



CONFLICT & CRISIS FOR CHRIST FOLLOWERS

CONFLICT & RECONCILIATION

1 Corinthians 1:10 – “I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.”

1. Conflict is inevitable in community. Christians MUST be committed to resolving conflict and pursuing forgiveness. Gossiping, holding a grudge, becoming bitter, refusing to reconcile are disobedience to Jesus’s commands.
2. Give the benefit of the doubt. Don’t jump to conclusions. Think the best of one another. Let respect be your default.
3. Spiritual warfare is real. Our ministry and your relationships are targets. The enemy’s strategy is to create discord, alienation, factions, and frustrations. Fight for unity.
4. We give one another permission to follow Matthew 18:15-20 and Matthew 5:23-24. If you sin, make it right. If a friend sins, don’t gossip but go to them (1) with a loving attitude (2) in the right way (3) at the right time.

“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.” – Matthew 18:15-20

A PRACTICAL PATH TO RESOLVING CONFLICT

1. Before you confront, examine the offense. Determine if it requires confrontation.
2. Consider your contribution to the conflict. Rarely is one person totally at fault.
3. Examine your heart. Are you trying to retaliate or restore?
4. Remember this person is your brother or sister, not your enemy.
5. After prayer, with humility, preferably face to face - speak the truth in love.
6. If necessary, humbly seek forgiveness
 - Be willing to say you were wrong: “I was wrong. I shouldn’t have _____.”
 - Be willing to say you are sorry: “I am sorry I did _____, and that I caused you to feel _____.”
 - Be willing to ask for forgiveness: “Will you forgive me for doing _____?”

FOCUS ON...	RATHER THAN...
one issue	many issues
the problem	the person
behavior	character
specifics	generalizations
facts	judgment of motive
“I” statements	“you” statements
Understanding	who’s winning or losing

HELPING FRIENDS IN CRISIS

1. College brings new levels of stress to young adults. Additionally, over 18% of adults experience an anxiety disorder or depression or both. Ages 18-25 is the most common time for onset of bi-polar disorder and schizophrenia.
2. Watch for symptoms: Isolation, sleep (*too much, too little*), appetite, (*too much, too little*), difficulty keeping normal responsibilities (school, work), self-medication (drugs, alcohol). Encourage healthy social life, sleep and eating.
3. Watch for suicidal ideation (*Questions: 1. Have you thought about it? 2. Do you have a plan? 3. Do you have the means? 4. If I leave you now, are you going to do it? FYI – Asking about suicide will NOT encourage suicide. Don’t be afraid.*).
4. When a friend is having a mental health crisis, you can be their friend. But you cannot be their counselor, their parent, or their pastor. (*There is a specific role for each of these.*) Remind your friend “I am not your therapist. I can pray for you and help you get help, but I can’t be your therapist / parent / pastor.” Clearly, directly push them to get help. Push them to tell their parents. (*“I can’t help you any more than I have. This HAS to be for your counselor.”*)
5. Beware of unhealthy emotional attachments. Sometimes people in crisis will expect a friend to carry more of their burden than the friend can or should bear. Set boundaries. Involve other people like friends, ministers, and parents.
6. Don’t promise confidentiality, especially if someone is in danger. Be willing to break confidentiality to keep someone safe. It’s better to make them safe than happy. Loving someone is caring for their well-being.
7. Be informed about University Counseling Center. Where the building is, the offices are and their hours. Driftwood Building. (361)825-2703, counseling.tamucc.edu
8. If you think someone’s life is in imminent danger, don’t be afraid to call the police. Err on the side of calling.
9. Involve yourself in community. Do not isolate yourself. This is vital for both you and your friend.
10. Don’t be afraid to get advice from BSM staff. We’re here to help you navigate difficult situations.