Interpersonal Problem Solving
Overview

- Goal/When
- Core Content
  - Types of Conflict
  - Interpersonal Problem Solving (IPS) Steps
- Student Activity
- Skill Review
Goal/When

Goal

► To address problems in a matter that shows respect for the relationship
► To lower the intensity & find a resolution that both parties can live with

When

► You need to find a resolution to a problem
Core Content

Types of Conflict

- **Constructive**
  - Strengthen relationships
  - Collaboration increases
  - Open communication

- **Destructive**
  - Damages relationships
  - Decreases productivity
  - Diverts energy and attention from important tasks
Unsuccessful conflict resolution

Other unsuccessful (but all too common) strategies for dealing with interpersonal problems

- Avoidance
- Competing or forcing
- Trivialization
Types of Conflict

Avoidance

Ignoring a problem and hoping it will go away

“In my opinion, you’re either part of the problem or part of the solution. Unless, of course, you’re Jones, who thinks he can just float above it all!”
Core Content
Types of Conflict

Competing and Forcing

Need to be right and in control; prioritize “right” over the relationship
Core Content
Types of Conflict

**Trivialization**
Laughing or shrugging off the problem.

I'm sorry, and by sorry I mean get over it and stop acting like a 5 year old.
Before using IPS, ask yourself:

- Am I using a growth mindset?
- Do I need to use ABC or CYP?
- Do I need to BYT?
- Am I ready to use Good Listening?
Core Content

Interpersonal Problem Solving Steps

Step 1: Define the problem/challenge

• Start with a positive statement
• Be specific
• Use “I” rather than “you”
• Acknowledge your role
• Keep it short and simple
Core Content
Interpersonal Problem Solving Steps

Step 2: Ask for the other person's perspective

- Use Good Listening, allow them to express their perspective
- Avoid getting defensive
- Make sure you understand their perspective
Core Content
Interpersonal Problem Solving Steps

Step 3: Work together to generate solutions
- Allow some brainstorming without editing every option
- Get several solutions on the table without evaluating or criticizing them
Step 4: Evaluate the solutions

- How realistic is it?
- Would the parties achieve their goals?
- Is it fair?
Core Content
Interpersonal Problem Solving Steps

Step 5: Choose a solution and seal the agreement
• Agreed on by both parties
• Clearly state what each plans to do and commit to it
Student Activity

1. • Think of an interpersonal problem or challenge you might be having

2. • Turn to the handout for Interpersonal Problem Solving, and write the issue in the box provided

3. • Work with a partner to role-play (Step 1) how you would approach the problem. Brainstorm some potential solutions to the issue with your partner.
## Interpersonal Problem Solving

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>How</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To address problems in a manner that shows respect for the relationship, lowers the intensity and makes it easier to find a resolution both parties can live with.</td>
<td>1. Define the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Ask for the other person’s perspective</td>
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<td>3. Work together to generate solutions</td>
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When
You need to find a resolution to a problem.
Interpersonal Problem Solving