

MY EXPERIENCE OF OVERCOMING CONFLICT

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Did you ever had a conflict where you had no idea of what to do? In the summer of 2023, fresh out of 10th grade, I was dreaming about my future. The idea of studying abroad had been lingering in my mind since I was a little girl. I wanted to immerse myself in different cultures and explore beyond the borders of Turkey. After researching countless countries, the results I had led me to consider pursuing my education in Germany.

I had finally found a place where I wanted to spend my future in, I was thrilled. I quickly started looking for universities and their programs. Well, since I had made up my mind the only thing that left for me to do was inform my parents. They surely were going to say yes. I mean, it was my future on the line and they wanted the best for me, right? I rehearsed what I was going to say, mustered up the courage and went to the living room to talk to them. Little did I know that it would be nothing like how I imagined. My parents were completely opposed to the idea. They started telling me about how I can not be alone in a country that I had never been before, that adapting into a new country while starting university would distract me from my studies and all kinds of excuses about why I should not go. At first I was angry, angry like I had never been before, thinking about how could they not want the thing that was the best for me. I left the living room in a breeze, went to my room and tried to relax myself. For the next few days I avoided the topic and so did my parents, but there was a tension in the air that could have been cut with a knife. I thought that by avoiding the topic, it would go away magically. But as the days went by I could not get the thought out of my head. That is when I realized that peace of mind is not the absence of conflict. I was going on about how I could have tackled this conflict, so I identified four essential steps. First of all, communication. I had to communicate. Communication skills are vital in times like this. Expressing myself using 'I' statements, making sure there was not any misunderstandings and validating each others feelings which also reminds me of Self Awareness; understanding your triggers, how your body reacts and how you behave when triggered. This helped me understand and process my emotions while stepping up in my arguments. My next step was, emotional regulation. Emotional regulation is when you are able to press pause and take a step back before reacting, it is also knowing coping skills that work for you including how to calm down and take time out if needed. Emotional regulation was something that I kept my mind on. I am a person that gets heated really fast so finding myself some coping skills and realizing when I should take time out was really useful. The last thing on my mind was my genuine desire to resolve this conflict. A willingness to compromise so we could move forward. So with all the steps I had in my mind, I had a talk with my parents, again. We had a long talk with a few tears from my mom, a lot of sighs from my dad, and words of hope from me.

In conclusion, this conflict with my parents over me studying abroad was a turning point in my personal growth. It has been nearly 9 months since we had this conversation. I am currently writing this essay on my desk while also preparing for my B1 certification exam in German, a stepping stone towards studying in Germany. What I am trying to tell you is that, even the conflicts that seem impossible to solve are easy as ABC's when you want them gone. Conflict is inevitable, but warfare is optional.