The Conflict Management Continuum

The conflict management continuum is a useful tool for organizations or individualsthat are considering how they want to respond to a conflict, or to start a conversation about how to respond to conflict before it happens.

Essentially, this tool demonstrates that proactive conflict resolution (like talking directly to each other, listening carefully, and improving our own conflict skills) take less time and money and can result in solutions that are much more likely to meet the actual needs of the people involved in the conflict. When we start moving towards more reactive conflict strategies, the options available become more expensive, draining, and often traumatic, and the resolutions they can offer are usually less satisfying for the people who are impacted.

This tool was created by the Centre for Community Organizations (COCo)
www.coco-net.org
The Conflict Management Continuum

**Proactive Conflict Resolution:**
Requires less energy, time, and resources.
Solutions are closer to original experience of conflict.
Potential for trauma is lower.

**Conflict Prevention / Capacity Building**
- Anti-Oppression Training and Practice
- Direct Communication & Active Listening
- Organizational Planning & Team Building

**Individual Conflict Resolution**
- Interest-based Approach to Conflict
- Direct Interpersonal Dialogue
- Explore all Operational / Logistical Solutions

**Collective Conflict Resolution**
- Internal Group Conflict Resolution Process
- Formal and Informal Mediation
- May draw on external mediator
- May use conflict ‘point people’

**Collective Complaints Resolution**
- Internal Complaints Resolution Processes
- Internal Negotiation Processes
- Other Internal Arbitration Process

**External Complaints Resolution**
- Police and Criminal Law
- Courts and Civil Law
- Legal Mediation / Negotiation
- Community / Alternative Arbitration

**Reactive Conflict Resolution:**
Requires lots of energy, time, and resources.
Solutions are distant from original experience of conflict.
Potential for trauma is higher.