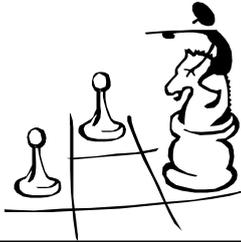


Is the avoidance of, and resolution of disputes just like a game of chess?

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**CHESS**



**C**hess  
**H**elps  
**E**licit  
**S**uccessful  
**S**olutions

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**Purpose**

**This seminar demonstrates how the skills learnt in chess can help when considering dispute avoidance and dispute resolution techniques.**



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Chess is ideal for teaching us that although we may have different needs, our minds can work in similar ways when trying to reach the mutual goal of resolving a dispute.

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Once involved in the “game”, the parties can discuss their problems and find alternatives and/or solutions.

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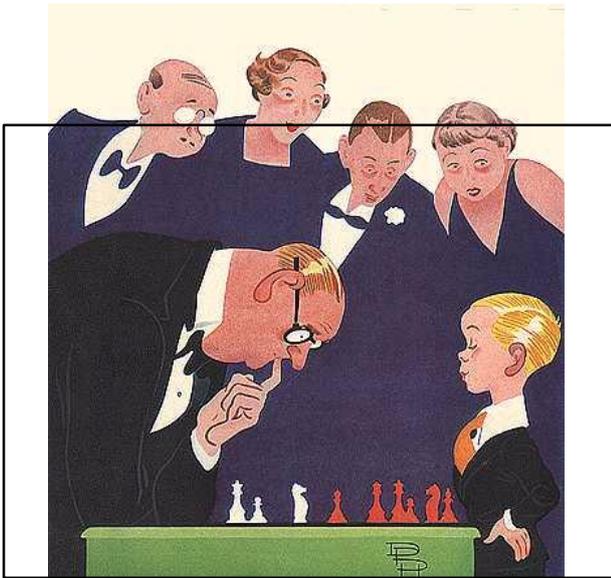
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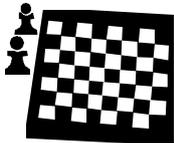
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The Chess board represents the dispute.  
The chess pieces become the parties.  
Each piece may represent the strengths  
that each party has. The way we move  
those pieces will lead us to success or  
failure.



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### **Dispute Resolution Skills**

- **Daniel Goleman**, in his book *Emotional Intelligence* (1995) noted that it is not only our pure intelligence that helps us to achieve in today's society, it is also our social emotional competence. The following slides compare some of the skills developed in chess with some of those that are key for resolving disputes.

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## Procedural Skills

- Understanding the Rules: You need to understand the 'rules' before you can play the game.
- Understanding the basic principles: You need to understand what you are trying to achieve before you play the game successfully.
- Think before you do: You need to think through the consequences of a move before making that move.
- Think possibilities and outcomes: Your mind needs to be open to new approaches. An old saying in chess is "When you see a good move don't make it. Why? Because you may find a better move if you keep looking". Have a plan but stay flexible.
- Keep your aim in mind at all times: That is to checkmate your opponent, not simply to remove pieces from the board.

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## Emotional Skills

- Managing skills: You need to manage feelings in every position of the game.
- Controlling impulses: If you do not control your impulses you might move too fast and may be not see that your chess position is in danger
- Delaying gratification: Sometimes in a chess position it is better not to capture a piece and wait for a better opportunity. Also sometimes it is better to sacrifice a piece for a long term gain – but if you sacrifice too much you will be surrounded by your opponent and will end up being put in checkmate yourself.
- Reducing Stress :To control and reduce stress when you play is very important in chess and in life.

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## Behavioural Skills

- Non verbal communication: In chess you learn to see non-verbal clues from your opponent.
- Verbal communication: Making requests, respond effectively to criticism, resisting negative influences, listening to others, helping others.
- Understanding behavioural norms: In chess you must always follow basic rules and etiquette rules.
- Positive attitude: In chess you must try to find the best choice in each position. You cannot be discouraged by setbacks.
- Self Awareness: Chess helps you develop the skill of setting realistic expectations. You cannot checkmate your opponent with the first move of the game.

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## Using Steps for Problem Solving

- Decision making, controlling impulses, setting goals, identifying alternatives and consequences: When you play chess you have to make decisions and resolve situations every time you move a piece. You must control your impulses. You must set short and long term goals to achieve a better position and win the game. This is also true when dealing with disputes.

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## Conflict resolution/fight

*It's White's turn to move. The Black pawns just moved forward. What would you do?*



If the white pawn moves forward, nobody can stop it. It will be promoted to a Queen and later the black King will be checkmated. But, if white captures black, the other black pawn will capture white and nobody will win. It will be a draw.

**Advice for Life:** When somebody challenges you, bothers you or steps into your space, your first reaction may be to bother or fight them back. Is it the best decision? It might be best to think before you move, focus on your goal and move away from trouble.

**Fighting does not solve anything, nobody wins**

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## Losing at Chess

- Losing at Chess: When players lose at Chess you often hear excuses such as; "I have not played for a long time", or "His method of opening the game confused me", or "The pieces were of an unusual size", or "The timekeeper was biased".
- Losing a Dispute: This is the one area of difference with dispute resolution. As we all know, we do not make excuses when we lose a dispute .....

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