

GROUP CONFLICT

DEALING WITH CONFLICT IN THE GROUP SETTING

CONFLICT CAN BE EXPECTED WHEN BROKEN HUMANS GATHER INTO A GROUP SETTING. AS THE LEADER, HOW YOU DEAL WITH CONFLICT CAN EITHER SEND A GROUP TO A DEEPER LEVEL, OR IT CAN DRIVE THE GROUP APART. HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR HELPING NAVIGATE THROUGH, NOT AROUND, CONFLICT:

ADDRESS THE ISSUE QUICKLY

As the leader, you cannot delay in dealing with conflict within your group. You cannot put it off and think it will dissolve by itself.

LISTEN CLOSELY FOR UNDERLYING MESSAGES

As the leader, remember that it is not always what someone says, but rather *how* they say it and the meaning behind what they said.

NEVER USE EMAIL TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

Try to avoid using phone or email to deal with conflict. If possible, always deal with conflict in person.

“YOU MAKE ME SO MAD!”

As the leader, encourage your group members to avoid using this type of language. Encourage your group members to use statements that start with “I...”; an example would be, “I get upset when...”

FIND THE SOURCE OF THE CONFLICT

As the leader, dig past the surface level of the conflict. Try to find the source of the conflict and deal with the core issues.

DETERMINE WHO IS INVOLVED AND ITS IMPACT ON THE GROUP

If the conflict is only tied to a couple of the members, do not bring the other group members into the conflict. Keep the needs of the group in mind, as well as the needs of those involved in the conflict.

BRING SCRIPTURE INTO THE DISCUSSION

Use the Bible as the foundation for answers to the conflict.