

WELS Women's Ministry Leadership Conference

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Overcoming Conflict in Service

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Agree or Disagree?

- Conflict can always be avoided
- Conflict occurs because of misunderstandings
- Conflict can always be resolved
- Conflict is always bad

On your own: Consider the conflict between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41) in light of the "myths" listed above.



What is the root cause of conflict?

SIN!

So the answer is **F O R G I V E N E S S**

"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God." – James 4:1-2



Bottom Line...

**Model
Forgiveness
in Every Day
Life**

**A Special Gift for
Christians:**

**“Bear with each other, and
forgive...as the Lord
forgave you...put on love,
which binds all together in
perfect unity...”**

(Colossians 3:12-17)



Management of Conflict is Highly Contextual

- How important is the issue to you?
- How important is the relationship to you?

	Small Issue	Big Issue
Casual Relationship	?	?
Important Relationship	?	?



Style of Managing Conflict: **Accommodating**

Problem?

Neither party feels good about the process

When Appropriate?

To build the relationship when you're certain you won't harbor resentment



Style of Managing Conflict: **Forcing**

Problem?

- Psychological pain for the loser
- Damage to the relationship

When Appropriate?

- Emergencies
- Protecting someone's welfare
- Someone is taking advantage of another
- Appropriate exercise of authority



Style of Managing Conflict: **Withdrawal**

Problem?

No resolution!

When Appropriate?

When the issue just
doesn't matter



Style of Managing Conflict: **Compromising**

Problem?

- Only partial satisfaction for everyone involved

When Appropriate?

- When the issue is moderately important
- When time is short
- When other attempts fail



Style of Managing Conflict: **Collaborating**

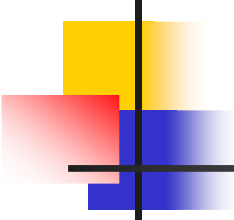
Problem?

NONE!

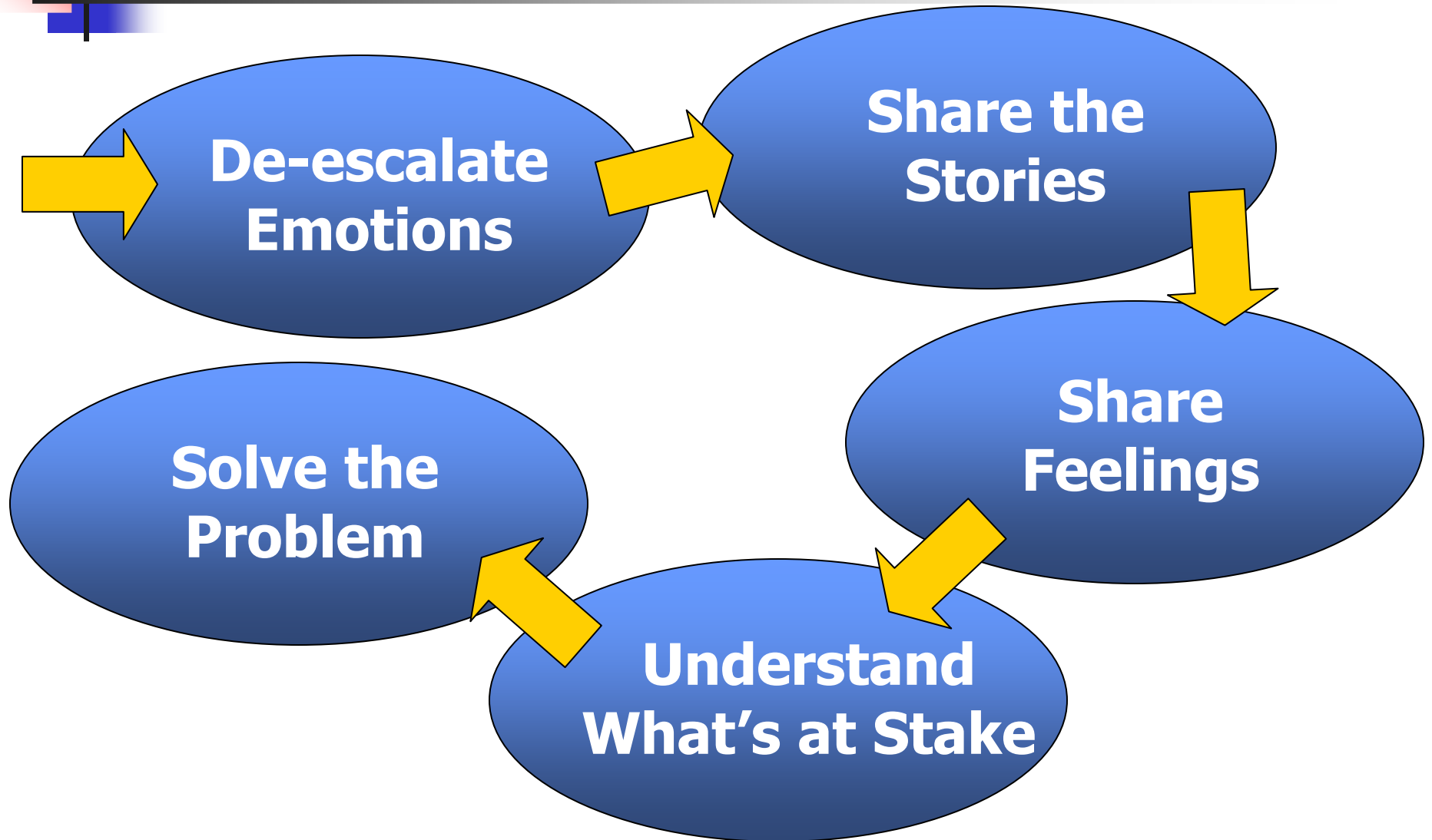
**When
Appropriate?**

ALWAYS! –
Especially when
both the
relationship and the
issue matter

..and this requires communication!

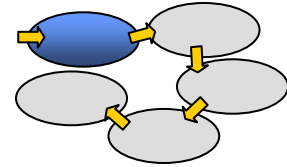


How do we have a “learning conversation”?





De-escalate the Emotions

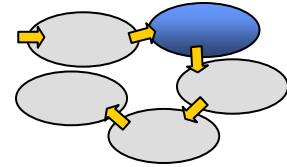


- Set your frame of mind: Be more mature, more humble, more forgiving
- Plan your message – pray about your message
- Put up shields, monitor non-verbal messages
- Separate the problem from the person
- Confirm the emotions of the other person and be quick to apologize, as needed

"A gentle answer turns away wrath." Proverbs 15:1



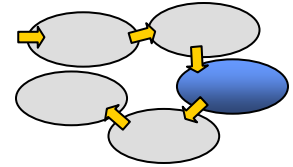
Share the Stories



- Both stories are legitimate, just different
- Response to conflict usually makes sense within the context of the story
- In humility:
 - actively listen to the other person's story, strive to understand, consider the merits of her/his perspective
 - tell your story, using "I messages"



Share the Feelings

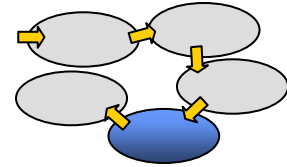


- What only I know (unless I tell you) – my intentions and how they affect me
- What only you know (unless you tell me) – your intentions and how they affect you
- Talk about contribution to the conflict rather than blame for the conflict
 - In humility be willing to see your own hidden contribution

Remember: Our sinful nature always wants to cast itself in the best possible light



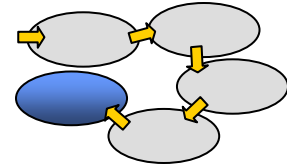
Understand What's at Stake



- What's this really about? What's at stake for each person
 - Know more immature people get locked into their own story and their own needs
 - Know people don't want to see themselves as used, a bad person, letting others down, etc
- Know the Gospel changes **EVERYTHING**
 - World becomes more trivial
 - We **AREN'T** perfect!
 - Jesus died for both of us
 - Forgive as we have been forgiven



Solve the Problem!



- Frame the problem so both on same side
- Come up with a win-win solution:
 - Define the problem
 - Analyze the problem
 - Agree on criteria for the solution
 - Generate multiple solutions
 - TOGETHER select the best



Overcoming Conflict in Service

Special thanks to Professor Mark Paustian, MLC, for his Bible study on Conflict, which provided the background for much of this presentation.

God's Help in Times of Conflict

- Psalm 133:3 – How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!
- Proverbs 15:1 – A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- Proverbs 15:8 – A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.
- Proverbs 26:20 – Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.
- Proverbs 29:22 – An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins.
- Matthew 5:23-24 – Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.
- Matthew 5:38-48 – You have heard that it was said, "Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth." But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- John 6:43 – "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered.

God's Help in Times of Conflict (con't)

- Romans 12:9-21 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves... Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer... Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse... Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud... Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
- Romans 15:5-6 – May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Romans 14:19 – Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.
- Galatians 5:22-23 – But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- Ephesians 4:1b-3 – I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace
- Ephesians 4:29-5:2 – Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

God's Help in Times of Conflict (con't)

- Philippians 2:14-15 – Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation in which you shine like stars in the universe
- Philippians 4:5 – Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
- Philippians 4:3 – I can do everything through him who gives me strength.
- Colossians 3:13-15 – Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.
- 1 Timothy 3:1-3 – If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach...self-controlled...not quarrelsome
- Philemon – mending broken relationships
- James 3:13,17-18 – 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...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. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.
- James 4:1-2 – What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.