



What is confrontation and what's so great about it?

It sounds kind of strange to hear that question doesn't it?

It feels kind of strange to ask it, because we tend to think of confrontation as something negative, not something that's great.

At its core confrontation is not negative and it's not actually great either. It's neutral for what confrontation really is.

How we address it is what determines whether or not it's going to be positive or negative. Our mindset about confrontation is what is going to contribute to it being positive or negative.

We're going to talk about all this and more today and throughout these videos. We're going to talk about what is so great about it, instead of something that we avoid or is awkward or uncomfortable or scary to us.

When you learn to do it well you are going to see how beneficial it can be for you to address situations that need to be addressed and to get the things that you want.

The origin of this word comes from Latin as so many of our words do and the literal meaning is forehead to forehead.

It's a little bit of a strange visual for us, but we do commonly say face-to-face, right? Maybe not quite as close as forehead to forehead, but similar idea.

I thought of this visual of the chairs. When you look at this picture and the chairs and you think of a face-to-face meeting, there's nothing inherently negative about that.

Certainly in our culture when we use that word confrontation, we very rarely use it to mean a positive conversation.

If your boss is going to sit you down to tell you got a raise you probably wouldn't use the word confrontation.

Even though literally it's neutral, I do want to recognize that we use this word when we're talking about addressing something that is difficult or challenging.

To be clear, confrontation and conflict are not the same thing. A lot of us use these words interchangeably, but they are not the same thing. They have some things in common, but they're not the same.

At its core conflict is the issue or the problem, and confrontation is the addressing of that issue or problem.

You'll see in purple that there's a lot that confrontation and conflict have in common.



Primarily it's that there is a disconnect or a disharmony between two people or more about what they want. Maybe both of them are feeling it or maybe just one of them is feeling it. That's one of the other differences- where conflict is mutual, confrontation isn't necessarily mutual.

There are a lot of situations where we might confront somebody about something that they're doing or saying or how their behavior is affecting us and it's not really affecting them at all or vice versa. With conflict it really is a mutual problem between two or more people.

Conflict happens no matter what, no matter how much we try to avoid it and many times pretend it's not there. It is going to happen no matter what in our personal lives and our professional lives even in the best relationships. There's going to be conflict where confrontation is optional, where we can choose to confront the issue or not.

We're going to learn throughout these videos how to confront those issues and the places where you don't necessarily have to confront them.

You don't have to confront everything but most of us should be confronting things much more often than we already are.

Again confrontation is inherently neutral. It's challenging in more than one sense.

It's challenging in the fact that you are challenging a situation or a person about something that is not sitting right with you, and it's challenging because it's difficult for most of us. It does not come naturally to know how to do this well, so it is difficult.

It's powerful in a couple of ways. We do attach a lot of emotion to it, but it's also powerful in what the result of it can be. When you learn to do it well- which you will- you are going to be pleasantly surprised at how effective you can be in getting the results you want, when you know how to confront people in an effective way.

It is a skill which means it is teachable and that's why you're here- to learn how to do this well. And you can learn how to do it.

Confrontation is not the same thing as conflict and it's not natural for most of us. Depending on our temperament or how we were raised or the culture we grew up in, most people struggle at least in some sense with learning how to do this effectively. It's not easy, and it's not a personality trait. I hear so many people say *I'm just not confrontational*.

When I hear that what comes to mind for me is saying something like *I just don't speak Russian. I'm not good at it*.

But you can be if you invest the time to learn it and practice it. Then you can get better at speaking Russian. It's the same thing with confrontation.



If you invest the time and energy into learning and practicing and getting better then you will.

When it comes to work confrontation is everywhere. These are just some examples and these are big ones but there are lots of small situations throughout the day too where confrontation is going to be there.

This includes but is no way limited to: negotiating, asking for raises or promotions, giving and receiving feedback, resolving conflict, saying no, calling out an ethical behavior, admitting a mistake, calling out somebody else's mistake, disagreeing with one another particularly with a boss....

there are all kinds of situations where if you're struggling with confrontation, you're going to be struggling a lot because there's opportunity for confrontation in all these situations and more.

When you learn how to do it well, then you get to reap the benefits of the power that positive confrontation can have. Once you become effective at confrontation, it will improve your confidence.

It's going to strengthen your relationships because you're going to be able to be more honest and open and transparent with people and you're opening the door for them to be open and honest and transparent with you.

You get to use your voice which absolutely connects to confidence.

You get to reduce conflict because you're not avoiding it or pretending it's not there. You will actually learn how to address it. You can help to solve the conflict or at the very least reduce it and you'll get the results that you're looking for.

It doesn't always mean you're going to get all the results you're looking for. Sometimes the only result you're going to get is that you gathered the courage to address the confrontation, which is a win in and of itself, but it's not a magic formula where you're automatically going to get everything you want.

Just for the sake of addressing this situation, that's a win for sure.

Like any skill it's going to take time and commitment. You're probably not going to be great at it in the beginning like any skill.

You learn it and you practice it and you make mistakes and you go back and practice some more and you get better. It's just like any other skill that you've learned over time that you will get better when you stick with it.

So the most important question for you to ask yourself is, are you ready to become more effective at confrontation?