

CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

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SERVANT LEADERS



INTRODUCTION

Genesis 12:1-3

Our lives and everything we do are to demonstrate the blessing that God has brought to our lives and to our families.

Acts 2:36

Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Phillipians 2:12

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

Romanos 12:18

It is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

God equips us to use/manage all that He has given us. Remember He does through us what we cannot do for ourselves. We are to live out the power of the gospel, demonstrating to the world His power in every area of our lives. We are not saved by works but our works are to demonstrate He lives and acts in us. Even conflict is an opportunity to demonstrate the truth of the Gospel in our lives and relationships.

WHERE DOES CONFLICT COME FROM?

Conflict results from real or perceived opposition to one's....

1. VALUES
2. ACTIONS
3. DESIRES AND INTERESTS



I. Values - Priorities that drive my lifestyle, my priorities determine my values.

“Values are the essence of who we are as human beings. Our values take us out of bed each morning, help select the work we do, the company we keep, the relationships we build, and ultimately, groups and organizations associate with. Our values influence every decision and move we make, even to the point of how we choose to make our decisions.” - Dr. Robert Rue

Conflict arise with others when we don't share values that determine where we spend our time, energy and money, etc... This can happen between friends or spouses. It can be as complicated as how to raise children or where we spend our free time.

II. Actions - The way I live my life with others

When two objects or people make contact they collide in life. This collision can cause conflict due to the choices one makes. For example, I am driving and a man decides to turn to the left into my lane, without looking first. I blow my horn to warn him and now he wants to say that it was my fault! How I react can determine the conflict I am involved in.

III. Desires and General Interests: Sports...

It is interesting that something so simple as the sports team one follows can lead to conflict. We have all seen fights break out at different sporting venues around the world. People who are willing to fight the other teams' spectators just because they follow a different team!

My Perception of Conflict - How I view conflict will determine how are react to it in my life. Most people react to it because they don't understand it and know how to manage it correctly.



What do you see ? A Woman? How old?

Our perspective can shape everything.

Two Types of Conflict

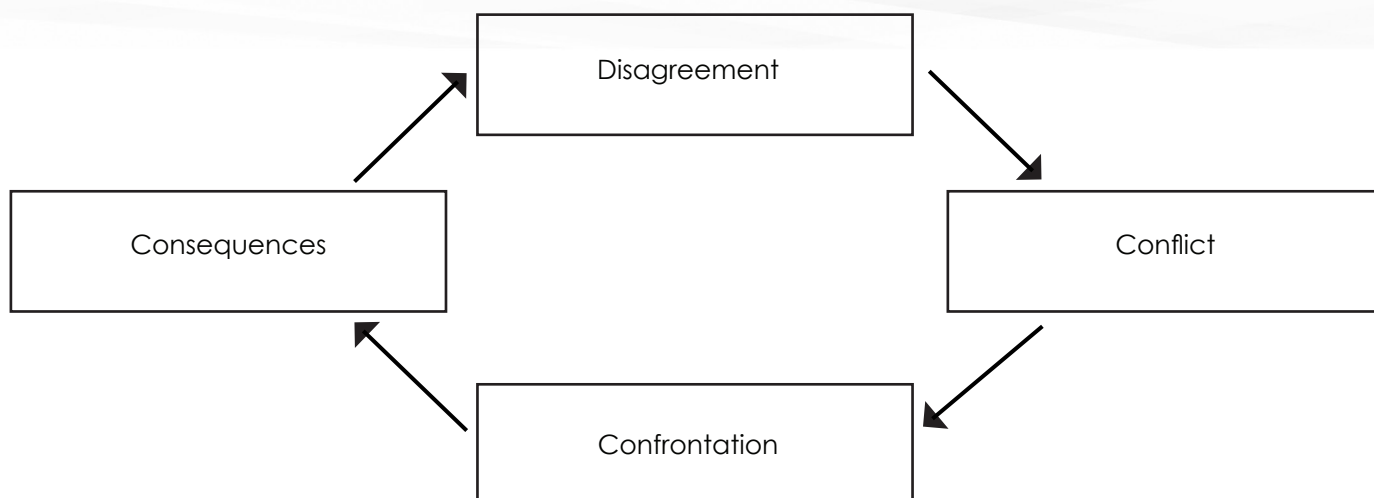
1. **DESTRUCTIVE** - This is Conflict can destroy teams turning friends into enemies, separate families and divide churches. Most people believe/perceive all conflict to be destructive in nature.
2. **CONSTRUCTIVE** – This is Conflict that builds strong relationships, creating trust and giving opportunity for personal and relational growth. If we can change how we see conflict we can then equip ourselves to turn it into opportunity for something positive.



DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

Destructive conflict occurs when the actions, the values or the behavior of two or more people result in a collision, rather than seeking a mutually agreeable solution of the conflict. When conflict is mishandled it follows a destructive cycle. Remember that conflict is not the problem but rather how we respond to it. Conflict becomes destructive because of the way we respond to it.

I. The Destructive Cycle:



Conflict of Values:

There is a recommendation that the worship pastor has been given to us. He wants to buy a new piano and is going to cost "\$X. ..."

Downward Spiral:

1. **Disagreement:** Is it good for us to spend money or not.
2. **Competition:** It is all about winning, how I see the money being spent.
3. **Destruction:** The focus now is to take down the other team member. Others are now viewed as a threat, one that needs to be removed.
4. **Adjustment:** In the destructive downward spiral one arrives the place where teams divide, people remove friends from facebook, you can no longer relate the same what with trust and respect.



II. 2 Carnal responses to conflict that lead us to Destructive Conflict. These are natural responses, when we yield to our sinful tendencies.



A. 2 Types of FLEEING:

1. PACIFIST

They think...

- (a) Conflict is Bad.
- (b) It is better to ignore it.
- (c) It will take care of itself .

2. AVOIDER

They think....

- (a) Conflict? What conflict?
- (b) I am willing to lie to avoid conflict.
- (c) I would rather diminish sin than confront it.

B. 2 Types of Fighters

1. DEFENDER

They think.....

- (a) The most important thing is to not change my position. I won't move!
- (b) I don't care who you are, I am not going to change.
- (c) I will justify my way to victory.

2. ATACANTE

They think....

- (a) They way to solve conflict is just win!
- (b) If I hurt you it is part of the process and not my fault.
- (c) It is all about power!



2 Men 2 Sinful Reactions to Conflict 2 Samuel 13-15.

Take time to read the 3 chapters and answer the following questions.

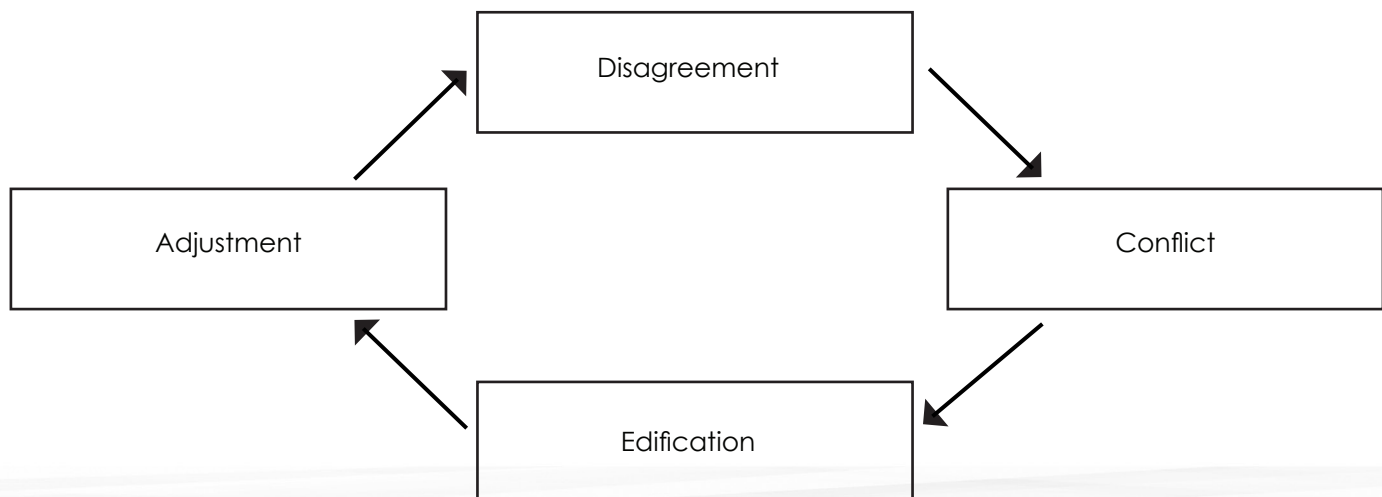
1. Name all the people involved in the story.
2. Identify the main conflict and the conflicts that flow out of it.
3. Next to each name of the all the participants in the different conflicts place the carnal response they gave.
4. What were the results of the different carnal responses and how did they affect the progression of the destructive conflict?

CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

The constructive conflict refers to the conflict where the benefits outweigh the costs; they generate productive decisions, and are mutually beneficial. - Colette L. Meehan

Constructive Conflict occurs when one sees it as an opportunity to grow in their relationship with others.

I. Constructive Cycle:



1. DISAGREEMENT - (a) Opposition to value. (b) Emotions grow. (c) 40% The person is the issue, 60% the problem is the issue.
2. CONFLICT/SOLUTION - Process to follow (a) Clarify the issue, (b) Permit the person to be respected and safe, (c) Listen Actively to the other person. James 1:19-20
3. EDIFICATION - (a) The relationship is built up. (b) Grace and Mercy are given, (c) Both parties move forward. Philippians 2:3-4
4. ADJUSTMENT - (a) The adjustment reflects restoration. (b) Both Parties move forward. I Thessalonians 5:15.

THINK ABOUT IT:

With Constructive Conflicts the process is just as important as the result. - Cameron Woolford

With out conflict we don't have change or growth. - Cameron Woolford

The conflict does not divide the churches ... however, the mishandling of the conflict is very destructive. Handled well, the conflict will mature us as we put into practice His divine love. Handled poorly, our selfishness will grow and kill Christian unity. - David Graef

II. 3 Key abilities to produce Constructive Conflict

1. **Clarify:** Make sure that every one understands all points of view and differences (OICA).
2. **Permit:** Make sure that each one feels that their views and values are valid.
3. **Active Listening:** Understand the meaning behind the words.



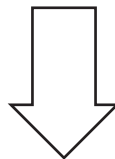
I. CLARIFY

O.I.C.A. Method

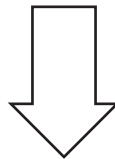
Observation - State exactly what you have observed



Interpretation - Explain how you interpret the information, keep an open mind to always give the benefit of the doubt to the other person.



Clarification - Give the other person the opportunity to clarify the matter. Look for alternative interpretations.



Accusation - With patience and love, show the other person how their behavior has been wrong.

2 Goals for Clarification

1. **CORRECT** my story: My wrong interpretation of the matter. In many cases you will not need to move towards accusation because clarifications clear things up and help to move towards a mutual resolution.
2. **UNDERSTAND** the position of the other person. This takes time and an ability to separate the issues from the person. Many times emotions keep us from truly understanding what the other person is trying to communicate.



II. PERMIT

3 Aspects of PERMIT:

1. Accept the legitimacy of the values and opinions of the other person. We need to help the other person feel that even if I disagree with them their position is a legitimate one. We need to be careful not to communicate an attitude of condemnation or superiority but rather a true desire to understand.
2. Make the other person feel safe to share their values and opinions. If someone feels threatened because they feel personal attacked we can escalate the conflict.
3. Demonstrate Respect. We can demonstrate respect by giving a chance to the other person to speak and not interrupt. We can demonstrate respect by giving correct body language, not crossing our arms or making noised under our breath.

III. ACTIVE LISTENING

4 Aspects of Active Listening:

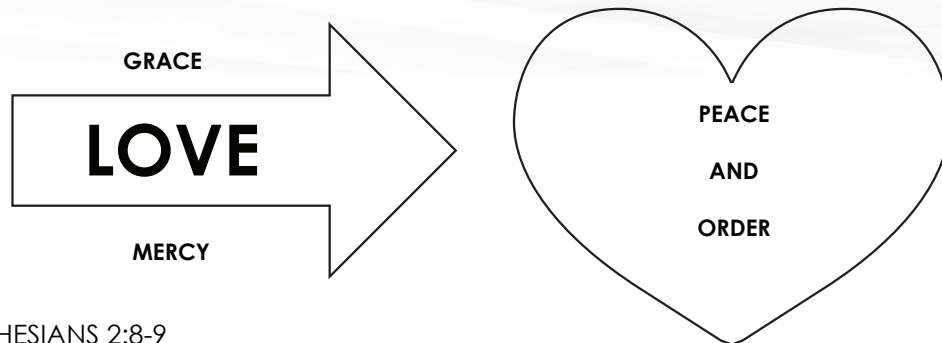
1. Give ATTENTION - Give full attention to the person that speaks, and examine the message. Recognize that the non-verbal communication also "talks" with a loud voice. Do not look down at the floor, seek to maintain eye contact. Don't just listen to the words but try to understand the emotions behind them.
2. DEMONSTRATE that you are listening - Use your body language and gestures to demonstrate its attention. Something as simple as crossing your arms can demonstrate you are not interested and are holding your position no matter what. Don't pick up or answer your cell phone or look at your compute during this time.
3. OFFER questions - Our filters, assumptions, judgments and beliefs can distort what we heard. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require that you reflect on what is being said and ask questions of clarification. Interaction and a real desire to understand through the asking of questions can demonstrate a real desire to understand and reconcile.
4. HOLD back judgement - To Interrupt is a waste of time, FRUSTRATES the person speaking and limits their full understanding of the message. Be very careful to jump to conclusions and not give the benefit of the doubt. The most important thing is that God is honored above all else even if means you have to humble yourself and your opinions.



GOSPEL CENTERED CONFLICT

The Gospel is the power that not only saved us, giving us new life in Christ, but is also the power that sustains us. It is the power by which we live each and every day as we walk in a world that is broken and under the rule of Satan. The Gospel brought you peace with God and order to your disorderly life. We must let that power do the same with our conflict. The Gospel should be evident in every area of our lives even in our conflicts!

2. Facets of LOVE: As we deal with conflict we need to become experts in applying the truth of the gospel giving undeserved kindness – GRACE and not giving the other person what we think they deserve – MERCY



1. GRACE - EPHESIANS 2:8-9
2. MERCY - ROMANS 5:7-8

2 Heart Results:

1. PEACE - Philippians 2:7
2. ORDER - I Corinthians 14:33a

Following the example of Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

1. We lose ourselves.
2. Elevate others.

Principles that help to ensure Constructive Conflict:

1. Live committed to one another
2. Values relationships.
3. Celebrate diversity over conformity.
4. Learn how to build and maintain trust with others.

