

# ME – BREATHE – WE

## Three Steps to More Productive Conflict

### Step 1 – ME

**Try To Remember:**  
“Conflict resolution starts with me.”

You can control what you say, how you say it, and you can control your body language and behaviors.



### Step 2 – BREATHE

**Try To Remember:**  
“Breathing to remain calm helps keep the conflict from escalating.”

Concentrate on your breathing, Try to slow it down. Think of something that makes you happy to regain composure.

### Step 3 – WE

**Try To Remember:** “We are both protecting something that matters. I am protecting something dear to me, and the other person is guarding something too.”

People in conflict can easily dehumanize each other. Help control this impulse by trying to understand what the other person is protecting. Try to have empathy for them for feeling that what they hold dear is under attack.

Avoiding escalation is not avoiding conflict, and the things you are protecting while in conflict do not lose their value by admitting that what the other person is protecting has value to them. Sometimes, the best outcome is coming to a mutual understanding that you may value different things, and that is okay.