

Why You Shouldn't Avoid Conflict

In some ministry circles I've had the opportunity to lead teaching sessions on the topic of confrontation. Though it's the worst title you can imagine, I've always wanted to write a book titled...

The Non-Confrontationalist's Guide to Confrontation

I thoroughly enjoy this conversation primarily because no matter the context, no matter the size, no matter the organizational structure... leading through conflict is one of the most important things we do.

I believe there are 3 reasons why you would choose to lean into conflict rather than step back from it. And there are 4 steps I use to lead through conflict. I believe everyone can be a better leader by applying these simple steps.

But let's start with the reasons why you would choose to lean in to conflict.

Reason #1: The Value of Conflict

For years I viewed conflict as something God used to make me a better leader. So every time I opted to step back or shy away from addressing a quarrel between team members, or poor communication between a parent & volunteer... I would internally berate myself for my lack of courage. Then one day God lovingly convicted me. These conflicts weren't all about me. But I was fighting hard to make them so.

"Could it be (He so gently tells me) that this conflict has more to do with them and a work I desire to complete in them? You can join Me in My work or not. But I am faithful to complete it and will use whomever is willing."

****Ouch**** That one hurt. When I realized that my self-centeredness and tendency toward self-preservation was an active detriment to those around me it was incredibly convicting. I viewed conflict through the wrong lens and that had to change.

Now the value of conflict all comes down to how I view those around me. I begin with the belief that the people on my team, the volunteers in my ministry and the parents I serve simply want to be better... better team members, better parents, better volunteers, better Christ-followers, better (fill in the blank). When I believe that (ultimately) the person in question wants to improve then I can leverage this conflict to help make them better.

Why? Because scripture is clear:

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."
Proverbs 27:17

"...that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion..."

Philippians 1:6

Conflict holds great value in our life because it sharpens us and those around us.) right 0% top 10px no-repeat transparent;">CLICK TO TWEET

When we view conflict through this lens then we are more willing to lean into it. God has a way of using circumstances to refine and strengthen our faith. He is faithful this way.

Action Step: Invest 5 minutes and take inventory of the conflict you currently have in your life. Assuming that all parties involved (ultimately) want to be better... list positive outcomes that can result from addressing the conflict rather than ignoring it.

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kids (Keegan, Josie and Connor) keep her from taking herself too seriously. Visit her blog at [for more information about her ministry.](#)