

# Conflict Styles: Avoiding

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

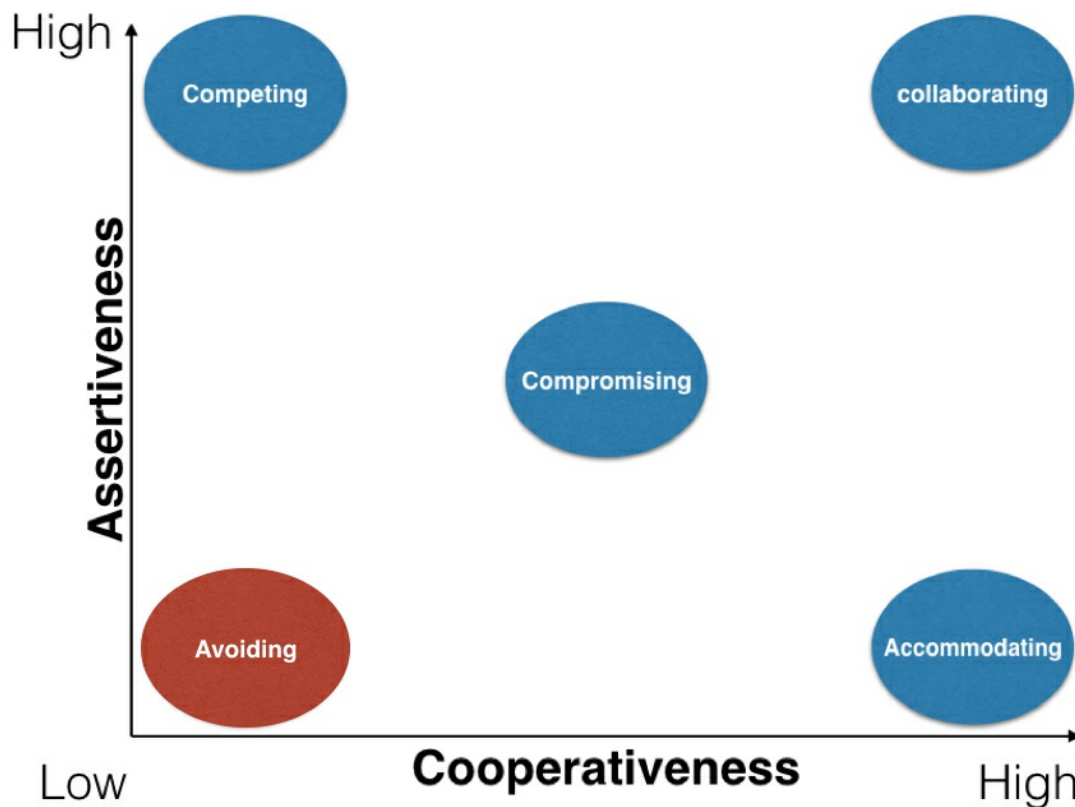
As you learned in a previous lesson, there are five different conflict styles. This lesson will discuss one of these styles and how it presents itself in various situations. The areas of focus include:

## 1. Avoiding as a Conflict Style

Recall that there are five different conflict styles. **Avoiding** is a conflict resolution style in which a party does not make any attempt to address or resolve the conflict.

As a style, avoiding is:

- Low in **cooperativeness**
- Low in **assertiveness**



Let's look at some examples of avoiding as a style.

➞ **EXAMPLE** When you come home from work, you notice that your spouse is in an argument with your teenage kids over chores not getting done, curfew being missed, and homework not being completed. This is becoming a very heated argument. You think, "I'm just going to go into the office and close the door." It is your tendency to avoid arguments like this at home.

➞ **EXAMPLE** You are on a trip with some friends. You've saved up some money for this trip, but you notice that you're running low. You've eaten at a few more restaurants than expected. You know you're going to need to bring this up because it's going to make a difference in the trip in terms of some of the things you do. However, you keep avoiding it; you just don't talk about it.

➞ **EXAMPLE** While walking down the street in your neighborhood, you notice there are some kids at the end of the block. It looks like they're getting into a fight, and it's starting to get violent. You were walking right towards it, so you decide to cross the street and avoid the fight.



#### TERMS TO KNOW

##### **Avoiding**

A conflict resolution style in which a party does not make any attempt to address or resolve the conflict.

##### **Cooperativeness**

Behavior in which two parties work in concert to achieve their mutual and respective individual goals.

##### **Assertiveness**

Behavior in which a person confidently makes a statement without need of proof, affirming his/her rights without attacking another's.

## 2. Positive/Negative Outcomes of Avoiding

This particular style of conflict has, as all styles do, both positive and negative outcomes.

A **positive outcome** is a resolution to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his or her needs and/or reducing the likelihood of further conflict.

A **negative outcome** is a resolution that the party perceives as not meeting his or her needs and/or increasing the likelihood of further conflict.

Return to the previous examples and suppose you avoid it:

Situation	Positive Outcome	Negative Outcome
You come home to find your spouse arguing with the kids, and you avoid it.	Maybe you and your kids get along okay because you stayed out of this argument.	Things don't get settled around the house. The kids know you and your spouse aren't on the same page, and your spouse may be upset that you didn't step in.
You're running low on money on your trip and you avoid talking about it.	You might enjoy a few more meals out with your friends on this trip.	When you come home, you realize you've far exceeded your budget because you didn't address it upfront.
You notice some kids fighting kids, where you crossed the street to avoid the situation.	You didn't risk your safety.	Maybe by not calling the police, or calling the parents of the kids if you know them, you ran the risk of this kind of behavior escalating in your neighborhood.



### THINK ABOUT IT

Do you tend towards the avoiding style as your preferred style? Can you think of a time when you responded to a conflict with this style? What was a positive and negative outcome of that conflict?



### BIG IDEA

It's important to remember that while avoiding might be the style that you tend towards and feel most comfortable with (your preferred style), that doesn't mean it's the only way that you can respond in a conflict. There are other conflict styles, and you, as well as anyone, can respond in any number of ways to a particular conflict.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### Positive/Negative Outcomes

Resolutions to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his/her needs and/or reducing likelihood of

further conflict (positive) or not meeting his/her needs and/or increasing likelihood of further conflict (negative).



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about **avoiding as a style of conflict** and what the **positive and negative outcomes** of using this style can be. You now understand that even though avoiding may be your preferred style, you always have the ability to respond to conflict in a different way.

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## TERMS TO KNOW

### **Assertiveness**

Behavior in which a person confidently makes a statement without need of proof, affirming his/her rights without attacking another's.

### **Avoiding**

A conflict resolution style in which a party does not make any attempt to address or resolve the conflict.

### **Cooperativeness**

Behavior in which two parties work in concert to achieve their mutual and respective individual goals.

### **Positive/Negative Outcomes**

Resolutions to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his/her needs and/or reducing likelihood of further conflict (positive) or not meeting his/her needs and/or increasing likelihood of further conflict (negative).