

## Syllabus Integration Guide: Conflict Is an Opportunity, by Dana Caspersen

**Course Relevance:** Ideal for undergraduate and graduate courses in:

- Conflict Resolution, Mediation, and Negotiation
- Peace and Justice Studies
- Social Work and Human Services
- Organizational Behavior
- Communication and Leadership
- Law
- Hospitality
- Education

### Key Features for Educators:

- 20 practice-oriented chapters structured around fundamental conflict decisions
- Exercises and reflective practices at the end of each section
- Applicable to both interpersonal and systemic conflict contexts
- Encourages embodied learning, emotional intelligence, and systems thinking

### Suggested Course Integration:

#### Week-by-Week Sample (10-Week Module)

- **Week 1:** Attention (Introduction, ch. 1)
- **Week 2:** Decisions and Requests (chs. 2-3)
- **Week 3:** Internal Regulation and Listening Practices (chs. 4-5)
- **Week 4:** Interpersonal Dynamics and Mindset (chs. 6-8)
- **Week 5:** Raising Topics and Identifying Questions (chs. 9-10)
- **Week 6:** The Impact of Punishment and Reward (ch. 11)
- **Week 7:** Collaboration and Constructive Action (chs. 12-13)
- **Week 8:** Structural Dimensions of Conflict (chs. 14-16)
- **Week 9:** Power, Belonging, and Systemic Forces (chs. 17-19)
- **Week 10:** Constructive Change and Final Projects (ch. 20)

### Sample Assignments:

- Weekly reflection journal responding to a chapter question
- Group presentation on applying the framework to a case study
- Midterm paper: Analyzing a real-world conflict using the 20 Decisions framework

- Final project: Preparing for a real-world difficult conversation using the framework

### **Sample Discussion Questions:**

1. How can shifting your attention change the nature of a conflict?
2. What is the difference between a request and a demand in conflict communication?
3. What does it mean to identify the question between parties in a conflict?
4. What kinds of power are at play in a specific conflict that you've observed?
5. What does it mean to see each conflict as proposing constructive change?