

The Transformative Power of Conflict Management Coaching: Why CINERGY® Matters to Me

By Susan Mackay

We often avoid conflict due to discomfort, lack of confidence, or even fear of negative consequences. But what if we were to reframe conflict as something healthy? Rather than view it as failure, what if we had the skills to embrace disagreement creatively as a means of challenging assumptions, gaining new perspectives, and pushing boundaries?

Peacebuilding – one person at a time

The CINERGY® philosophy of "peacebuilding – one person at a time" resonates deeply with me. **Conflict Management Coaching** isn't about judging, taking sides, or attempting to 'fix' people - it's about helping people gain new perspectives and deepen understanding in ways that enrich and empower them. The process also helps individuals discover and tap into their strengths so that they can navigate future disagreements and disputes with increased skill, confidence, and awareness.

By developing this simple but powerful coaching model, CINERGY®'s founder, Cinnie Noble has helped countless individuals and organizations shift perspectives on conflict. The process has helped teams move from avoidance and fear into a place of creativity, learning, and empowerment. And in recognition of this pioneering work, the trailblazing lawyer, mediator coach trainer and thought leader [Cinnie recently earned an 'ICF Lifetime Achievement Award.'](#)

Transforming failure into opportunity

I came to CINERGY® Conflict Management Coaching after coming through some challenging professional experiences. At the time, I wish I'd been able to navigate workplace politics, power dynamics and competing interests more skillfully. However, inspired by insights from Amy Edmondson's "The Right Kind of Wrong", what I've learned from coaching the CINERGY® model has helped me transform my own experiences into rich learning and growth.

After all, Edmondson teaches us that 'failure' can be turned into opportunity when we learn from it in a thoughtful, structured way. She even suggests that 'intelligent failure' is not just the best, but in some cases the only way to make progress and breakthroughs, particularly when we're operating in new or uncharted territory. But linked to Edmondson's earlier groundbreaking work on psychological safety – this only happens when we feel safe enough to do so.

Beyond Resolution: Embracing Conflict for Success

Whilst positive workplace cultures are essential, if we prioritise harmony over 'speaking up,' we run the risk of creating 'toxic positivity' — or even worse – 'groupthink.

'Groupthink' is hard to avoid when people don't feel safe to speak up, or prioritize their own self-interest. Indeed, this phenomenon has been linked to major disasters such as the Challenger Space Shuttle and the Boeing 737 Max Disasters. If teams don't feel safe to disagree, it becomes harder to identify and avoid risks, challenge flawed assumptions, and develop more robust and creative solutions.

So the most successful organizations embrace conflict as an engine for growth. They create spaces where people feel psychologically safe enough to express differing viewpoints, knowing that respectful debate leads to better decision-making and stronger team dynamics. By shifting our mindsets from 'conflict as a problem' to 'conflict as an opportunity', evidence shows that teams unlock new possibilities, strengthen relationships, and drive long-term success.

CINERGY® for healing and growth

The value I've already gained from learning to coach the CINERGY® model means that the CINERGY® certification isn't 'just another credential for me. Not only has it deepened my ability to coach, it's also helped me accelerate my own learning, healing and growth.

Learning to engage creatively with conflict – rather than in fear – is helping me set stronger boundaries, have more transparent conversations, and support others to do the same. Working with clients, I'm already seeing how life-changing this process can be. Watching clients move beyond feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or unheard to gain their own clarity, agency, and resolution is really inspiring.

A Simple Tool for An Increasingly Complex World

In the current global context, individuals and organizations face more complexity, disruption, and high-stakes decisions than ever before. The workplaces most likely to thrive in uncertain times won't be those that avoid difficult conversations, but the ones that learn how to navigate them with the most clarity, courage, and skill.

If you prefer to 'keep the peace' rather than engage in difficult but necessary conversations, CINERGY® Conflict Management Coaching has much to offer. Learning to navigate conflict healthily isn't the same as seeking out disagreement. Healthy conflict is a natural – if not essential – component of learning, growth, and innovation.

When we stop fearing conflict and instead embrace it, we open ourselves up to new possibilities, deeper relationships, and more creative ways to collaborate. In our increasingly fractured world, engaging in constructive disagreement isn't just a skill – it may be the only way to make deeper connections and bring about transformative and meaningful change.

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References:

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