

Conflict Resolution

Dec 2, 2001

1. Conflict resolution quiz. When my spouse and I (or if you are not married substitute a work or family situation) are having a disagreement I:

1.1.

1. A. Focus on what I can do to correct it
2. B. Focus on understanding my spouses perspective
3. C. Focus on what we both can do to correct it

1.2.

1. A. Am ready to admit that both of us are part of the problem
2. B. Encourage open discussion, allowing both parties to express their feelings
3. C. First admit that I am part of the problem

1.3.

1. A. Look for biblical things my spouse can do to resolve the issue
2. B. Recognize I cannot do anything to change my spouse
3. C. Express my feelings so my spouse will clearly understand my position

1.4.

1. A. Focus on my thoughts about the issue and examine them biblically
2. B. Focus on what my spouse is feeling and try to understand
3. C. Focus on the situation and try and understand the facts

1.5.

1. A. Focus on defining new behaviors we can practice on together
2. B. Focus on changing my behavior comparing my actions against biblical principles
3. C. Listening to my spouse describe what they think I should change about my behavior

1.6.

1. A. Listen carefully to the words my spouse uses as they describe areas of concern
2. B. Make sure I understand what my spouse is saying through tone of voice and body language
3. C. Focus on using proper words, tone of voice and body language in what I say

1.7.

1. A. Take time to point our in the midst of our disagreement things I appreciate
2. B. Avoid (A) because my spouse will interpret it as trying to "butter them up" or win them over
3. C. Stick to focusing on the disagreement in order not to be distracted

1.8.

1. A. Focus on defining ways that together we can become more like each other
2. B. Explain to my spouse that it is natural to disagree because men and women see things differently
3. C. Appreciate the different perspective my spouse has and try and learn from that difference

1.9.

1. A. Think about the way that I would want to be treated if I were in my spouses situation
2. B. Write down specific repeatable and attainable ways I can better serve my spouse in the future
3. C. Give my spouse suggestions on how we can avoid situations that created the disagreement

1.10.

1. A. Reinforce the past good times we've had together and suggest we move past our disagreements
2. B. Resolve to focus on the positive qualities of my spouse rather than the negative
3. C. Commit to solve the root cause of the immediate conflict permanently before moving on

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2. How should we resolve conflict

2.1. Focus on our own THOUGHTS first

2.1.1. **Learn to recognize UNBIBLICAL thinking** instead of trying to justify a right to escape from the conflict

- > They won't listen:
God's word says: listen to advice and accept instruction **Prov 19:20**
- > They only care about themselves:
God's word says: don't judge motives **Matt 7:1**
- > Just learn to live with it.
God's word says: I can do all things through Christ **Phil 4:13**
- > I can't take the pressure
God's word says: He won't give you more than you can bear **I Cor 10:13**

2.1.2. **Work hard to REPLACE unbiblical thinking with biblical thoughts**

- > 2 Cor 10:4-5 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
- > Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--
- > Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness

2.1.3. **What should you be thinking**

- > **What is God trying to teach me in the midst of this conflict**
James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
- > **God will help me to endure these conflicts**
I Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
- > **God has a purpose in this conflict**
Phil 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
Romans 8:28 8 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
Psalms 66:10 For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver.
- > **What can I do differently to make it easier for us to solve this conflict?**
Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
- > **How am I contributing to the problem?**
Matthew 7:3-5 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

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2.2. **Make sure our ATTITUDE is biblical.** Thinking and attitude go hand in hand. An attitude is a cluster of thoughts, repeatedly expressed and reinforced so that it influences your behavior and character

2.2.1. **Stimulus → Thoughts → Emotions → Actions → Character**

2.2.2. **Humility**

- **James 3:13-18** Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.
- **Colossians 3:12-14** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.
- **Proverbs 18:2** A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.

2.2.3. **Gentleness (Meekness)**

- **Proverbs 12:18** Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
- **Proverbs 15:1** A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- **Proverbs 15:4** The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.
- **II Timothy 2:24-25** And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,

2.2.4. **Patience (Longsuffering)**

- **Proverbs 19:11** A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.
- **I Corinthians 13:4** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

2.2.5. **Forgiveness**

- **Colossians 3: 12-14** (as above)
- **Ephesians 4:31-32** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- **I Corinthians 13:5** Love is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
- **I Peter 4:8** Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.