

Conflict Resolution Team Activity

Tuesday, July 26, 2022, Nairobi

Mental Health Public Service Announcement

- If you start to have emotional/mental symptoms – check the side effects of all meds, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal – talk with provider or a medical professional – recommend changes

Objectives

1. Based on scripture, differentiate between healthy and unhealthy conflict
2. Based on scripture, describe the guidelines for conflict
3. Apply the above to team relationships.
4. As a team, decide how you will make one change in group behavior to promote healthy conflict resolution.

Your Job

Resources at the bottom

This is mostly a Bible study – a reminder of how to let God’s love flow through us. As we go through this study together, listen with the Holy Spirit ask:

1. What action or attitude do I need to start or stop?
2. What practice do we as a community/team/organization do we need to stop or start?

Pray

Unhealthy Conflict Characteristics (10 min)

Groups of 3-4

Activity #1 – Read these scriptures

- List 5 things that are signs that a conflict is unhealthy
- Find an example of unhealthy conflict in scripture (disagreements, confrontation, arguments)
- Make a brief skit (2.5 mins) of that includes 1-3 of unhealthy characteristics that you found (false face of “biblical” conflict)

JOHN 10:10-11

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

JAMES 3:9-18

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My

brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

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 reap a harvest of righteousness.

JAMES 4:1-12

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

MATTHEW 7:1-5

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

So, based on scripture, what are signs that the conflictual interaction is unhealthy (10 min) causes division in the body of Christ?

- motivated by ambition or selfishness
- motivated by fear that God will not provide or will not care for the person (James)

- judgmental/legalistic condemning (woman caught in adultery, pharisees and disciples eating grain, Jewish Christians who wanted circumcision) “should, ought, must” laws or rules you must follow otherwise you deserve punishment or ostracism –
- motivated by pride or contempt or revenge
- includes rage, selfishness, envy, personal ambition, deceit, pride, jealousy, fear, hate, resentment
- When conflict results in injustice or loss of freedom (oppression). When the powerful win over the less powerful
- Promotes secrecy/deceit/hiding of faults for the sake of self or organizational protection

Healthy Conflict Signs (10 min)

Groups of 3-4

Activity #2 – Read these scriptures

- List 4 things that are signs that a conflict is healthy
- Find 2 examples of healthy conflict in scripture (disagreements, confrontation, arguments)
- If you have witnessed healthy conflict, tell the group about it

JOHN 15:9-12

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends

JOHN 21

Jesus with Peter – Do you love me? Feed, pasture, care for my little lambs, my sheep

JOHN 17:11, 13, 20-22 Jesus prays for his disciples before he goes to the cross

Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Loving motivation for confronting about sin/mistakes/falling short of the mark

JAMES 5:19-20

My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Save his soul – heal/protect their soul/spirit/breath

LUKE 8:17

For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open.

JAMES 5 calling out the rich who are not paying their workers fairly

Based on scripture, what are signs that a conflictual interaction is healthy? (10 min)

- Results in unity and love in the body of Christ (why do I not say pure – because I believe that that which is pure is also loving because all of the law can be summed up in love your neighbor and love God.)
- Results in truth and motivations revealed – results in greater openness, honesty, understanding, closeness.
- Advocates for, promotes, stands up for those with less power to those with more power. – Paul standing up for the Gentiles before Peter & the elders, Jesus standing up for the wayward woman pouring perfume, Jesus standing up for the woman caught in adultery, Jesus standing up to his disciples for the children who came to him, Jesus standing up for his disciples about washing their hands and eating grain and not fasting. James 5 – calling out the rich who are not paying their workers fairly
- Saves someone from eternal judgement – see someone in sin, go and talk to them

Christian Practices (Get testimonies of each)

Christian Practice: Settle things quickly (5 min)

Activity #3 – Write an example of Matthew 15, when you witnessed someone clearing things up with someone they know they've made mad. Share with one person

If you've screwed up and made someone mad – go to them and clear things up right away

MATTHEW 15:21-26

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. 'Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”

Christian Practice - Confront sin/missing the mark/mistakes directly in private (equal power) (5 min)

Activity #4 – Write when you’ve seen people of fairly equal power confronting each other well using Mathew 18 guidelines – share with one person.

You’ll be reading a passage from Matthew 18.

Sin – miss the mark, sin, make a mistake (manuscripts have “sin against you”)

Confront = point out their fault – reprove, expose them – shed light on

MATTHEW 18:10-18

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Christian Practice - Confront leaders/elders publicly with witnesses (unequal power) (5 min)

Activity #5 write a real-life example, share with one person

READ

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father.

I TIMOTHY 5:17-21

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For Scripture says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.” Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. But those elders who are sinning

you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

Elders – older men and women

Vs 1 Rebuke – to strike or lash out at (could be with words)

Exhort – come alongside and call them by name (literal) meaning – call to, encourage, exhort

Accusation – a complaint, criminal charge, accusation

Do not receive – come close to accept/receive openly/welcome “don’t welcome with open arms”

Witnesses – eye-witness, the word of

Sinning – missing the mark, sinning, making mistakes

Rebuke – like the expose word – convince with evidence

EPHESIANS 5:1-14 EXPOSE

Talks about deeds of darkness which include greediness and sexual immorality (sin because not loving) instead “walk in the way of love”, like Christ who gave himself and be full of thankfulness instead of course joking.

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, **but rather expose them**. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

Christian Practice - Confess your own wrongdoing to each other (10 min) 12:15

Activity #6 Write an example of a time you witnessed biblical confession of one believer to another. Share with one person.

READ

PSALM 32:3-5 – confess to the Eternal Living God

When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night
your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the LORD."
And you forgave
the guilt of my sin.

In the OT we see David confessing to God. Now that we are full of God's Spirit, we are encouraged to confess to each other not only to God.

JAMES 5:13-16 – confess to each other

Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray.

Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

If any is sick – weak, feeble, ill
The wish/prayer offered in trust/faith will heal/save/protect the weary/sick/tired
Sins will be left/sent away/forgiven/omitted
Confess – admit freely, openly, joyfully
Your sins or failures

Christian Practice – Forgive (10 min)

Many stories in scripture of Jesus forgiving sins

Forgiveness – let off the hook, normally extended from the more powerful to the less powerful.

Activity #7 – Small groups recall to each other your favorite stories of Jesus forgiving someone. Identify at least one story of someone else in the NT who forgave someone – What are the signs that they truly forgave them? For you, what are the signs that someone has actually forgiving you? (Craig – touches me. Laughter, lightness, humor. Fellowship – hanging out, getting together for fun)

JOHN 20:8, 19-23

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her...

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

gain Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

When Jesus fills us with his Spirit, he extends confession and forgiveness from only a job of God to that of all believers. So we confess to each other AND we forgive each other.

An example of the church forgiving and restoring is Paul who was Saul and persecuted the church & Paul forgave the prison guard (Acts 16:22-34). Eating together in each other's homes, touching each other & letting self be touched.

Team Task (15 min)

Develop a plan to incorporate mutual confession into team life, and if applicable into mbb community. Make as specific as possible – when, where, who, how. Does it need to be added to any documents, liturgies, orders of service, covenants? After you've developed a plan, set a time to come back and report/check that you've done what you've planned.

Resources for Healthy Conflict

Crucial Conversations - Patterson

The Peacemaker - Sanders

Everything DiSC – workplace styles assessment tool

The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team - Lencioni

The 7 Principles of Making Marriage Work - Gottman