

## DEALING WITH CONFLICT

Leader

(For the Student Version see Table of Contents)

Based on Healthy Relationships Pocket Principle: #8 *Dealing with Conflict*. Students should read these before the Guided Discussion.

### GOAL:

For a disciple to be able to recognize weaknesses he has in handling conflict and to develop a plan to grow in these areas.

### GETTING STARTED:

What is your most likely response if someone yells at you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Yell back	<input type="checkbox"/> Cry	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Be silent (in shock)	<input type="checkbox"/> Express astonishment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Duck and run	<input type="checkbox"/> Ignore it	

Transition Sentence: Conflict usually creates stress and confusion. We can deal positively with conflict by understanding and applying biblical principles.

### STUDYING TOGETHER:

1. Why is it so difficult for us to handle conflict well?
2. In Pocket Principle #8 there are 9 biblical principles mentioned. Each person in the group should choose 1 principle that is especially important to him and be ready to discuss the answer to the following question: What are the consequences if this principle is not applied correctly? (If your group is small, each group member may take more than one principle so that all are covered.)

Principles:

- work toward agreement
- be careful what you say and how you say it
- take the log out of your own eye before trying to correct another;
- be willing to receive correction
- gain wisdom through the counsel of others
- be sensitive to others' needs
- speak the truth in love
- stay under control
- listen carefully before giving an answer

## Guided Discussion—Equipping for Ministry (Phase III)

3. One of the guidelines for applying biblical principles is to communicate feelings, not judgment. It is best to communicate using “I” statements instead of “you” statements and to include your perspective. The following example was used in Pocket Principle #8:

When I hear you talk very loudly, I understand it to mean that you are angry  
(objective fact) (my interpretation)  
and I feel threatened.  
(my emotion)

Why is each part of this statement important?

The objective fact? *It helps to know if the two of you agree on the facts. If there is disagreement at this point, the rest of the communication process is doomed.*

My interpretation? *This helps you and the other person understand how the objective fact was interpreted. Often this is where differences begin. People draw different conclusions or interpretations from the same facts. Knowing the differences in interpretation allows you to begin to understand another person's thinking process and how he arrived at the conclusion he did.*

My emotion? *This helps the other person understand your feelings which are the result of the interpretation you came to. At this point, the emotion will not seem as threatening because the facts and the interpretation have been given and provide a context for it.*

### LOOKING AT REAL LIFE:

1. Read the following brief case studies and then write out a good response to each of them using the example above. Each person should do this on his own, and then read them to the group. There are several “right” answers.
  - a. Wife to husband:  
“You always throw your dirty clothes on the floor instead of in the hamper. And you never pick them up! You just leave them there. Why do you do that? I have better things to do than pick up after you. I’ve had it!!”

Husband’s healthy response:

b. Husband to wife:

“Why didn’t you ask me to stop and get milk? I can’t read your mind. I know I used the milk this morning, but I didn’t know how much you would use during the day. Food around here is your department. You can’t expect me to think of everything!”

Wife’s healthy response:

### LOOKING AT MY LIFE:

1. Think back over the last conflict you had with someone. What did you do well? What area do you need to improve in?
2. Design a plan with specific steps that you can take in order to grow in this area. Share this plan with the group and pray for each other, as time allows.