

March 8, 2011

To our Colleagues in Personnel...

This monthly "resource tool" is designed to provide encouragement for personnel workers in ministry-related areas. If you would like to be removed from the list (or a friend would like to be added), please let me know... kenroyer@aol.com or kenroyer@linkcare.org.

Quick reminder of "Building Skills for Member Care with Excellence." Reserve the date (Jan. 9-12, 2012). More info will be coming.

For our "tool" this month we'd like to focus on *Conflict – Sometimes beneficial – often draining. When can we avoid conflict? How resolve conflict?* We hope these thoughts will be useful to you.

God bless you... And have a great month.

Ken Royer, for your Link Care friends
1734 W. Shaw Ave; Fresno, CA 93711
559 439 5920

How can we Avoid and Resolve Conflict?

Ken Royer, Link Care Center

Intro: How often have we heard from missionaries, "The most difficult part of our ministry is not adjusting to the climate or food or even language – but the most difficult aspect is getting along with our fellow missionaries!" The focus in this communication is to discuss when to AVOID conflict (and when NOT to) and to explore various ways of resolving conflict. We trust these tools will be helpful not only "over there – in some far-away place" but also beginning now.

1) How can I AVOID conflicts? Since we can't afford to make "issues" out of everything, here are some ideas...

a) *In communication, it helps to use "I statements" rather than the accusatory "you did such-and-such."*

b) *Love one another—Christ prayed that we'd all be one. Are there times when for the sake of love, we can simply overlook the offense? Perhaps*

by “dumping buckets of love on the offender?”

- c) Try harder to just get along. I (Ken) personally grew up in a home with 5 siblings (I’m 3rd of 6) -- followed by Mom and Dad taking in about 60 foster children through the years when we children left the home)... the philosophy for survival was, “If you can’t say something nice... [remember the rest? Sure you do...] don’t say it at all.”
- d) Could it be that the Lord wants to show the Fruit of the Spirit in my words? Perhaps this is an opportunity for personal spiritual growth.
- e) On a scale of 0-10 in importance, if the issue is up to a “5,” just ignore it. Remember the sayings, “Don’t make mountains out of mole hills.” or “Can’t die on every mountain.” I Cor. 13 – “beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things...”
- f) However, if the issue on the scale of 0-10 is a “5” or above, the situation becomes more serious. Perhaps my rights are being violated; or I’m being bullied; or one of us has gone back on our promise ... perhaps I’m not feeling useful here; I’m way overworked. Therefore – perhaps “avoidance” is NOT the wisest approach.

Therefore... DEALING with CONFLICT...

- 1) Why is the topic of conflict resolution important for missionaries?

Ans: By some estimates, 75% of missionary stress and early departure from the field is directly related to problems with *teammates*. (Team Peacemaker Training Materials)

- 2) What is conflict? Ans: A *difference* of opinion or *purpose* that frustrates another’s goals or desires (Source: Ken Sande, Peacemakers).

- 3) What causes conflict?

- a) An *issue* which cannot be compromised. E.g. Acts 15. E.g. What God says about same-sex relationships.
- b) A *relationship* which has been wounded. E.g. Misunderstandings, differences in values, goals, competition

over resources, sinful attitudes and desires, stress caused by change (e.g. culture shock).

c) *Sinful Desires*: James 4:1ff What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?

4) What is the best possible outcome of conflict?

a) You get to be *heard*; I get to be *heard*; we seek a *solution*.

b) We may *agree*.

c) We may agree to *disagree*, in order to preserve the relationship.

d) We each *give* a little, growing and learning to see each other's point of view and not be so stubborn.

e) We restore the *relationship*, confessing our own faults.

f) We may insert *energy* into a relationship by saying there needs to be a change.

5) An underlying principle is from Jesus in Matthew 7:5, "...*first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*" Therefore, it is helpful to honestly evaluate our own motives, attitudes, and actions as we deal with conflict in ourselves and others.

Next month, we'd like to focus on some common responses to conflict.
Have a good month!

Ken Royer, for your Link Care Friends...