

CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHOP

DO I WANT TO BE RIGHT OR HAPPY?



PATHWAY

- ✓ SERENITY PRAYER
- ✓ INTRODUCTIONS
- ✓ PLAN
 - CONFLICT & RESOLUTION DEFINITIONS
 - STAGES OF CONFLICT & COPING STRATEGIES
 - STAGES OF RESOLUTION:
 - SELF REFLECTION
 - COMMUNICATION & LISTENING
 - TOOLS, KBDM
 - CONCEPT 5
 - PRACTICAL EXERCISE
 - MY THREE WORDS (TO SUMMARIZE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Conflict is a natural and valuable. People who recognize this will seek resolution.
- ✓ Conflict is a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns.
- ✓ Resolution is a solution to a problem or disagreement.
- ✓ Conflict is a part of every relationship - even in recovery.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

➤ Stages of conflict.

- ✓ Denial/Avoidance - anger, hurt, resentment, sadness.
- ✓ Defense/justification of my behavior – I want to win!
- ✓ Focusing on a solution rather than the problem - agreeing to disagree.

COPING STRATEGIES

Negative ways people deal with conflict:

- Avoiding conflict
- Attacking the other person
- Minimizing the conflict
- Issuing threats

Positive ways of coping:

- Engaging in a meaningful discussion
- Treating the other person with respect and courtesy
- Listening actively
- Staying on the topic
- Maintaining a pleasant tone of voice and demeanor

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Stages of resolution.
- ✓ Self examination
 - Do I understand what the true nature of the problem is we are trying to resolve.
 - Do I know how I am feeling?
 - I am looking, acting and being interested.
 - I am "listening between the lines."
 - Am I interrupting or preparing my defense while the other person is talking.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

➤ Stages of resolution.

- ✓ Honest self examination
 - Stop talking.
 - Am I truly listening?
 - Am I letting others talk/vent?
 - Did everyone have a chance to share?
 - Am I aware of my/others non-verbal behavior?
 - Do I understand other's point of view?
 - Am I interrupting or preparing my defense while the other person is talking.
 - It's okay to rephrase to ensure understanding.
 - Use I statements & avoid ultimatums/demands.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

- ✓ COMMUNICATION INVOLVES: (SEE HOW AL-ANON WORKS [B-32], P. 98)
 - WHAT WE SAY AND WHAT WE DO NOT SAY
 - OUR BODY LANGUAGE – FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, POSTURE, ATTENTIVENESS, AND EYE CONTACT
 - OUR TONE OF VOICE
 - OUR ATTITUDE

- ✓ “FIVE GUIDES TO COMMUNICATION” FROM THE DILEMMA OF THE ALCOHOLIC MARRIAGE (B-4), P. 30-32
 - DISCUSS, DON’T ATTACK
 - KEEP YOUR VOICE LOW AND PLEASANT
 - STICK TO THE SUBJECT
 - LISTEN TO THE OTHER PERSON’S COMPLAINTS
 - DON’T MAKE DEMANDS
 - AM I HANGING ON TO RESENTMENTS THAT MAY SURFACE DURING THIS DISCUSSION?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

- ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS
- SEEK TO UNDERSTAND RATHER THAN TO BE UNDERSTOOD
- ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS
- DO I ADMIT MY MISTAKES AND ALLOW OTHERS TO DO SO TOO?

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES: ACTIVE LISTENING

GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS: (SEE THE *WALLET CARD, S-71* AND *HOW AL-ANON WORKS, P.98-99*)

- STOP TALKING
- SHOW YOUR INTEREST IN WHAT THE OTHER PERSON HAS TO SAY
- GIVE THE OTHER PERSON THE TIME NEEDED TO EXPRESS HIS OR HER THOUGHTS
- DON'T INTERRUPT OR FINISH ANOTHER'S SENTENCES FOR THEM
- DON'T STOP LISTENING AND PLAN IN YOUR HEAD WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY
- ARE RESENTMENTS PREVENTING ME FROM HEARING THE OTHER PERSON?
- IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR A BREAK IF YOU ARE FEELING OVERWHELMED
- REMEMBER OUR SLOGAN, "LISTEN AND LEARN"
- REMEMBER TO "BRING YOUR MIND TO WHERE YOUR BODY IS," *HOPE FOR TODAY, P. 158, E.G., "I AM WASHING THE DISHES."*

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Stages of resolution.

- ✓ Use program tools
 - Warning Signs -It's not about who is right or wrong.
 - Our Higher power is the one authority. - Tradition 1.
 - Find positive solutions and make conflict constructive.
 - We can grow from difficult situations. – Concept 4 (participation key to harmony); Concept 5 (right to appeal/petition protect minorities and ensure they be heard); Concept 9 (necessity for good personal leadership)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

➤ Stages of resolution.

✓ Use program tools

- How will the discussion benefit us and Al-Anon?
- Unity - Tradition 1 (our common welfare comes first).
- Protecting minority views - Concept 5.
- Always remaining democratic in thought and action - Warranty 5.
- Getting past resentment - Steps 4,7, and 10, Tradition 2, Concept 9.
- Admitting previous history without blame - Steps 4 and 5.
- Presume goodwill - Concepts 3 and 9.
- Focus on principles over personalities - Tradition 12 and 1.
- Use Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBMD) process.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

➤ Stages of resolution.

✓ Find a solution

- List points of agreement.
- Discuss all possible ideas that could lead to solutions.
- Break to cool emotions or pray for guidance..
- List Step/Tradition/Concept that provides guidance.
- Agree to disagree.
- Dialogue and understanding are goals.
- Everyone seeks to be heard.

APPLYING CONCEPT FIVE TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Concept Five: “The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.”

From Paths to Recovery, p. 278:

- Listen with consideration to everyone
- Everyone may state their views
- Maintain unity by respecting all views
- Incorporating minority opinions into our discussion may help us avoid mistakes caused when we are angry, hasty, misinformed, or rigid
- Listening to a minority voice may bring about a solution we had never thought about

Resolution is a solution to the disagreement:

- Coming to a new understanding
- Agreeing on a new way forward
- Finding a compromise
- Agreeing to disagree
- Agreeing that some conflicts are unable to be resolved

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Celebrate success working together!

SCENARIO #1—THE LORD'S PRAYER

A member comes to the GR after a meeting that closed with the Lord's prayer and comments that it is obviously a Christian prayer and violates Tradition 3 which states that "the relatives of alcoholics when gathered together for mutual aid may call themselves an Al-Anon family group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation." This prayer demonstrates a Christian affiliation. The GR decides that the group should hold a group conscience, which is scheduled after announcing the date and time at three separate meetings.

At the group conscience, a member states, I am a Buddhist. When I chaired a meeting, I said that I was not familiar with the Lord's Prayer and was told by my group that they would teach it to me. I replied that it wasn't my prayer and that the God of my understanding understands my own prayer's words. I was also told that I could remain silent and hold hands as the Lord's Prayer was recited by the Christians in our group. This makes me feel like I don't fit in.

Another member commented: You are not required to participate in any way if you choose not to. You may even step back and not join the circle. I choose to join the circle, yet say my own prayer, while holding hands with those in my meeting.

Another member stated, I do relate to your question. However, one of the most important things that Al-Anon says is, "Take what you want and leave the rest."

One member angrily suggested the Buddhist find another meeting which immediately caused another member to state that maybe the angry member should find another meeting. This spurred a heated and emotional exchange that started to spread and divide the group.

What are 2 or 3 immediate and longer-term approaches based on the conflict resolution principles, to find a resolution to this conflict.

SCENARIO #2—NON CAL LEAD

At an Al-Anon meeting that is less than six months old, a new member James, defensive and prone to anger, leads on a chapter from Melody Beattie's book, "Codependent No More." After the meeting, another member Adele, strong-willed and feisty, talks to the GR and notes that although it's a great book, it is not conference approved literature and should not be used in the meeting.

The GR states that perhaps they should hold a group conscience to discuss this issue. Adele states there is no need for a group conscience. "Tell people before the next meeting that we only use CAL in our meetings or I will go to the DR, the Area, even the WSO, to get this fixed!"

James overhears the conversation and comments that Beattie's book has been very helpful and only wanted to share its insights with the group. "I don't understand the problem? Why are we being so close-minded? Shouldn't we use every tool that will facilitate recovery?"

Adele, more agitated than before, comments that James is "clueless" and "shouldn't come to the meeting if he can't follow the legacies."

James replies, "I have no idea what you mean by "legacies", but if you're an example of following the legacies, then no thanks." He heads for the door.

At this point, the normally friendly "meeting after the meeting" has abruptly stopped and the room has gotten quiet. A newcomer comments, "I have not idea what is going on?"

Everyone looks at the GR.

Discuss this multilayered problem and find several approaches consistent with the conflict resolution principles. What could the GR do to address the CAL issue, Adele's attitude, the newcomer's confusion, and the potentially brewing divide in the group.

MY THREE WORDS--THAT DESCRIBE WHAT I LEARNED TODAY

? ? ?

RESOURCES

- *2018-2021 AL-ANON/ALATEEN SERVICE MANUAL, VERSION 2 (P-24/27) USING AL-ANON PRINCIPLES TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS (K-70)*
- *TALK TO EACH OTHER (S-73)*
- *CONFLICT RESOLUTION USING OUR TWELVE TRADITIONS (S-72)*
- *LOVING INTERCHANGE TO RESOLVE CONFLICT (S-71)*
- *HOW AL-ANON WORKS FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF ALCOHOLICS (B-32)*
- *THE DILEMMA OF THE ALCOHOLIC MARRIAGE (B-4)*
- *PATHS TO RECOVERY—AL-ANON'S STEPS, TRADITIONS, AND CONCEPTS (B-24)*
- GUIDELINES FOR GROUPS, AREAS AND AIS/LDCS: LOCATED ON THE AL-ANON.ORG MEMBER PAGE
- SAFETY IN AL-ANON MEETINGS: LOCATED AT [HTTPS://AL-ANON.ORG/PDF/SAFETY-IN-AL-ANON-MEETINGS.PDF](https://al-anon.org/pdf/safety-in-al-anon-meetings.pdf)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!