

Some introductory thoughts ...

1. Not about new-ness, but about do-ness.
 - I want fresh and new.

2. Number of us have a negative view of conflict.
 - Could be way we grew up.

 - Conflict is a normal and natural part of relationships.
 - We just need to figure out how to work through it in a God-honoring way.

3. I am by no means suggesting
 - That this a comprehensive conflict resolution plan.
 - Deeper issues most likely will require more intensive help and counseling.

4. You have to prepare & train for it.
 - It is highly unlikely that you will just naturally get it right ...
 - In the heat of the moment.

1 Timothy 4:7-8 "...train yourself to be Godly.⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

It is a little bit like a 1st AID KIT

- You don't want to start looking for one, once you have had an accident.
- You want to have one readily at hand.

Physical kit – with words in it?

RESOLVING CONFLICT

INITIATOR'S – KIT

1. REMEMBER WHO THE ENEMY IS

Ephesians 6:12 ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

2. BE SELF-CONTROLLED & ALERT

1 Peter 5:8 ⁸Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Who is he looking for?

- Satan is going from Relationship to Relationship ...
- Friendship to friendship, Marriage to marriage ...
- Family to family and Family Group to Family Group ...
- Looking for People who are not Self-Controlled and Alert.
- Looking for people with a short fuse ...
- And who easily give into their emotions.

3. GET A GODLY PERSPECTIVE

Psalm 127:1 ¹Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.

Take your problem to God 1st!

- Let God help you develop some Godly perspective.
- Some perspective on yourself
- Some perspective on the situation
- And some perspective on the “other party.”

Romans 15:1 ¹ We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak ...

This is pretty embarrassing, but I always read it as “bare” ...

- As in put up with.

In other words, ...

- If you are strong in a particular area ...
- The kind thing to do would be do “bare” with those who are not.

That is on so many levels not what this passage is saying ...

“bear” = bastazo

- To cause something to come to a higher position
- To sustain or carry.

And the word “ought to” means ...

- To owe or be indebted too .

Failings = weaknesses (weaknesses of the weak).

So, we who are strong are under an obligation to carry the weaknesses of the weak.

Communicate your feelings in a loving way ...

4. MAKE THE TRUTH AS EASY TO HEAR AS POSSIBLE

1 Corinthians 13:4–8 ⁴Love is patient, love is kind... it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

What does that look like?

Make it as easy to hear possible.

- Be gracious.

Think & Pray through WHAT you want to say

- And HOW you want to say it.

Run it through the Filter

- Is it patient, kind, humble, loving, protecting ...

Then communicate feelings as feelings and not as facts.

Example – Get couple on Stage

- ...

RESPONDER’S – KIT

Now let’s assume that someone didn’t consult their Kit

- Before bring up something with you.

I have been caught off-guard, unprepared or untrained far too many times.

- It is fairly rare for someone to communicate the truth with lots of grace.
- And to try and make it as easy to hear as possible.

1. REMEMBER WHO THE ENEMY IS

Ephesians 6:12 ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Although the other person might be acting like Satan.

- They are not the ENEMY!
- And you have to remember that.
- It is their emotions talking.

You have to Fight for OBJECTIVITY!

- This is so easy for me to see when I am helping others.
- And so hard for me to see when I go through it myself.

Decision I had to make about marriage (in context of who Lisa is – not entitled).

1. Unrighteous
2. Cause us to leave God / “fall away.”
3. Bankrupt us

90% of conflicts are about nonsense.

I have had to so often say to myself, looking at the person in front of me.

- You are not the ENEMY!!!

2. HUMBLE YOURSELF

Philippians 2:5–8 ⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁶Who, being in very nature God ...

Who is Jesus?

Colossians 1:15–18 ¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

...

Philippians 2:6 ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant,

Jesus gave up his right and emptied himself out.

- And took on the nature of a slave or a bondservant.
- He bonded himself to us in order to break the power of sin over us.

Now Paul says ...

Philippians 2:5–8 ⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus ..

When someone brings up something with you.

- You are going to have to Humble yourself.
- You are going to have to make yourself Nothing.
- Empty yourself out!

Illustrate with Cup

This is not a Time to bring up Your Issues!

- OR even the way that they are Bringing up their Issue with you.

This is SUPER EXPOSING!!!!

- And it will not come naturally.
- You will have to Fight for it.
- You are going to have to dig deep.
- You have to remain in the vine.

If you are walk with God is shallow.

- You are going to find yourself wanting.

ILLUSTRATE

You cannot take something out of a well that is not there.

“You cannot give what you do not have and cannot help but give what you do have.”

As you build this heart, bite your tongue, pray!!!

- Do whatever it takes.
- But do not under any circumstances retaliate.

3. SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

Proverbs 20:5 ‘The purposes of a man's heart are **deep waters**, but a man of understanding draws them out.’

We are all “deep” and “complex” as people.

- Everybody is normal till you get to know them.

We all have a story and a perspective.

- And most conflict arise from a difference of perspective or story.

When you bring up something with me ...

- You do it from a certain perspective or within a certain storyline.

And the man of understanding ...

- Is willing to draw out the perspective and the story.

This can be very hard because ...

- It is usually hurt emotions talking ...
- And it is also unreasonable emotions talking.
- What I call the "Porcupine Effect." – **SARIEN: Kan jy asb die woorde "Porcupine Effect" met n image van n hectic porcupine op sit?**

Understanding is not about who is right or wrong.

- It is about validating people's feelings.
- Look past the emotion, the accusations.
- Past the exact words and phrases used.
- You are simply trying to understand & empathize.

When we are hurt, we want to be heard.

- And if I don't feel hurt, I am going to either ...
- Increase the volume
- Draw into my shell.
- OR speak to those who will listen.

Put yourself in the persons shoes.

- Their context, their perspective, their feelings, their world.

4. BRING ABOUT HEALING

How do I bring about Healing?

SINCERE APPOLOY!!!

- I am so sorry for making you feel that way.
- No "if's" or "but's".

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones

How can I bring about healing.

- It might be quick or it might take time.

But it needs to be clear to the other person that you are fighting for it!

- Studying, reading, praying, seeking council ...
- And changing!

RESPONDER'S KIT

1. Remember who the Enemy is.
2. Humble Yourself
3. Seek to Understand
4. Bring about Healing.

HOMEWORK

- As couples and families we need to talk it through.
- As family groups we need to talk it through.

- Figure out what needs to be in your kit.