

How to have a hard conversation or Steps in Conflict Resolution

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.

Choose a Good Time and Place for Conflict Resolution

Set aside plenty of time so no one feels rushed or at a disadvantage. You may be comfortable at a local coffee shop or somewhere free of interruptions. It may be a good idea to bring these steps with you as a helpful tool.

Practice Self Awareness

It is important for you to stay calm. You are the one person you have control over. Remember to breathe and take notice of how you feel. Start resolving the conflict within you first.

Acknowledge emotions

One way of doing this is to use phrases such as "Let me try to explain how I see things" or "Please allow me to explain why this is so important to me". Then reverse these points: "I would like to understand better how you see this situation" and "Please explain to me what is important to you in this problem".

Truly Listen to the Other Side

This may be the last thing you want to do since you may feel upset or offended. You must always show respect for the other person. Listening carefully (with the ears, body and mind without thinking of your response) is the most important tip for successful conflict resolution. Consult Ephesians 4:1-4.

Focus on the Problem

Don't focus on the person you are in conflict with. Avoid blaming, name calling and putdowns. Be respectful and accept responsibility for your share of the conflict.

Explore Resolutions

Let everyone offer as many resolutions as possible, with neither side evaluating the suggestions offered. Once all possibilities are on the table then you both can face the "problem(s)" together, reviewing the ideas and evaluating their usefulness. "Team up" on the problem, not each other. Pray together, for one another, and for guidance from God.

Read Matthew 18:19-20 and Don't Give Up!