

How to resolve conflict well

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Personal conflict styles self-awareness
3. Peace-making skills and 'rules'
4. Cup of tea (brief!)
5. Small group work on 'scenarios'
6. Feedback from small groups
7. Wrap Up

Introduction:

We live in a fallen world.

Resolving Conflict is a Top Priority for us

Matt. 5:23 Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

We ought to take the initiative in resolving conflict, just as God has with us.

Rom. 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us...¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

The goal of conflict resolution is Reconciliation

Styles of conflict self-awareness

Refer to Adult Personal Conflict
Style Indicator Questionnaire

COMPROM
-ISING

THE ISSUE

FORCING
(elephant)

While you are talking, she/
he is thinking of next
argument; not really
listening well

COLLABORATING
(owl)

May talk passionately, but
listens carefully and
compassionately to you

RELATIONSHIPS

AVOIDING
(turtle)

Neither really talks, nor really
listens – just doesn't want to
be there; wishes it was just
over

ACCOMMODATING
(bear)

When you talk, the bear is
saying all is fine, and agreeing
with you; when the bear talks,
everything sounds OK

Personal Conflict style inventory

- A starting point only – reflection on it is the most valuable part
- Helps us understand our different styles
- Enables us to see where we need personal growth
- **It is our choice as to whether conflict can be constructive or destructive. It can be an opportunity to grow, a time to learn to see things differently**

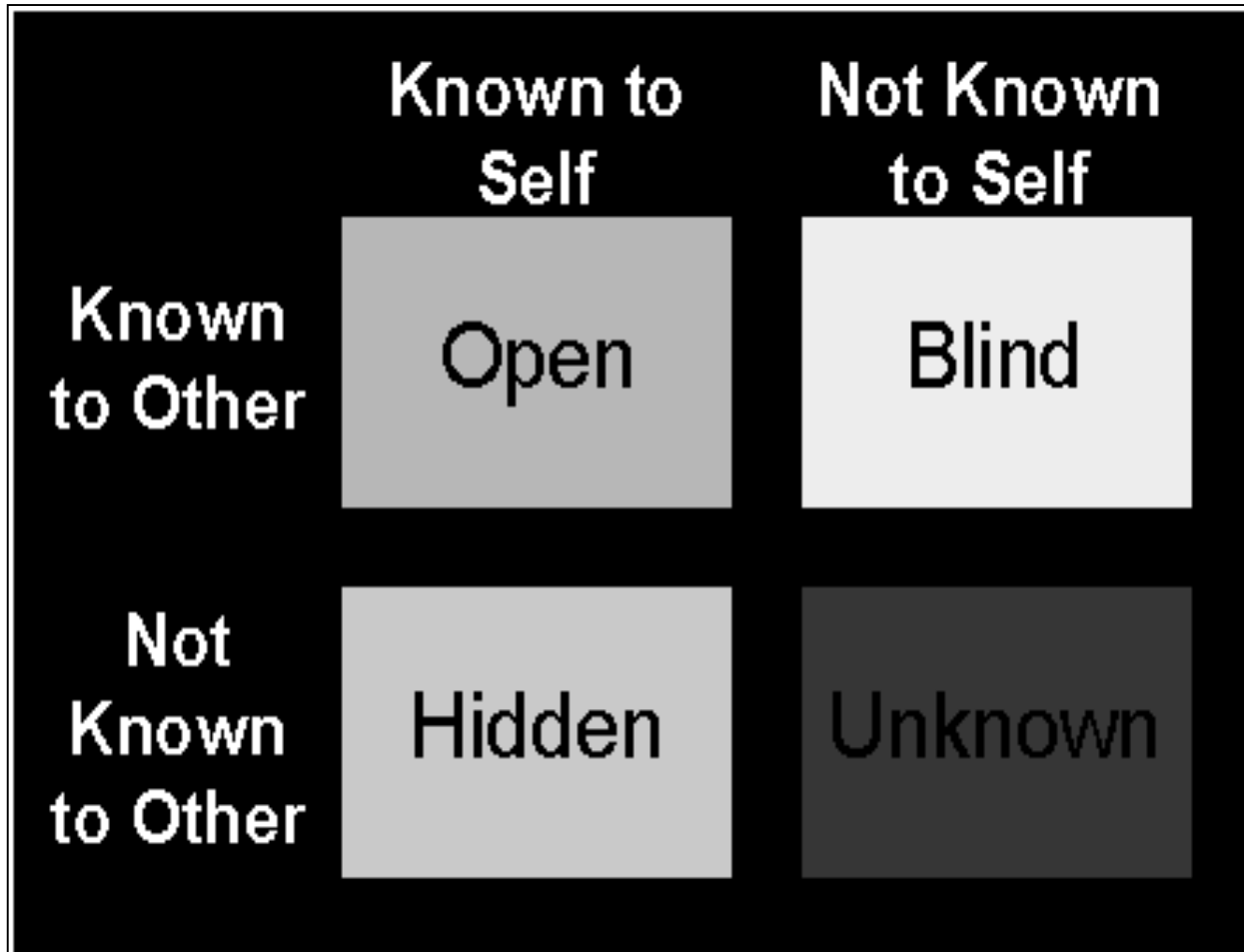
Psalm 85:

**“Truth and Mercy have met together;
Justice and Peace have kissed.”**

- Truth – every side thinks they have it; but we only ever have part of it; can be a “harsh light”
- Mercy – may be seen as an enemy of truth – giving in, not driving truth home; lenient; too compassionate
- Justice – so intent on putting things right and consequences, that he can’t see mercy at all
- Peace – can be claimed cheaply; manipulated

Need all four to reach reconciliation

9/4/09



Johari window

- As we grow in Christ, our blind, unknown and hidden quadrants become smaller

Peace-making skills and 'rules'

Before the conversation

- Set up the meeting (no ambushes)
- Go alone in the first instance. (Mt 18:15-17).
- Emotions in check?
- Pray

The Goal

Reconciliation:

- i. mutual understanding,
- ii. acceptance of responsibility for wrong-doing,
- iii. apology for specific fault,
- iv. Restitution,
- v. repentance.

The Process

1. Set up the conversation
2. Define the issue.
3. Confirm the facts.
4. Share how you felt/respond to these events.
Explain what issues are at stake for you.
5. Identify responsibility: own up first.
6. Apology: no weasel words.
7. Restitution
8. Repentance
9. Confidentiality

Skills

- Active listening

(body language is more than 50% of the meaning;
tone of voice is another 20% of the meaning).

- Clarify before response.

- Ask questions first.

- Go for the issue, not the person.

- Help each other to be true

Rules

- Stick to the point: no barbs, no history lessons.
- Use 'I' statements: no blame game
- Value the experience of the other person.
- Beware the 'rescuer' complex

Scenarios

Break into groups of about 4, select a 'scenario' to work through together.

(10 mins)

Where to from here for us?

- Be quick to listen (empathy), slow to speak
- Resolve issues early and privately if possible
- Honour the value of relationships
- See the opportunity in conflict – not all conflict is negative
- Focus on the issues
- Humility – admit wrong, say sorry
- Take initiative
- Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry
- Appreciate difference & diversity
- Be prepared to invest time in resolving conflict – no quick fixes

