Managing and Understanding Conflict in a Time of Rapid Change

Rev. Dr. Karin Walker

All materials copyrighted. Use only with permission
Change

• The rate of change is directly correlated to the level of conflict.

• The faster the change, the greater the potential for conflict.
Why Conflict Is Uncomfortable

- Physical Implications, Debate
- Irrational Behaviors, Quick Assumptions
- Anger, Frustration, Emotions

We are not at our best in conflict.
In Conflict

• Make negative assumptions about the other.
• Dread encounters and insulate with others who are like-minded.
• Ignore the person or situation.
• Be visibly anxious about the issues.
In Conflict

Potshots are taken

Pastors/On/The/Spot

Hurting

Opposing

Testing
SACRED

SCARED
In a Sacred Space, there is no need to:

• Convict
• Convince
• Convert

Instead, we will:

• Listen
• Learn
• Lament
Intentional Centering

1. Be God’s.
2. Discern God’s call.
3. Share God’s love.
4 Responses

Martyr
Warrior
Avoider
Worrier
Reflection

What is your default response to conflict?

Instructions:

Take 2-3 minutes and think about a recent conflict in which you have been involved.

What worked and what didn’t?
De-escalation

1. You can change the outcome to win/win
2. You can get out of the middle often
3. You can be more objective
4. You can feel confident/positive about your role
Change Your Response: Focus On The Other

from Martyr to Caregiver
from Warrior to Peacebuilder
from Avoider to Embracer
from Worrier to Non-Anxious Presence
The ABCDE’s Of Conflict

Assessment

embrace

Clarify

Design

Engage
Assessment

Relationships
Information
Values
Interests
Resources
Structure

© Alban Institute
Assessment
Levels of Conflict
1. Difference of Opinion
2. Disagreement
3. Conflict
4. Fight or Flight
5. Divorce/Intractable
Assessment

What would it look like for conflict to be dialed down?

What needs to change for that to happen?

What role can you play in getting it there?
What statements can be spoken that represent common ground?
Clarify The Conflict Purpose

- What is at stake in this conflict?
- What would it look like to not be in conflict?
- Collaborate on a path forward.
- Create a new future picture.
Design A Process

- Script the critical moves
- Imagine the best
- Find the bright spots
- Clarify
Engage Group To Steward Process

Engage folks in action plan using Appreciative Inquiry:

What do we do well and how can we do more of it?
“The gift of listening is enough to resuscitate the deadness in one’s spirit.”

Rev. Dr. Karin Walker