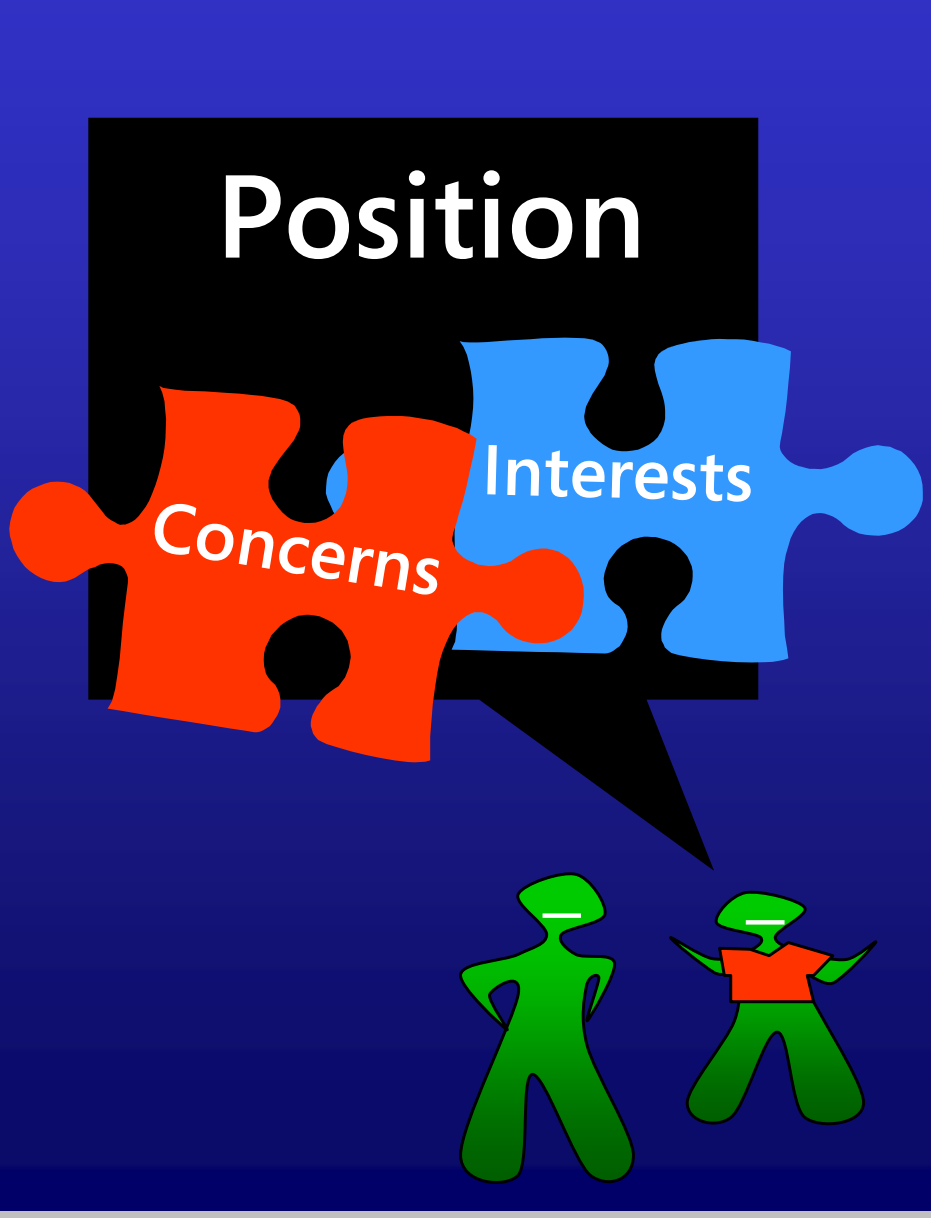
This is what should happen.

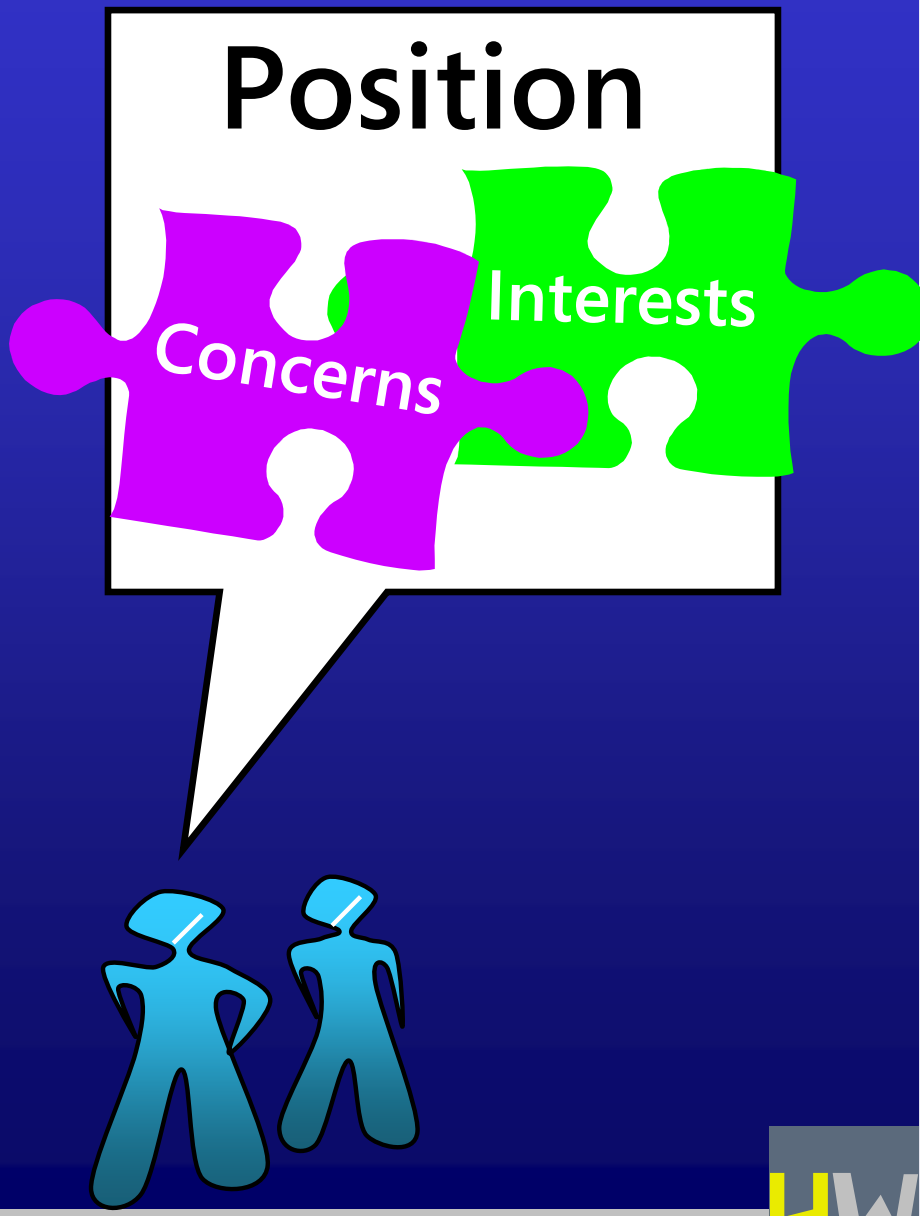
**Position**

*Are you crazy?!! No, we should do this. . .*

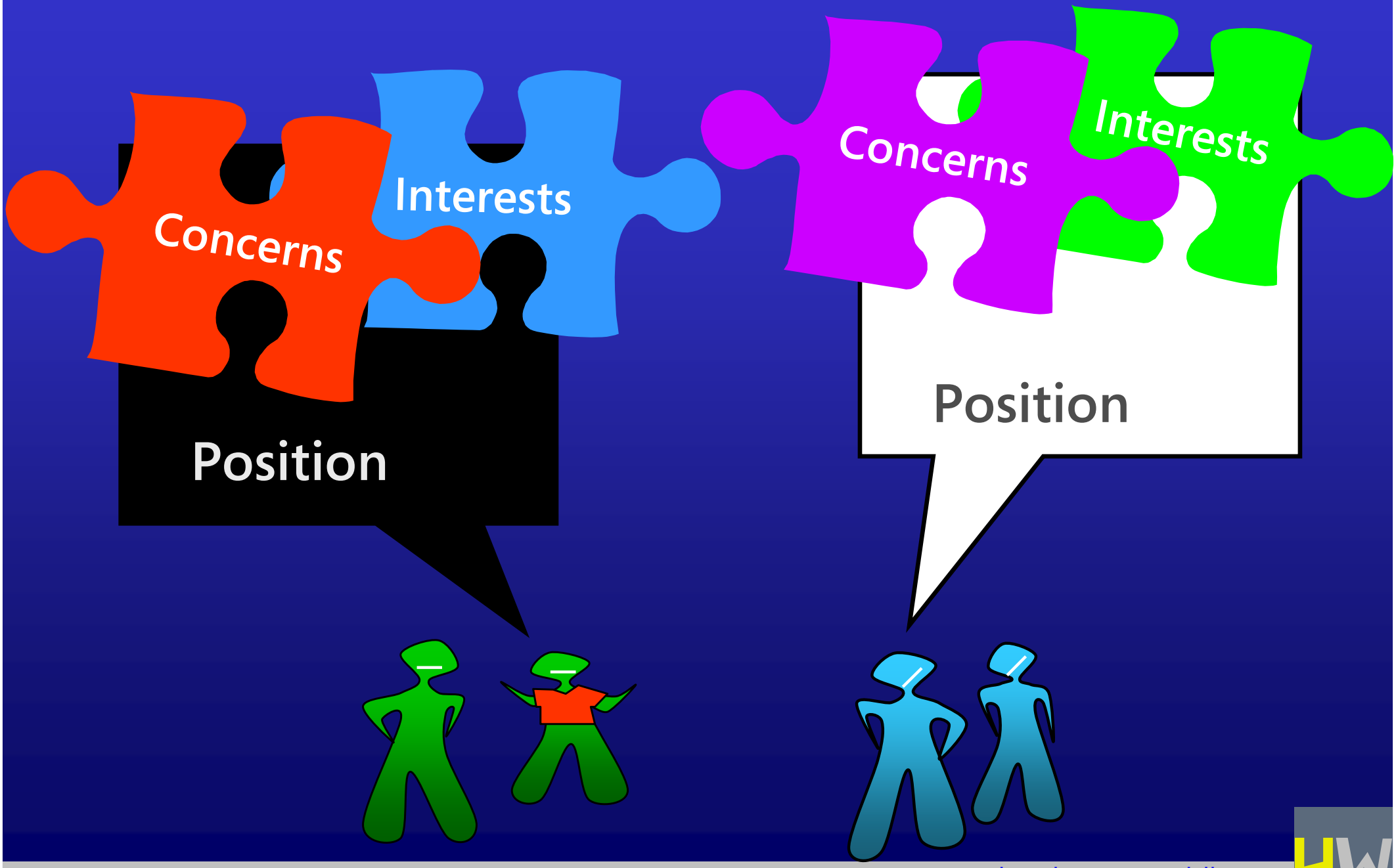
# Positions Clash

# Positions are driven by underlying concerns, needs & interests.

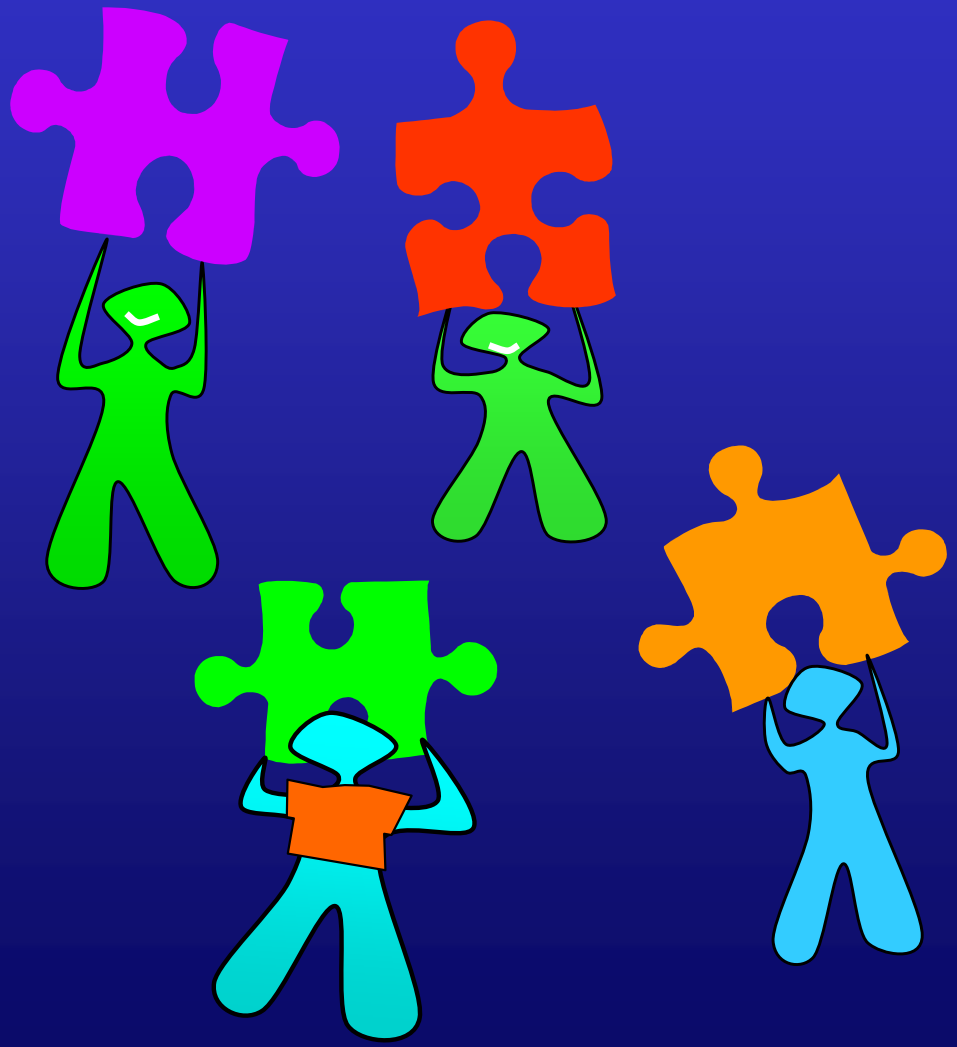


# So, Surface Concerns



# Concerns inform the reasons WHY the parties assert the positions they do.



Positions are a single solution.

But there is always more than one way to satisfy a concern.

Conflict resolution is the search for these alternatives.

# 3 Keys to Remember

Surfacing Concerns

reveals

Missing Information

that enables

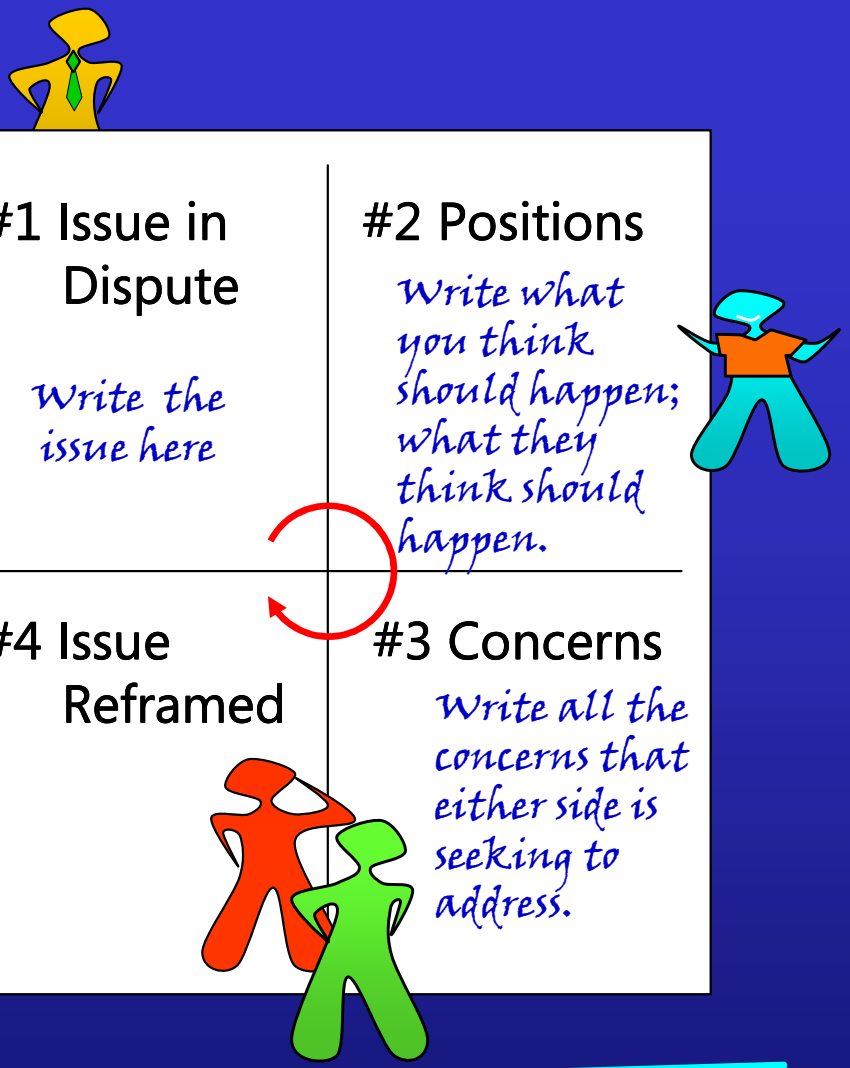
Mutual Solution-Finding

*In your situation, what concerns are met by the position you favor?*

*Positions are merely an initial preferred solution, i.e. just one option for what might happen. Moving from positions to concerns opens possibility.*

*In #3, write all the concerns that need to be addressed in this issue- yours & theirs.*

*Collaborative conflict resolution uses concerns to redraft the issue as a mutual problem-solving question.*

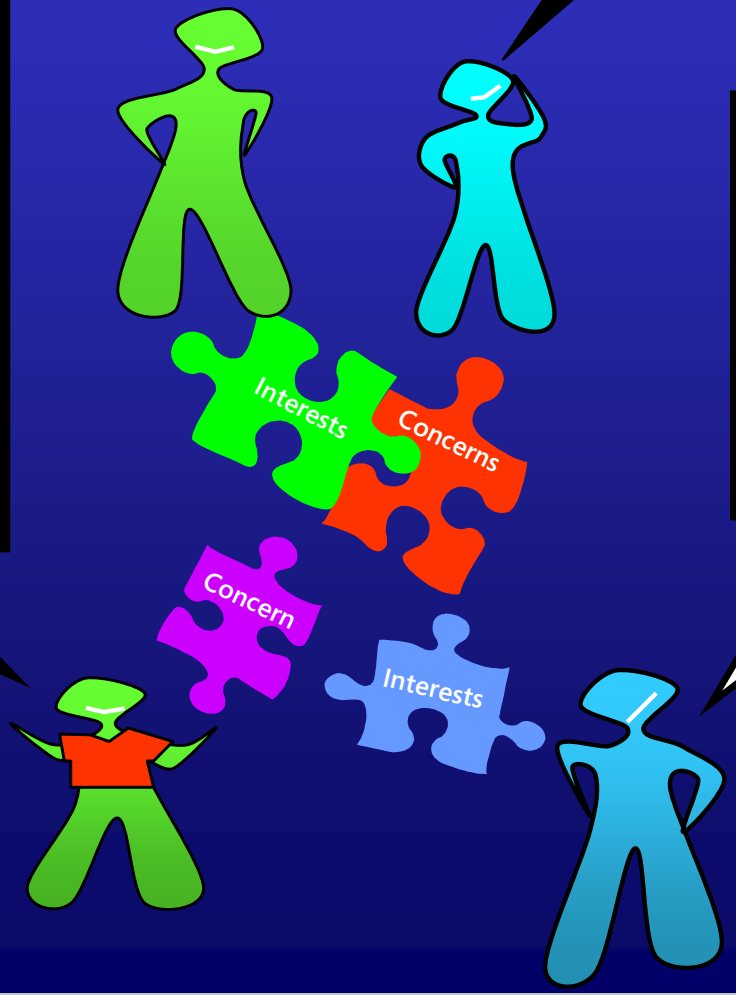


# Redraft the Issue using Concerns

*So, what are we really talking about here?*

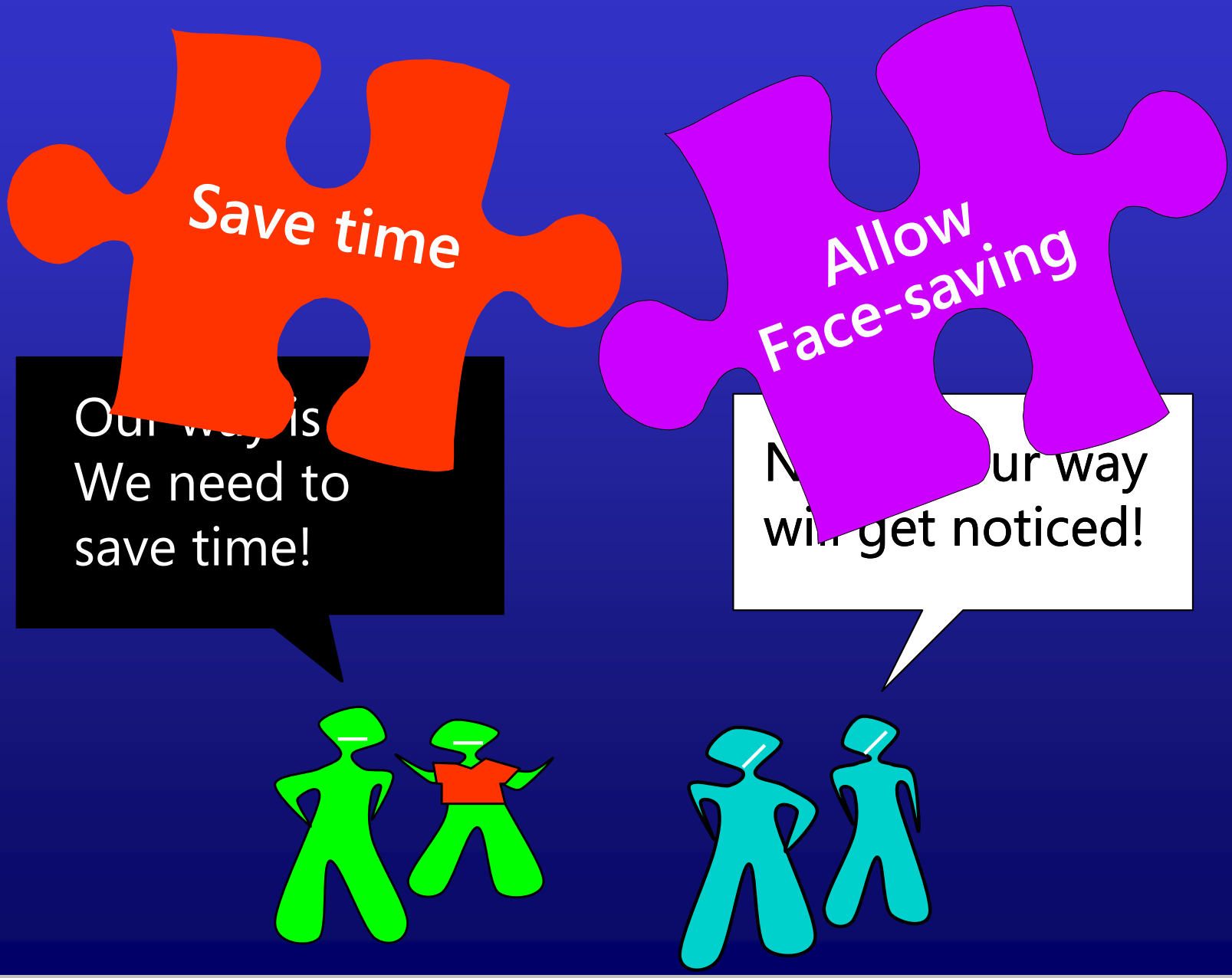
*What can we do that satisfies our concerns and addresses their interests?*

*How can we help them in a way that works for us?*



# For example, what concerns do you see in the exchange below?

# Did you catch these concerns?



# Use concerns to redraft the issue as a problem-solving question.

Redraft the Issue —

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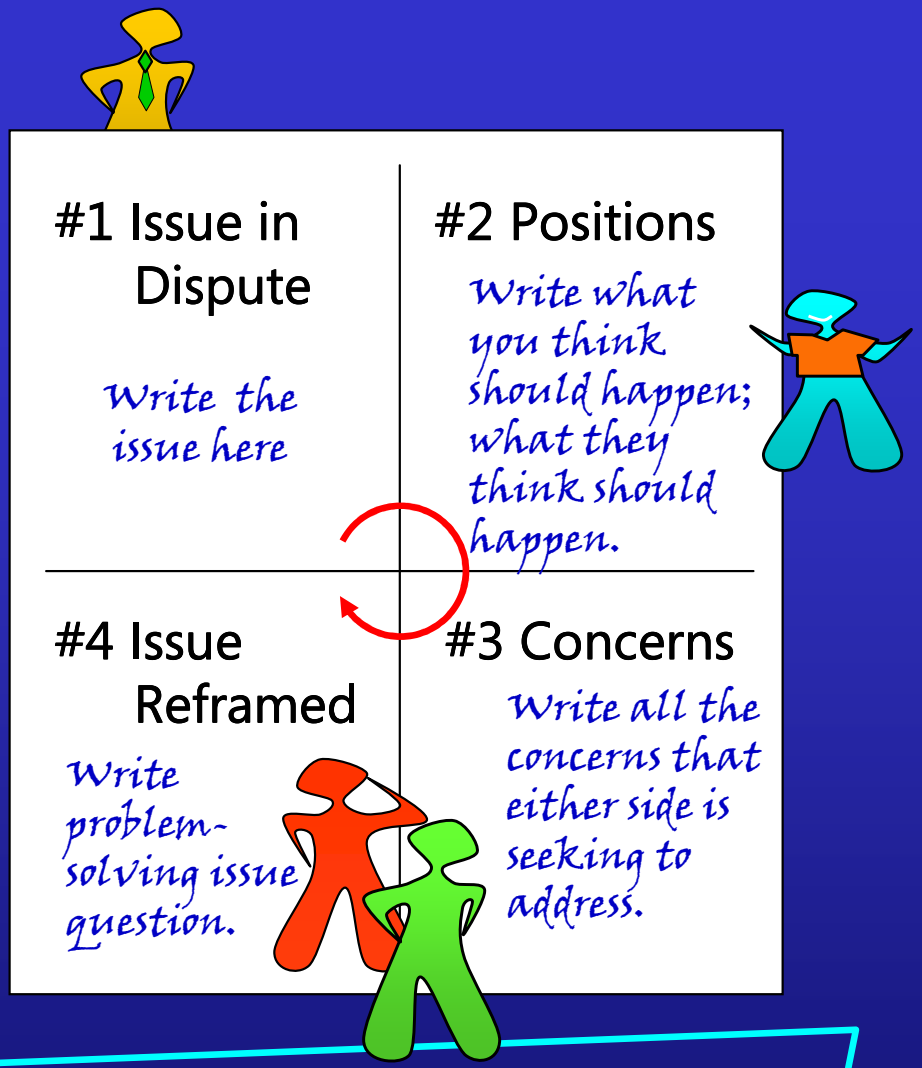
Redraft the Issue —

How can we do this quickly in a way that allows face-saving?

*In #4, draft a restatement of the issue as a problem-solving question centered around the concerns of both parties.*

*This redraft will only be a suggestion at this point. You need to work with the other side to confirm their concerns and to share yours with them.*




*Redrafting the issue as a problem-solving question draws the parties into working together and guides them to consider new possibilities for a mutually acceptable solution.*

# Now, on to Mutual Solution Finding …

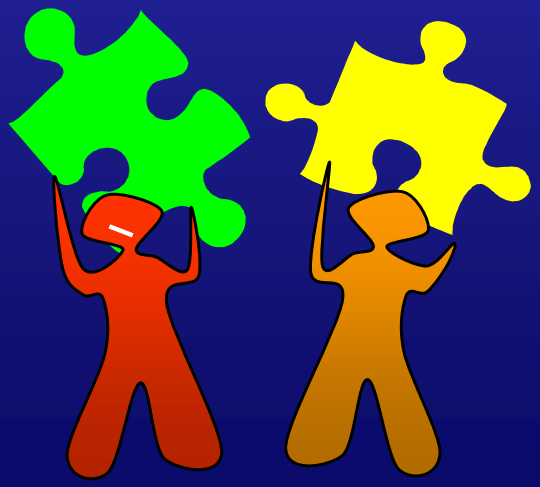
→Brainstorm Multiple Options before Deciding

→Evaluate Options by Concerns & Objective Solution Criteria

→Select the Best Acceptable to All

→Check Back to see if it's working

# Consider the case of the Suspected Gas Leak



A utility worker with the local gas company responds to a resident's call about a suspected gas leak. To inspect the gas connection, the utility worker must go into the basement of the house where the gas connection was located. The only access to the basement is through the first floor. The resident, a person of Korean decent who holds traditional cultural values, requests the utility worker take off her shoes before entering his home. The utility worker responds that she can't do that – OSHA regulations and company policy. The resident repeats that he respectfully requests her to remove her shoes before walking through his house.

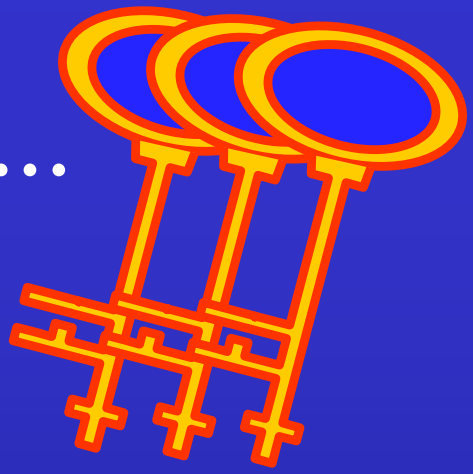
What happens?

# Consider the case of the Suspected Gas Leak

The utility worker pulls out a pair of disposable paper booties, slips them over her heavy, laced work-boots and proceeds to the basement to check the suspected leak.

The resident thanks her.  He repeats the incident to a friend, saying he felt "respected."

# The process works because …



Surfacing Concerns

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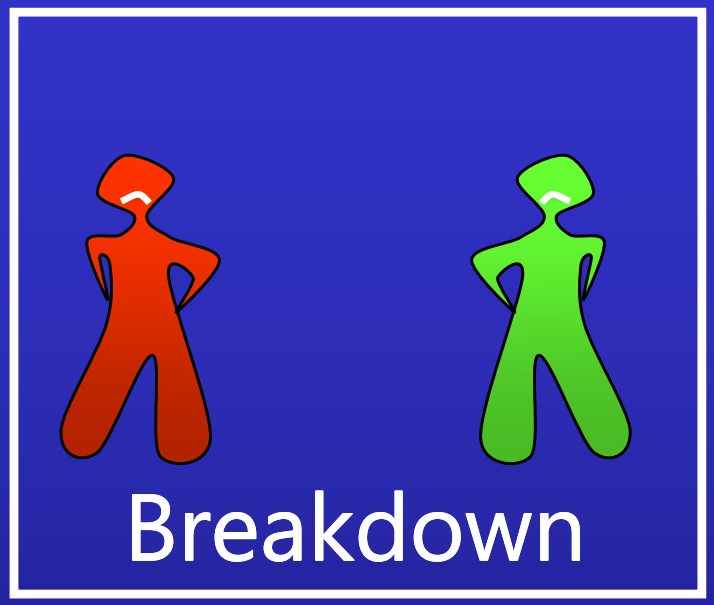
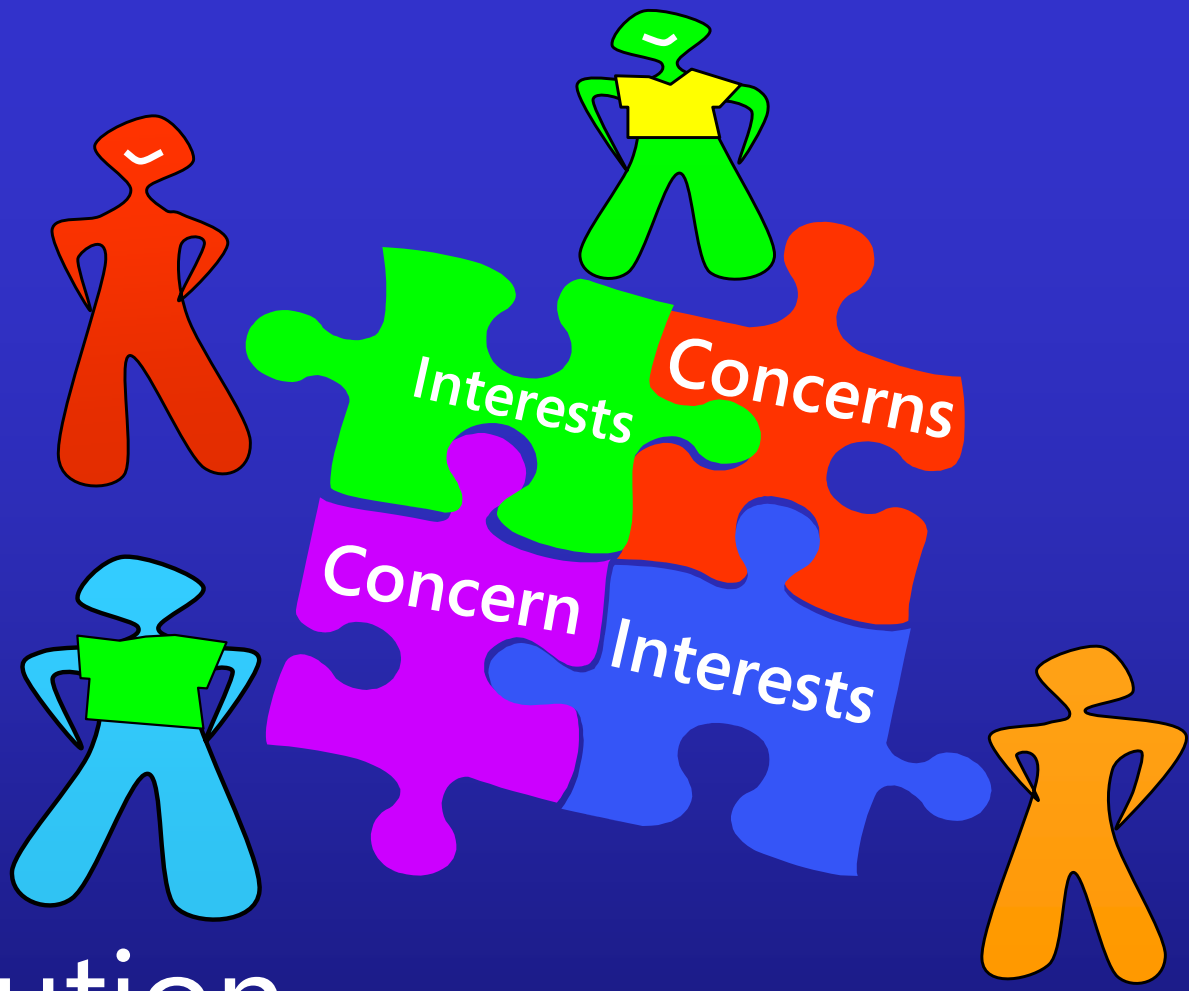
# Possible Conflict Outcomes



Collaborative Conflict Resolution increases the likelihood of Success!

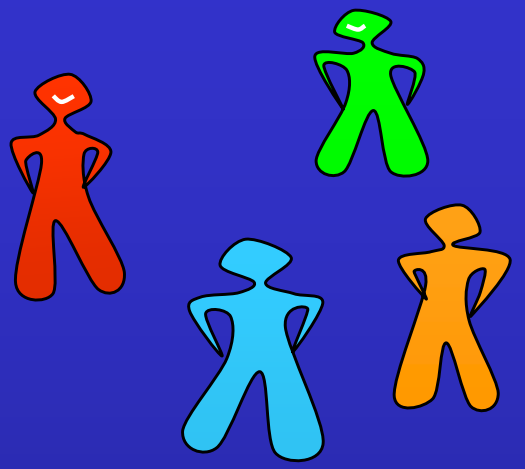
Successful solutions are superior to compromise.




# Collaborative Conflict Resolution frames conflict as an opportunity for **Mutual Solution-Finding**.

1

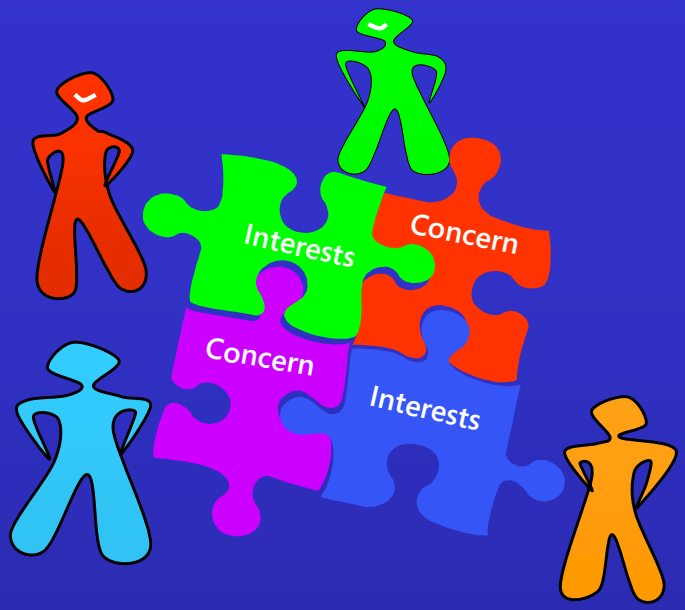
# Work the Story



- What's important about this issue? What's at stake?
- What happened that brought us to this point?
- What do you want the other party to understand about the situation from your perspective? What do they want you to understand from theirs?

2

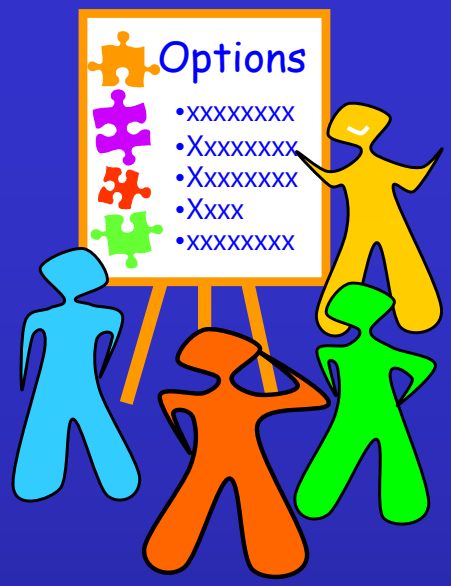
# Work the Issue




- So, what are the main concerns each party brings?
- Are there any solution boundaries we need to work within? Any objective criteria the solution must meet?
- So, what are we really talking about here? How can we reframe the issue as a problem-solving question both parties can buy into?

3

# Work the Outcome

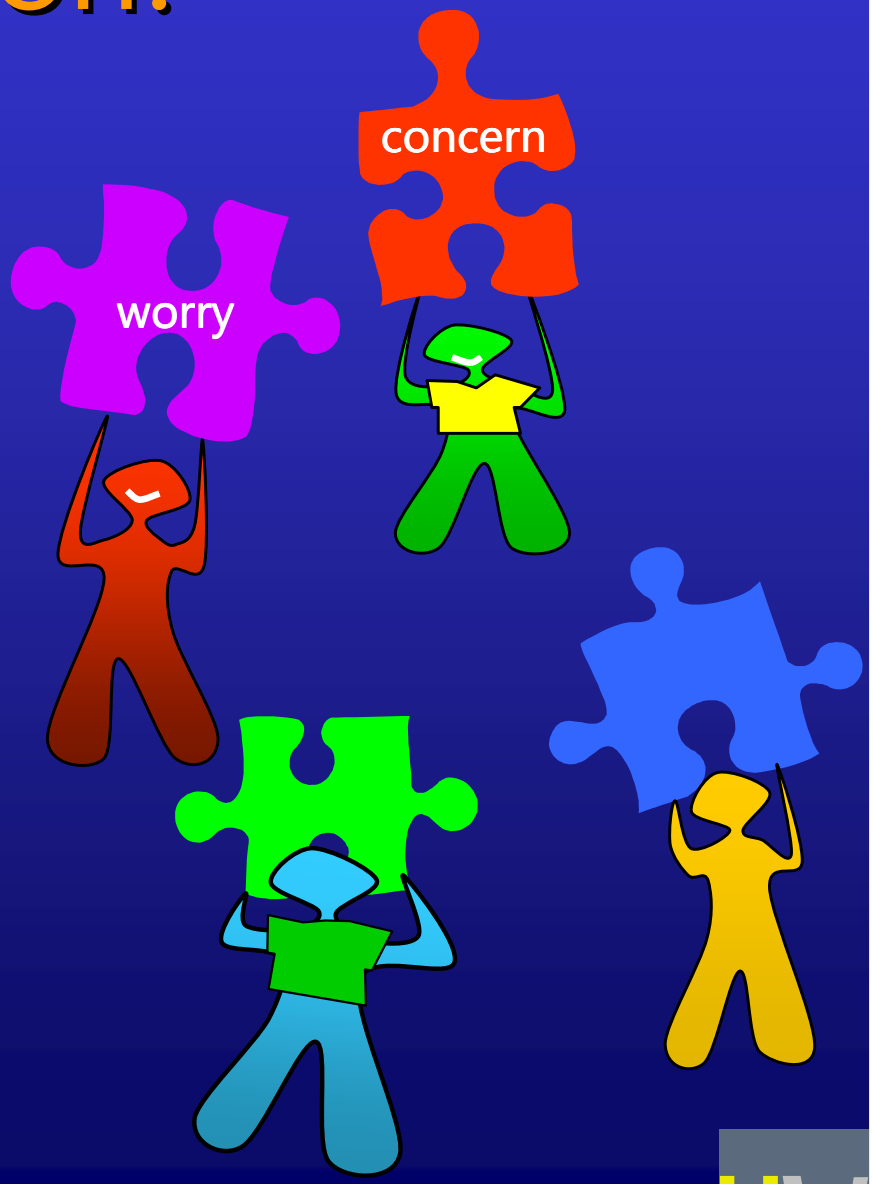


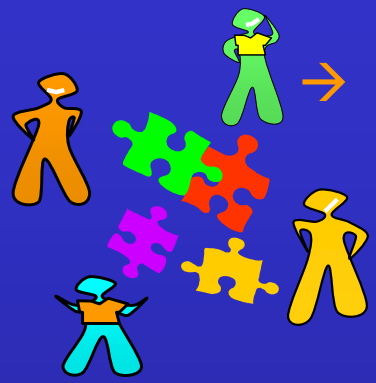

- So, what could we do? What are our options?
- Which best meets the concerns of both parties as well as fits within the solution boundaries & criteria?
- Is that outcome better that what my side could accomplish walking away from the conversation?* (If yes, accept it. If no, keep working or walk away.)

*Patton, Ury & Fisher's BATNA – See Getting to Yes.

# The best way to get there —
# Open the Conversation!

- ✓ Set positions aside.
  Don't rush to solutions.
  Surface concerns.
- ✓ Take time to learn
  about the other side's
  concerns & share yours.
- ✓ Ask questions & listen. Ask WHY.
  Discover missing information.
  Talk to them, not to yourself.





- Conflict may be about substance — selecting a restaurant, or relationship — the way people treat one another.

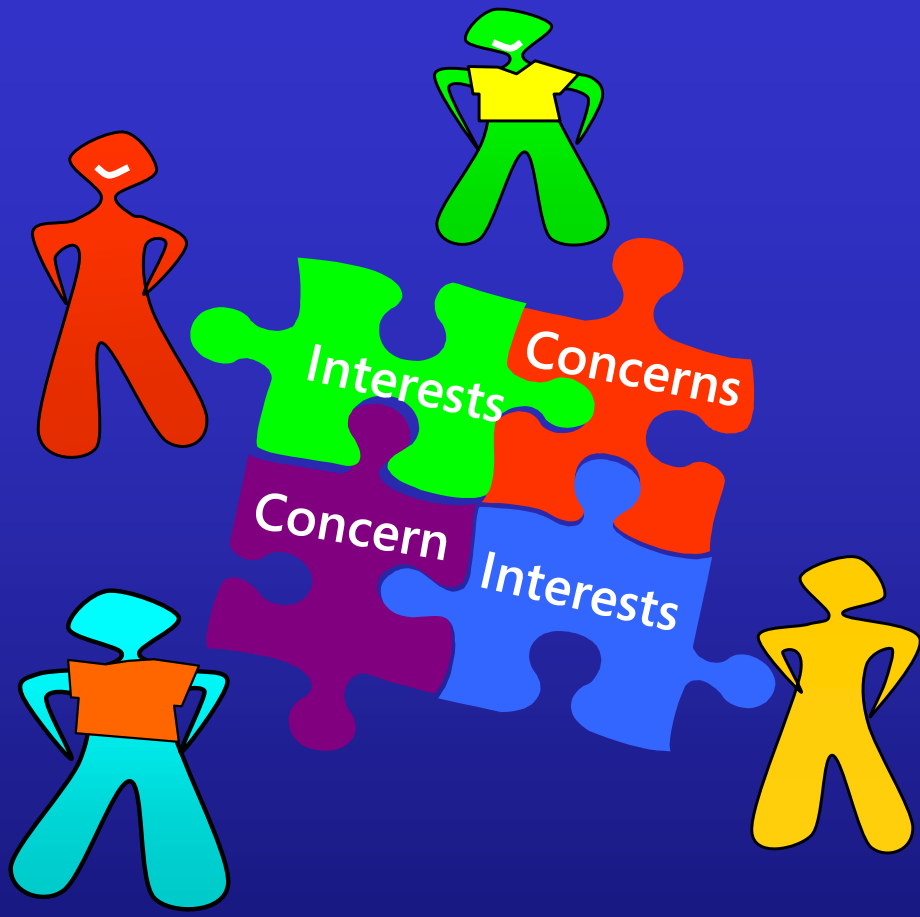
- With relational conflict, storytelling is important. Learning to engage dialogue, listen with empathy, recognize and acknowledge one another's perspective, even if different, communicates respect. This is especially true for diversity conflict where issues of respect, recognition and backlash to inclusive change must be acknowledged to diffuse tension and enable movement toward resolution.

- Resolving substantive conflict collaboratively calls for creative solution-finding. Conflict is resolved when the parties engage in working toward an outcome all sides find acceptable because underlying concerns are addressed. A process that transparently works toward this end is likely to be perceived as fair, motivates compliance and strengthens working relationships. Parties emerge feeling good about themselves.

- Using a collaborative approach to conflict resolution is a strategic choice. The process of surfacing concerns works for everyday interpersonal conflict as well as institutional negotiations, like labor-management.

- This tutorial simplifies the process to highlight the basics.

# Thank YOU!

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