

Conflict Resolution

Process Work considers conflicts as potentially transformative processes. Here are some core concepts:

u and x

Processwork uses the abbreviation **u** to describe all aspects of experiences and perceptions that are consistent with and constitute a person's sense of identity.

Perceptions that disturb this identity, are experienced as foreign, or appear to be beyond one's control are referred to as **x**.

The “u” of a person is expressed, for example, when they say “I,” or when they say “I want, plan, or do something.” The “x”, on the other hand, is typically experienced as something that *happens* to the person — something that eludes control and intention, is felt as disturbing, and is therefore marginalized.

In conflicts, we usually find us conflicting with something we experience as x.

Roles and role switching

In a conflict, the most important roles are “Taking my own side and viewpoints” and “Taking my opponents side and viewpoints”.

There is a natural tendency to role switch! That is, we find that we may identify with our own position but later in the conflict we notice that we feel pulled to represent the opponents viewpoint.

It is a very important awareness practice: Noticing and allowing yourself to switch roles, sensing when you are in one role and when you begin to move to the other.

This role switching will lead to more awareness and if completed reaches a natural conflict resolution. Then practical negotiation is much easier.

Quantum mechanics and rotational symmetries with roles in a group process

- **Quantum mechanics looks for symmetries:** who participates in which role (or polarization) at a given time is random. There is a tendency for *organic switching of sides*; if this does not occur, many *double signals* emerge.
- **Rotational symmetry:** Imagine juggling eight balls. Any ball can take any position. They continuously rotate through all positions. The stable elements are not the balls, but the two hands. The more participants have moved through multiple roles, the more the group experiences a sense of flow.