October is

CONFLICT RESOLUTION MONTH IN COLORADO

Listen. Talk. Work it Out.

About Us

Each year, Conflict Resolution Month in Colorado selects a book that enhances problem-solving skills and/or inspires dialogue. Over 300 copies of the book are distributed across Colorado - to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor; legislators; supreme, district, and appellate court judges; alternative dispute resolution professionals; and various public libraries, including Little Free Libraries.

This Reader's Guide was created to
further conversation and inspire connection with others.

Learn more. Get involved.

www.conflictresolutionmonth.org

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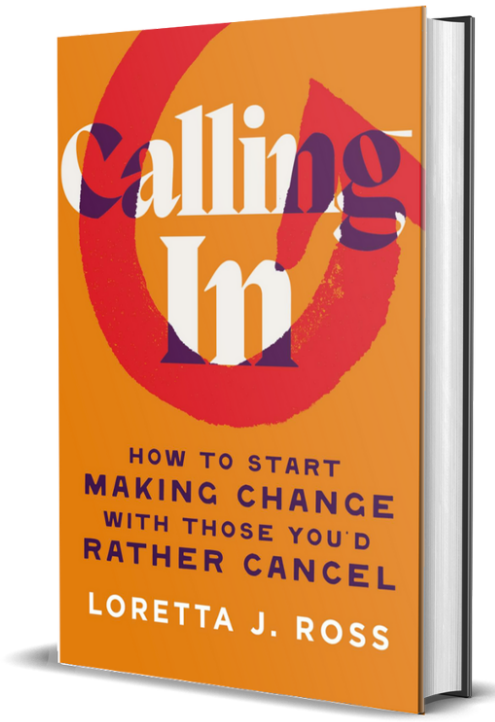
2025 Book Selection



Loretta J. Ross, Activist, Professor & Public Intellectual

"I believe that if a hard-headed rabble-rouser like me could learn new ways to have difficult conversations, nearly anyone could learn if they want to become their better selves and make this their default so that they're always working to demonstrate kindness instead of anger." --Loretta J. Ross

Guiding Questions

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION: What is our default to "Calling In?"

1. Loretta Ross describes calling in as “call out done with love” p. 26. What does calling in mean to you?
2. What unhealthy ways of handling conflict did you witness in your childhood? What healthy ways of handling conflict did you experience?
3. In Chapter 5, Loretta writes, “Calling in is radical imagination work that offers true revolutionary potential for changing our relationships with ourselves and the world.” How does this statement speak to you?
4. The final point in Loretta’s book concludes with: “We start with ourselves, and we end with ourselves.That’s the funny loop of calling in.” How do you see yourself being the change in relationships as you begin using calling in strategies while handling conflict?

INTERPERSONAL CONNECTION: How to engage others with kindness.

1. When you are regulated yourself, and you approach a conflict with love and respect, how can you initiate the conversation in a way that signals your respect for the other person's humanity, even if you disagree with their actions/words?
2. How would you describe “Empathetic Accountability,” and how do you feel it can support the conflict resolution process?
3. Consider a current conflict that you are experiencing. How can you focus on the problem and not make the other person the issue? Brainstorm some ideas.
4. Is there an insult that you need to apologize for? If yes, when? How can you use what you’ve learned about Calling In to initiate this apology?
5. How can you approach a current conflict as “me and you?” rather than “me versus you?” List some specific things you could say or do.
6. Think of a relationship in which you would like to impart your values to someone else. How do you think listening to them could open the door for them to listen to you? Write down some intentional ways you will listen this week.

CPI Crisis Prevention offers ideas for de-escalation:

- ✓ Stay calm: Use a calm tone of voice and monitor your volume.
- ✓ Active listening: Give your full attention, nod, and ask clarifying questions.
- ✓ Empathize: Show genuine concern and a willingness to understand without judging.
- ✓ Focus on feelings (without agreeing with behavior): "I understand that you have every right to feel angry, but it is not okay for you to use abusive language."
- ✓ Respect personal space: Maintain a safe distance.
- ✓ Use nonthreatening nonverbals: Relaxed body language, open hands, neutral facial expression.
- ✓ Set limits clearly and respectfully: "It's important for us to be calm in order to talk. How can that be accomplished?"
- ✓ Allow silence for reflection.
- ✓ Offer choices and solutions.

"We have to talk to each other, and actively listen, to discover our commonalities and share our visions for change."

"I want people to feel energized by the possibility of personal emotional growth and be more forgiving of themselves and others. I want people to understand that mistakes—ours and others—are proof of our humanity and our vulnerability. Mistakes are not reasons to cancel or dispose of other human beings, but opportunities to explore how we can help people obtain the pleasure of growing their integrity and emotional intelligence."

-- Loretta J. Ross