

A Model for Reconciliation

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Definitions:

- Offense - Anything that comes between two people
- Reconciliation - restoring relationship between people
- Resolution - solving a problem

Avoiding offense over unmet expectations

Four things necessary for a reasonable or valid expectation - Peter Scazzero

1. Conscious - You must be aware that you have an expectation
2. Realistic - The person must be able to do it
3. Spoken - The expectation must be clearly spoken verses assumed
4. Agreed Upon - The other person must agree to it

Magnets for Conflict and Controversy

1. Brokenness, lack of self-worth, pride, etc.
 - a. Causes one to hear things that no one said or intended
 - b. Causes one to run from issues
 - c. Causes one to be defensive
 - d. Causes one to make excuses, pass blame, deny mistakes, refuse correction or advice
 - e. Causes one to take everything personally - becomes not about what you did but who you are
 - f. Causes one not to listen
2. Wrong view of God
 - a. If we see God as angry, temperamental, or hard to please we tend to project that on people

Take courage, make time, and seek help to be free in areas mentioned above

How to know if you need reconciliation? Take this pretest.

1. Do you not like to be around this person? You avoid them or refuse to be around them.
2. Do you talk more about this person to others more than you talk directly to this person?
3. Do you pretend when you are around this person.
4. Do you maintain a record of wrongs - a mental and emotional file on them?
5. If you're not sure, it's worth pursuing reconciliation.

Common excuses for avoiding reconciliation

1. Fear they won't listen
2. Fear they'll make excuses, or not admit their part
3. Fear they will turn the situation against you
4. Fear it will make things worse
5. Our heart is not right so we do not yet want to be reconciled
6. We would prefer that someone else handle the situation for us
7. We do not know how to reconcile

The prep work of getting our hearts and minds ready

1. Blessed are the peacemakers - Matthew 5:9
 - a. Peace doesn't just happen. We make peace.
 - b. Running from a problem, pretending there isn't a problem, appeasement, giving in, acting like a doormat is false peace.
2. The goal is relationship, relationship, relationship (gaining a brother or sister) - Matthew 18:15
3. Always take the initiative, always go, don't wait - Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-17
4. Try to understand and look out for the other person's interests - Philippians 2:4
5. Search to see if you may be in the wrong - Matthew 7:5
6. Attack the problem not the person - Proverbs 15:1
7. Cooperate as much as you can - Romans 12:18
8. Be gentle - Galatians 6:1

Steps when you have hurt or offended someone – Matthew 5:23-25

1. Take the initiative and go in an effort to be reconciled
 - a. Going may mean a personal visit, a phone call, and in rare cases a letter if the first two are unrealistic
2. We may want to pray about it but God says leave the altar and go make things right without delay.
3. Check your motive for going to make sure you want reconciliation
4. You may begin with, "I believe I hurt you" or "I heard that I hurt you"
5. Listen more than you talk to avoid sounding like you are trying to justify yourself
6. Seek first to understand and then be understood. – Stephen Covey
7. Don't make excuses. Admitting a mistake is the only way to save face.

Steps when someone has hurt or offended you - Matthew 18: 15-17

1. Take the initiative and go in an effort to be reconciled
 - a. Going may mean a personal visit, a phone call, and in rare cases a letter
2. Check your motive for going to make sure you want reconciliation
3. It is beneficial to use "I" instead of "YOU"
 - a. Good Examples: "I heard you say", "I believe", "I think", "I saw", "I feel"
 - b. Bad Examples: "YOU said", "YOU did", "YOU didn't"
4. Attack the problem not the person – Proverbs 15:1
5. If you find you played a part in the issue be prepared to own your mistakes

Sometimes things can't be restored in just one sitting. There is value in hearing and being heard and then going away to process things before returning. Don't wait too long or you may start blaming, sulking, taking things too personally and making excuses. Return soon. Each person may need to take steps to ensure that reconciliation is achieved and maintained.

What if my going doesn't work? Matthew 18:16-17

1. Take a mature believer trusted by both parties who will serve to confirm the facts and help bring restoration.
2. If there is still no reconciliation, then take it to the leaders of the church. By this time the process should have revealed who wants reconciliation and who wants to be right. If a rebellious heart is the problem, then it must be dealt with by the church leaders for the health and safety of the church.
3. "As far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people." (Romans 12:18) You are responsible for being obedient to the assignment of reconciliation. You are not responsible for the reactions of others or the outcomes. If you have been faithful to try and reconcile, you can be at peace that God is pleased with you.

Poison Control

1. Speaking and listening to grumbling, gossiping, murmuring, complaining, and criticizing is poisonous. Issues will arise and must be dealt with directly among the parties involved.
 - a. The surest way to stop negative talk is to not give ear to it. You can say, "Since I am not a part of what you are talking about I believe you should go to the person and work this out before it becomes a bigger problem."
2. Positioning your soul over someone else. – Harold Eberle
 - a. When someone not in authority in an area positions themselves over a person who is in legitimate authority and begins to criticize, evaluate, second guess, and advise or give direction.
 - b. Examples: A friend positions themselves over another friend's way of parenting. A person not in a ministry leadership positions themselves over someone that is.
 - c. It can create feelings of uncertainty, confusion, attack, defeat, frustration.
 - d. The key is to operate with authority in the areas that God has given us authority in, while we pray for those who are in other areas of leadership.

Activation: Lord show me if I need to reconcile with anyone. Take the initiative and begin the work of reconciliation.