

## How to Mediate a Disagreement using the Housemate Agreement



Hold **Housemate Meetings** to discuss and agree on important house expectations. Display agreements in a prominent common area in the house if desired. Re-do House Expectations as a group activity every time a new housemate moves in.

If a conflict arises, consult the Housemate Agreement to identify and re-agree to house rules or add a new item to agreement. **Review conflict resolution tips:**

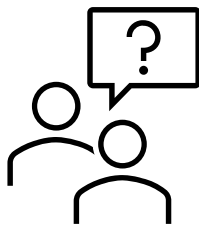
**Stating the Issue:** If you have an issue with a housemate, do not hold it inside. Address the problem as it arises.



When bringing up the issue with your housemate, do not confront them with hostility. Instead, simply state you would like to have a conversation, ask when ready to talk. (De-escalation Tips below)

**Negotiating for Mutual Gain:** Set the goal to negotiate for mutual gain:

- Build trust by deeply listening, and hearing, the other's view.
- Move away from positions, support dialogue and clarification of viewpoints.
- Illuminate common benefits, not positions, by reframing the issue:



*What is important to you about.....?*

*What is your basic concern.....?*

*What do you fear might happen if.....?*

*What do you hope will happen if.....?*

**Brainstorm solutions and put new, mutually agreed upon decisions into the Housemate Agreement.**

## Shared Housing Conflict Resolution Tips



***No one can read your mind.***

**When you have an issue with a housemate, do not hold it inside. Instead, address problems as they arise, talk it out, after having found your own inner calm.**

### Quick tips to help resolve conflict

- You can both be heard if you are both willing to listen.
- Communicate your needs and sensitivities (what upsets you).
- Hear your housemate's needs and commit to respect them.
- Compromise is necessary most times; be willing to bend.
- Review Conflict Management guide in the 'Living Well With Other's' Book.'

### How to Be a Good Housemate

Do not expect perfection

Be accountable for your own responsibilities

Be considerate

*Know you do not have to be best friends to live together peacefully.*

## Shared Housing Anger De-escalation Tips



**Take deep breaths to calm down.** This allows the body's parasympathetic system to reestablish a sense of quiet, increasing your ability to assess the situation. Repeat for five minutes if not calmed with three breaths.

**Try the Navy Seal box breathing technique:** inhale for four seconds, hold air in your lungs for four seconds, exhale for four seconds, hold your lungs empty for four seconds, then repeat.



**Take a walk – at least 15 minutes – to calm down.** Fresh air may allow you to see the situation in new light. Practice taking deep breaths in and out while walking.



**Explore what may have triggered your anger.** Step back early to be able to regain own stability. Only take next steps for discussion once you feel balanced and have regained your own equilibrium.