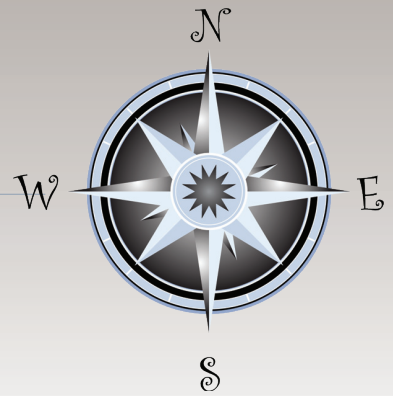


The Courage Principle of **CONFLICT**



“Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional.”

Max Lucado

PRINCIPLE OF THE WEEK

There are those who think that life should be completely without conflict, but behind every remarkable man or woman, there are stories of great conflict. Those experiences have taught them principles that have made them wise.

Often conflict arises as our ideas clash with other people’s ideas and opinions. A major part of our lives is spent learning how to present our ideas and how to react to the ideas and opinions of others. As we deal with this conflict and often the tension that accompanies it, we should become better people. Through this process, we discover our strengths and weaknesses. The gift of reasoning enables us to make the choice to grow and overcome conflict.

We can choose to let conflicts polish our character or we can allow them to make us angry at life. We can be humble and thankful and learn from the conflict or be critical, haughty and arrogant. It is not wrong to have conflict and we should not be afraid of it. In fact, we cannot grow or make progress without it.

It is important to avoid turning conflict into a war. If a conflict does become a war, it will separate us from important relationships and associates. It is good to prepare for conflict with the intent of finding a resolution. This seems like a statement of the obvious, but many people approach conflict with the idea that they must win at all costs instead of recognizing that the

best answer is often a compromise or finding the solution that is best for the greater good whether that be for a relationship, a business, or public policy. “Whenever you are in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it and that factor is attitude.” (William James)

Some people will choose to not address conflict at all. They ‘go along to get along.’ They think that by addressing a conflict, they are creating one, so they simply keep quiet when upset. This does not resolve conflict, it simply hides it for a while – it is not a healthy long-term strategy. Unresolved conflict can lead to resentment and drive a permanent wedge into a relationship.

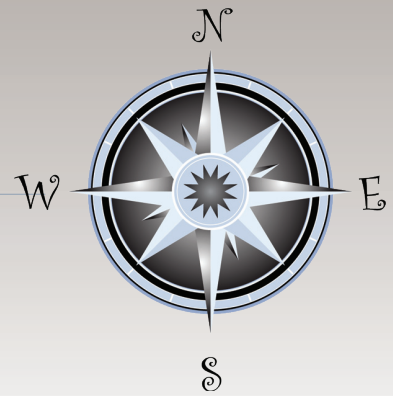
Benefits

There are several benefits to be gained by being able to resolve conflict well:

1. You will learn other people’s perspectives on problems and situations.
2. You will discover your own strengths and weaknesses. Dealing with conflict requires creativity, reason and discernment in order to overcome and resolve the issue.
3. You will build stronger relationships by keeping open communication and being respectful of the other person’s opinion.
4. You will grow and progress as a person and become a problem solver rather than someone who is contributing to the problem.

Action Plan for

CONFLICT



5. You will alleviate the stress and tension associated with having unresolved conflict.

Characteristics

Those who handle conflict well:

- Approach the problem from a place of humility and desire to hear and understand the other side of the story or other person's viewpoint.
- Keep a good attitude and refrain from sarcastic remarks or verbally attacking during discussion.
- Express opinions in an open manner and give reasons and logic for their point of view.
- Do not fear altering their opinions once they have listened to the other party's perspective and reasoning. They truly desire what is best overall for everyone involved.

Steps to Follow

1. Be committed to humility. Regardless of if you are "right" or "wrong," humility is a becoming trait. It keeps you from alienating yourself from others and ensures you approach others with the right attitude.
2. Remember that being right is not more important than breaking relationship.
3. Know how you feel and why you feel that way before you engage in conflict. Knee jerk reactions or speaking before you think will only increase the tension in a conflict.
4. Be a good listener. It is vital to understand the other person's perspective. Helping the other person to feel heard and understood can go a long way in resolving the conflict. Do not listen to answer, listen to understand.

5. Keep an open mind during communication. Do not become defensive or shut down.

6. Say what is on your mind in a way that is clear and assertive without being aggressive and manipulating. When you manipulate others, you may get your way but the conflict is not resolved.

Remember... Thoughts become actions. Actions become habits. Habits become our destiny.

Reflect and respond

1. How does conflict make you feel?
2. Have the conflicts in your life made you a better person?
3. Give an example of when conflict has helped you in life.

Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle?										
Check list for the daily reading of this principle	M	T	W	T	F	S	S			

Completed

Not completed