



Leader’s Discussion Guide -- Conflict

**sdmiusacanada.org**



Church of the Nazarene

**Conflict**

**Session Goal:** To help participants understand that conflict is a normal part of life and learn how to be

Christlike in our response to life’s challenges and conflicts.

**Are You Ready?**

 Pray for God’s direction as you prepare for the session. Pray that participants will be open to

God’s truth and be ready to apply it to their lives.

 Read the entire leader’s guide for this session to get an overview of the material.

 View the Mor2Lif video, *Conflict.*

 Be prepared to show the Mor2Lif video, *Conflict.*

 Choose one or two questions from the “So What?” section as a follow-up to the video and an intro to the study.

 Determine which *Option* you will use from the “Now What?” section of the session. If choosing

*Option 2,* the “Techniques for Resolving Conflict” (see the page of this Leader’s Guide Outline).

 Be prepared or enlist several people to read: Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:25-32.

 Prepare copies of the participant outline, *Conflict.*

**Introduction**

Conflict happens in every relationship. It is as regular as holidays or Sunday dinner. Conflict, when viewed from God’s perspective can be beneficial and not destructive. It depends on how you face it. However, for too many people conflict is seen as a hazard which threatens to crush their plans leaving them bruised and hurting. As a result they learn to avoid conflict at all costs, either by running away or by refusing to acknowledge it. For others, conflict is an obstacle; an opponent to be defeated and the quicker the better. How do you typically face conflict? Think about the following questions as you prepare to lead this session.

 When you hear the word “conflict”, what images, feelings, and thoughts come to your mind?

 How did your family handle conflict when you were growing up? Did certain people become loud and boisterous? Did others become silent and retreat?

 How do you think your family shaped your pattern of conflict resolution?

**Note to Leader:** It is possible that some members of the group are currently in the midst of serious conflict. Encourage them to identify steps they can take to resolve the conflict. Be aware you may need to encourage them to seek professional help.

**So What?**

View the video, *Conflict.* Choose one or more of the following questions that best fits the needs/dynamics of your group.

 What do you think was the main point of the video?

 With which character do you most identify? Why?

 Consider three ways to respond to conflict: fight, flight, or freeze. Which one would you say is most often your response?

 What might be the positive and/or negative aspects of your conflict response?

 Think of one or two close relationships. How would you say they respond to conflict?

 What might be some ways you or those in your group could help you to make the best and most godly response to conflicts you are encountering in your relationships at home, school, work, and so forth?

**What Does the Bible Say?**

**Say,** Conflict is a normal part of relationships. However, regardless of the conflict every Christian is commanded not to allow anger to promote sinful attitudes and actions (Ephesians 4:26). How is that possible? In his letter to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul gives some guidelines that can be helpful in dealing with conflict. Let’s take a look at those guidelines.

*Practice Love in Conflict*

Read or have someone read Romans 12:9-21.

 List some key teachings from this passage that are useful in conflict resolution.

 Discuss how each teaching might be helpful in conflict resolution.

 Which of these “keys” do your find easy to apply in your life? Which of theses “keys” do you find

difficult to apply in your life?

 What does Paul advocate in verse 18? Do you find this directive difficult or easy?

*Put on the New Self*

Read or have someone read Ephesians 4:25-32.

**Say,** Earlier in this passage the believer is commanded to “put on the new self, created to be like God (v.

22). This is a clear call to righteousness and holiness in all of our dealings; even in conflict.

 What command does verse 25 give? How do you think this will “look” in a conflict situation in

which a believer is involved?

 How important an element do you think “in your anger do not sin” is to conflict resolution?

 How well do you temper your anger in conflict resolution?

 What does verse 29 teach about our choice of words in conflict resolution? What might be some

ways to “build others up” even in a conflict situation?

 How easy is it for you to “forgive” (v. 32) when you are in a conflict situation?

**How Does This Affect My Life?**

*Responses to Conflict*

**Say,** Conflict is an inevitable part of life. Dr. Jim Pettitt, Marriage and Family Life consultant for the Church of the Nazarene stated: “If there isn’t conflict in a relationship, one person isn’t needed—or is dead.”

 What do you feel are some factors that influence the way individuals experience conflict?

 In what relationships in your life are you currently dealing with conflict?

 What are some ways you are dealing with that conflict? Are the practices you are using helping or hindering the points of conflict?

**Now What?**

*Option One*

Covenant with your group members to ask these questions when conflicts arise this week.

 In my attempts to resolve conflicted issues, I will examine my words and ask: Are they lovingly truthful? Are they uplifting and supportive? What changes might I need to make to align them with God’s Word?

 How might those in your group help you be accountable for your words?

*Option Two*

Discuss the “Teaching for Resolving Conflict” list by Dr. Roy Rotz.

 In what areas are you doing well in resolving conflict?

 What steps can you take to improve the way you deal with conflict?

Close the session with prayer. Ask God to give participants the grace, courage, and desire to resolve conflicts that threaten to harm their relationships.

**Techniques for Resolving Conflict**

By Dr. Roy Rotz (2011)

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| **Understand that differences and disagreements** are a normal part of  any relationship. | **NOTES** |
| **Know that anger is a signal** that something is wrong. If you become  angry, talk about it using “I” statements. | |
| **Set aside a time and place** to deal with the conflict. When emotions are out of control, take time to step back, calm down, think, and then come back together to work out the situation. | |
| **Define** the problem or conflict. Focus on *what* the problem is; not *who* the problem is. | |
| **Identify your own understanding** of the problem and listen to other  person’s explanation of his/her understanding of the problem. | |
| **Discover** areas of agreement and disagreement. Focus on similarities instead of differences. | |
| **Stay on the subject** of the immediate conflict; don’t bring up past  baggage. | |
| **Explore options** for resolution. Get creative; think outside the box. | |
| **Focus on the solution**, not the problem. | |
| **Value** the other person. | |
| **Allow for the needs of each person to be met**. Identify the needs of each person and do your best to meet them. | |
| **Close the issue**. When a conflict or problem has been satisfactorily resolved, close the issue in a tangible way that is mutually acceptable. | |