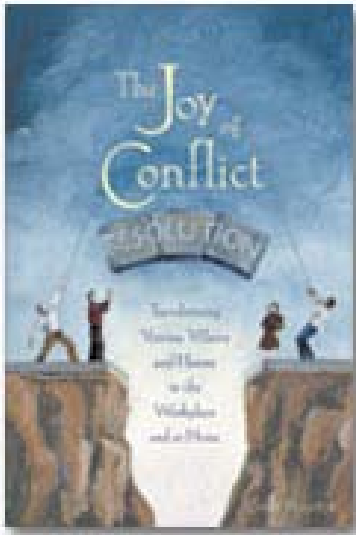


The following is an article on *The Joy of Conflict Resolution* from the December 2004 issue of *Frontlines* a newsletter of [www.benefitsCanada.com](http://www.benefitsCanada.com).



## BOOK REPORT

The Joy of Conflict Resolution

By Gary Harper

One might argue that having the words “joy” and “conflict” in the same title is a bit optimistic, but *The Joy of Conflict Resolution* plays on this juxtaposition in its aim of effecting workplace harmony. Written in a storybook narrative, the book focuses on how the faster paced workplace is negatively impacting employees. Casting each office employee as a “type,” author Gary Harper identifies the motivations and personality traits each player possesses—and how those characteristics affect other co-workers. The book takes a humorous approach to a topic that rarely elicits laughter, effectively deconstructing the toxic environments that many offices have become. It also illustrates how universal these pitched workplace battles are, and that simple communication can alleviate the most threatening of environments. Lastly, *The Joy of Conflict Resolution* lists steps embattled employees—and employers—can take when confronted with hostile situations. These include asking open-ended questions, being assertive without being aggressive and writing “scripts” of what to say during a conflict. Extra features include summaries at the end of each chapter and specific questionnaires to ensure the movement from theory to practice. The book is available from New Society Publishers at [www.newsociety.com](http://www.newsociety.com). —Anna Sharratt