

**Unit 2: Conflict Management**  
**Z-Chapter 13**  
**ONLINE CONTENT (1H)**

**Unit objectives:**

- Discuss five methods to resolve conflict. (1,2,3,5,6)\*
- Discuss techniques to use in dealing with anger and with difficult people. (5,6,7)\*

\*Course Objectives

**Review Chapter 13 and the attached article entitled: Running on Empty: Compassion Fatigue in Nurses and Non-Professional Caregivers, and place your answers to the following questions in the Z-Chapter 13 dropbox by 0800 on 2/5/2024.**

1. You have recognized one of your coworkers is suffering from Compassion Fatigue. Discuss specific ways you would deal with this person if they were a:

(Provide specific examples and techniques)

a. Sherman Tank:

If I had to talk to a coworker who had a Sherman tank personality, I would first want to sit down with them to talk so they do not have a “higher ground” when speaking. It is important to give them some time to express their feelings but make sure that they do not go on for a long period of time and take control over the conversation. I would want to make sure that when I am talking with them, I defend myself and understand that I may possibly have to get my word in any way I can for them to listen. It may be necessary to be rude, but do not fight with the person and be respectful when speaking. After the conversation with this person, be friendly with the person as much as possible to show that you still respect and value them as a person.

b. Sniper

When communicating with someone who has this personality, you do not want to give them a reaction showing that what they said hurt you. Exposing their attack can throw them off guard, and you can do so by asking questions like “I’m not sure I understand, could you explain that for me?” or “It sounds as if you are making fun of me- are you?” Another tactic that can be utilized is getting group confirmation or denial about what this person said. You can ask the group if everyone feels the same way the person does or if they agree with their statement. You do not want to give in to the person’s reactions as this can fuel them to keep going. To help prevent sniping, it can be beneficial to set up regular problem-solving meetings with this person to communicate about methods of avoiding this negative behavior.

c. Constant Complainer

When talking with constant complainers, it is important that you listen to and acknowledge their thoughts and feelings about the problem. After listening, make sure that you understand their point of view and why they feel the way they do. You do not want to fully agree with the person, but you can agree on the problem itself. You want to put more focus on the problem-solving side of the conversation by asking the person very specific, informative questions as well as encouraging them to put their complaints in writing. Going over ways the problem can be solved is more effective than just agreeing that there is a problem and ending the conversation.

d. Clam

Those who are considered clams refuse to respond when an answer is needed from them or a conversation is needed. You will want to assess their nonverbal communication such as body language since they are refusing to speak about the topic. Use open-ended questions to allow them the opportunity to answer the question how they would like and give them time to provide an answer. You also do not need to fill in the silence with more conversation, it is just better to leave the silence be. Using the friendly, silent stare can be an effective tool to implement too. Be attentive when these people are ready to open up and watch your own impulses. When finishing the conversation, be very direct and tell them what you are going to do. You would also want to avoid using polite endings.

2. Pick one of the ways to offset or reduce the risk of compassion fatigue in staff members (article) and provide **specific** examples a Unit Director could utilize in order to accomplish this.

There are numerous methods that can be utilized to offset or reduce the risk of compassion fatigue, and one of these methods involves creating an open environment where workers can feel comfortable expressing their feelings and how their work affects them. A unit director could regularly remind the workers that this unit is a safe place to talk about their feelings while providing a set time for meetings to talk. Some people feel that they do not want to bother others about their fatigue, especially if they feel that everyone is too busy to listen. This may not be feasible in some locations, but possibly including a room where these conversations can take place could be helpful. This minimizes distractions and allows a more private location to talk about these sensitive feelings. The unit director could provide community resources to the staff members that could include therapy, wellness/self-care activities, and support groups. They could also implement a compassion fatigue support group at the facility as well that the staff members could attend. This way, there would be familiar people to make them comfortable as well as seeing how others in the facility are managing their compassion fatigue.

3. You are a new graduate RN working on a busy Medical-Surgical Unit. The patient assignment you have for the day is a very heavy workload, and the Charge Nurse has just informed you that you are getting a new admission from the ED. You know that you will not be able to manage your patient load and this admission. Utilizing the model for

conflict resolution, provide specific examples of how you would manage this situation by using:

a. Accommodation:

Using the accommodation method, you would accept the patient even though you already have a heavy workload. In this method, one person (the nurse in this situation) would accommodate the other (the charge nurse) at their own expense. Taking on another patient would put significantly more stress on the nurse as they would now have to work another patient into their already very busy day.

b. Collaboration:

With this method, you would talk with the nurse about your schedule that day and state that you are willing to help care for the patient. The thoughts and feelings of both parties will be considered during this time, while working together to determine how this patient will receive adequate care. You could explain to the nurse that having some extra assistance with this patient will help reduce the individual workload for the patient while still being able to care for the patients you were already assigned. In the end, the patient will have someone to care for their needs while the nurse and charge nurse were able to work together to reach their goal.

c. Compromise:

Compromising involves resolution of the problem, but both parties may not feel satisfaction with the final decision. In this scenario, you might speak with the charge nurse about your busy day and the increased stress another patient will add to the day. The charge nurse needs to be able to assign a nurse to this patient so they can be transferred to the unit. You may come to an agreement that you will take this patient today but will not tomorrow if the workload is the same, or you could state you will take the newly admitted patient if one of your pre-existing patients is given to another nurse on the unit. This can be seen as a temporary solution until further options become available.

d. Avoidance:

When the avoidance method is in place, you may completely ignore the charge nurse while they try to talk to you about this patient. You might also try to avoid the charge nurse on the unit to prevent the conversation from taking place again. There is no resolution to the problem at all because there is not a conversation being held to plan a goal.

e. Competition:

With this method, there is a use of power from a higher position that is implemented to reach a goal. The charge nurse would not take no for an answer, using statements such as, "I am the charge nurse, and you have to take this patient." They could also say "My position gives me the authority to make you take this patient, regardless of what your schedule for the day already looks like." The nurse would feel that they are in an inferior position due to the power dynamic and would unwillingly accept the patient.

*In order to receive full credit (1 H class time) for this assignment, it must be completed in its entirety by the due date/time assigned. Any assignments not completed in its entirety by the due date and time will result in missed class time and must be completed by the end of the semester to pass the course.*