



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Conflict

Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.

- *William James*

Did you ever notice how difficult it is to argue with someone who is not obsessed with being right?

- *Wayne W. Dyer*

Chalice Lighting

As we light the chalice let us be thankful for each others' presence

Opening Reading

An Unexpected Meeting

We treat each other with exceeding courtesy;
we say, it's great to see you after all these years.

Our tigers drink milk.
Our hawks tread the ground.
Our sharks have all drowned.
Our wolves yawn beyond the open cage.

Our snakes have shed their lightning,
our apes their flights of fancy,
our peacocks have renounced their plumes.
The bats flew out of our hair long ago.

We fall silent in midsentence,
all smiles, past help.
Our humans
don't know how to talk to one another.
- *Wistawa Szymborska*

Silent Reflection

A good listener tries to understand what the other person is saying. In the end he may disagree sharply, but because he disagrees, he wants to know exactly what it is he is disagreeing with.

- *Kenneth A. Wells*

Sharing/ Check-In

Take two or three minutes to share how you are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. You can speak or you can pass. We want to know how you are in this moment.

Break/Quiet Contemplation

All married couples should learn the art of battle as they should learn the art of making love. Good battle is objective and honest--never vicious or cruel. Good battle

is healthy and constructive, and brings to a marriage the principle of equal partnership.

– *Ann Landers*

The direct use of force is such a poor solution to any problem, it is generally employed only by small children and large nations.

– *David Friedman*

Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence.

– *Dorothy Thompson*

When conflict is reconciled, some hatred remains;
how can this be put right?

The wise accept less than is due

And do not blame or punish;

For love seeks agreement

Where justice seeks payment.

- *Tao Te Ching 79*

Sharing/Deep Listening

Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. If you choose to use the questions, focus on just one or two, as this will allow you to go deeper into the topic.

- What conflicts do you currently face in your life? What past conflicts have you overcome?
- How do you deal with conflict?
- Where did you learn how to deal with conflict?
- How does conflict make you feel?

Discussion

This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

Checkout/ Likes & Wishes

What did you like about this meeting? What would you like to see change at future meetings?

Closing Reading/ Extinguish Chalice

*Join hands or link arms as you read the closing words together, if you like:
The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers.*

– *M. Scott Peck*