

## Executive Director Sarah Kelly



Recently, seemingly more so than ever, we are receiving calls and emails on how to address conflicts within clubs and between members.

We strive to uphold our vision of “Creating Thriving Communities” and to live our mission of fellowship, goodwill, and community service daily. However, when internal strife manifests in the form of arguments, disputes, or unruly behavior among club members, it not only undermines these ideals but also jeopardizes our efforts and image in our communities.

At the heart of resolving conflicts lies the commitment to being good listeners. Please read or re-read Robin’s message.

When faced with members at odds with each other, it’s crucial for club leaders to take proactive steps to address the situation promptly and effectively. Here are some strategies to navigate conflicts:

- Encourage an environment where members feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and concerns openly. Establish ways for feedback and dialogue, such as time during regular meetings where members can voice their opinions constructively and calmly.
- In situations where conflicts escalate, have a neutral mediator facilitate discussions between conflicting parties. The mediator should remain impartial and focus on guiding the conversation towards mutual understanding and resolution.
- Set clear expectations for behavior and conduct within the club. Write them out and pass them around. Emphasize the importance of respect, tolerance, and civility in all interactions. By establishing ground rules, members are reminded of their responsibilities and the standards of behavior expected of them.
- Organize team-building activities, workshops, or collaborative projects that foster camaraderie and strengthen relationships among club members. Building strong bonds outside of conflict situations can soften tensions and foster a sense of unity.
- As leaders within the club, demonstrate a commitment to resolving conflicts peacefully and constructively. Model positive communication and conflict resolution behaviors for other members to emulate.
- Remind members of the club’s overarching vision and mission dedicated to improving communities and fostering fellowship. Emphasize how conflict resolution and harmony align with these core values and contribute to the collective goals.

As stewards of our community, it is incumbent upon each of us to uphold the values of fellowship, goodwill, and service and to actively contribute to the creation of harmonious environments. Instead of being obstacles, conflicts can become catalysts for strengthening relationships and building a more cohesive community.

*Remember, the strength of a community lies not in the absence of conflict but in our collective ability to navigate and resolve it with grace and compassion.*