



*night, obsessed by a conflict with a sibling, a co-worker, or a politician we've never met.*" I can't recommend this book highly enough as a guide for reflecting on how to better navigate community decision making in the context of differing viewpoints and opinions.

As we make our way to the next election, navigate the next community decision, find ourselves facing the next controversy or crisis - I would ask us all to consider . . . is this who we want to be? Is this the example we want to set for our young adults and children? Does Lake Forest win when we alienate, exclude, attack, and shut down meaningful dialogue and communication with one another?

Do we want to continue to support, allow, and bring the high conflict that is clearly not serving us well on the national or state level into our local governance and decision-making processes?

Is there another way? Can we evaluate candidates and decisions based on the factual information available instead of attention seeking sound-bites? Are we willing to take the time to truly understand the complexity of the decisions being made? Can we value the service of our volunteers even when we disagree with their decisions? Can we hold decision makers accountable without attacking them personally? Can we agree to disagree? Can we allow for diverse viewpoints? Can we understand that just because a decision doesn't go our way, it doesn't mean our viewpoint wasn't genuinely heard and considered, but that it wasn't the most compelling or consensus viewpoint? Can we collaborate with people who have differing priorities because we share a value for our community?

I hope and believe we can because, in fact, we have a long history of doing so.