

Confrontation, Part 2

(Continued from March 18, 2008)

How to Engage Effective Confrontation

3. When Conflict Occurs...

Define your concerns and perceptions.

To some people, confrontation is nothing more than an exercise in "verbal spewing." Think through the real issues and find as positive an approach as possible. Create a mental plan before you confront someone and describe why the issue is important to you.

Deliver your message with discipline.

Tact. Tone. Timing. These are the tools found in the toolbox of a wise builder. The goal in confrontation is *understanding*, not necessarily *agreement*.

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly... The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

—Proverbs 15:1-2, 28

Determine to listen.

"One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears—by listening to them."

Develop a plan of action.

Know where you are going. Remember, resolution is the goal in confrontation.

"Successful confrontation usually changes both people, not just one." —John Maxwell

Discern matters that are personal.

Sometimes *you* are the problem, not the other person. Healthy relationships require work, diligence and patience.

4. When Confrontation Succeeds, Celebrate and Build on the Benefits

Deepen Your Understanding

The more you understand, the greater your wisdom. *Knowledge* and *understanding* are not the same. You can have knowledge without understanding. Wisdom

is knowledge rightly applied as needed in a given situation.

"Women are meant to be loved, not to be understood." —Oscar Wilde

"To understand is to perceive patterns."
—Sir Isaiah Berlin

"Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding." —Kahlil Gibran

intentionality

Strengthen Your Unity

The greater your ability to confront and correct, the greater your unity and union will be with another person. When conflict is resolved, team members have greater appreciation and respect for each other. They believe they can work together!

Broaden Your Contribution

When you examine yourself and your contributions in detail, you learn how to sharpen focus, limit energies and offer the best possible solutions.

5. When Confrontation Brings Change, Accept and Adjust to the Outcome

Things change. You don't always remain in the same season of life. Your circumstances, successes and failures can be growth variables if you accept their reality and adjust accordingly.

You can be reconciled with another person without resolving a situation. Resolution deals with issues; reconciliation deals with relationships. It is the same in your relationship with God. You are in conflict with God through your sin. Yet, God is able to reconcile you to Himself through Jesus Christ.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

—Romans 5:8 (NAS)

If you want to know more about conflict resolution and reconciliation with God, visit www.davidhmckinley.com. (Select "blog" from the home page menu.)