

Reflection Paper #4- Conflict Management

The text states that conflict is a clash between incompatible people, ideas, or interests. I grew up with brothers and sisters, and occasionally when one sibling gets something that another does not, often times my parents would say, "life isn't fair!"

Feeling of fairness is one type of conflict introduced in the text. The text also says that conflict can come from misunderstanding, which cause people to act in haste. It can come from confusing rules and regulations that don't make sense to us. It can come from mistrust.

It is hard for people of all ages to see others getting special privileges. I can imagine that there are others in our daily environment that complain about the privileges we receive in which we never thought would upset them, and at the same time we are complaining about them internally or externally. It is a strange way to think about it, but it seems like one type of conflict comes from everyone being jealous of everyone else.

I see conflict as being a competition as well. We are all constantly working hard to prove ourselves as being the most worthy of either rewards or recognition. We may only look at our own effort and hard work when someone else wins that reward or recognition, which can bring on ill feelings that people do not deserve.

In highschool, I was on the wrestling team. I have had many disappointments, and then I have had some lucky matches where I know the other person was much better than I was because of harder work, but I would take that win for the team no matter how fair it was, because sooner or later, I would know that I would get shafted with that unfair match. The difference between

being on a sports team and the business world is that you don't always have that third party giving you input as to what they thought of your performance. Sometimes I feel that just the constructive criticism from a coach or team mate is enough recognition for me, especially if you do lose one, because you know someone wants you to try again. Its beating conflict in a constructive manner, and there was not even any compromise.

Compromising, although, is a method that we had demonstrated in class that solves several conflicts. The two students who wanted to watch T.V. at the same time with only one available never thought about other alternatives. They only thought about getting their own way. One person may have to give in and suffer a little bit under the assumption that next time it will go the other way around if there are no other options.

In Wheatley's video, the message that I received was that controlling conflict is impossible. Every action that we take, even in compromise, creates new conflict whether it be by interfering unknowingly with time, priorities, space or other people's attitudes. We come up with a solution that we think is going to solve every problem from then on out, but as Wheatley said, there are constant flaws in nature and nothing follows the same pattern. For instance, one solution may work for the time being, but we must be open to change and compromise constantly because new situations will arise that we close our thoughts off to. Closing ourselves off is what causes conflict to cause harm.

I believe Wheatley's idea of the constant flaws in nature is affected mostly through our human relations because everyone's lives are so diverse that so many different needs and wants have to be met.

In our daily lives, we will have to learn ways of dealing with people who are unable to handle conflict. The text has three categories of dealing with people- win/lose strategy, lose/lose

strategy, and win/win strategy. The win/lose strategy is winning at the expense of others. This is not a preferred choice of mine, but sometimes such as my wrestling experiences, it happens. Sooner or later, we all will be on the losing side. Lose/lose strategy is a step in the wrong direction, but it relieves ill tempers from someone, which will allow work to continue. The win/win strategy focuses on the problem rather than the blame. With this strategy one puts their differences and feelings aside and works out solutions that compliment both sides.

There is another section in the text that brings up a good point I thought. Some conflict is just a matter of having an understanding of others. Some people may know that a situation is very easy to handle, but they don't want it to be that easy, because they need to get their feelings out and in the open. A piece of mind that others pay attention to their actions means a big deal to some. So, solving conflict may mean doing more listening above and beyond solving the physical problem, because a personal problem exists too.

With times changing, we have to develop new techniques on our own to adjust conflict in a productive manner without causing ill feelings toward any one individual, and I think the biggest key is to place yourself in as many different shoes as possible, and give the problems effort.