Know Your Other Options 10 min

- When you really understand yourself and your interests, you can also see that there is more than one way to get your interests met.
- When we only think about positions, it can seem like we must get what we want through the negotiation.
- When we think about our interests, though, we realize there is always another option.
- What you can do if negotiation does not work is called your “other option.” Everyone say “other option”. (Have the students repeat after you.)
- Knowing your other option helps free you in a negotiation, because it lets you know that while negotiating can help you get your interests, you don’t need to agree to anything hurtful or unfair.
- One way to understand this is to think about going to the market. Let’s say you want to buy a basket from a seller, but the price is very high. If you can’t get the seller to bring the price down, you also have other options. What are some other options you would have?

(Allow the girls to answer until you hear 1 or 2 good examples of other options, such as:

- I could go to a different seller
- I could decide not to buy a basket

- Great answers! If you can’t get the seller to drop the price, you don’t need to agree. You could get a basket from someone else, or you could look for a bag instead of a basket.

(Turn to Flipchart 5 from Appendix I):

Other option: How you can best meet your interests other than continuing to negotiate

- Let’s think about Hope’s other options. She really wants to see Mary, but she has to babysit. How can she meet her interests if she can’t get Mary agree to help babysit?

- She could ask her mother if she could take her brother with her to Mary’s house
- She could ask one of her sisters or brothers to babysit for her so she could go to Mary’s house.

- Great job! Those are all other options for Hope.
Before you start a negotiation, you need to think about your other options. That is a lot easier to do once you have thought about your interests. You just need to think about how else you could get those interests taken care of.

To find your other options, ask yourself: what could I do to get my needs met if the other person does not negotiate with me? Could I ask someone else? Could I find a different way?

Thinking through your other options is really important. It means that you will not feel “trapped” into agreeing on something that does not meet your interests.

If you have a lot of other options, how important do you think the negotiation is?

(Allow them to discuss so you can reinforce the point that when there are a lot of good other options, the negotiation is less important.)

What if you don’t have a good other option? How important is the negotiation?

(Allow them to discuss until they understand that when there are not good other options, it is very important to negotiate and find a solution together.)

Sometimes in a negotiation, we feel like we do not have any options—like we just have to agree to what the other person is telling us. But, it is important to remember that there is actually always another option.

Knowing that you always have another option in a negotiation tells you that you never have to agree to something that hurts you or does not meet your interests.