

## RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Betty Turrichi - February 2013

Our thanks once again to Human Resource Professional Betty Turicchi, President of the Dallas OCDS Community, for her generosity in sharing her expertise for resolving conflicts with us. We present Betty's outline of Steps hoping that you will see that there are ways that disputes and misunderstandings can be addressed in an orderly fashion and have a positive outcome. We can create and negotiate with a fuller understanding of adverse experiences, offer one another opportunities for positive growth and especially, with prayer, truly forgive one another and produce fruitful reconciliations.

\*We need however, to convey to you that Betty emphasized that the following Steps are but a thumbnail sketch of what normally takes place during a week of intense training.

When discussing conflict resolution, there are important facts that Council Members need to keep in mind. You are in a position of delegated authority, not infallibility. You are there to be of service. The position does not presume that you possess extraordinary skill in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, when conflicts arise, you must always be very sensitive to the possibility that you yourselves may:

- Be in error in your perception of the situation and/or
- Be judgmental vs. understanding in your actions.

While it is necessary, as leaders of the community, for the Council to act with both clarity and firmness, you must strive for the level of self knowledge and humility which leads to charity.

Gal. 6:1 *"Brothers, even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit, looking to yourself, so that you also may not be tempted".*

### Three Step Action Plan for Conflict Resolution (after prayer)

#### Step 1 - LISTENING

-Set aside a one hour meeting with the person whom you feel is the source of the conflict.

-Ask the person to discuss the actions that are in question.

-As the person speaks, give no signal of either judgment or disapproval. You are seeking information only. You are attempting to see, think and feel from the perspective of this other person. If through either body language or spoken words you signal criticism, then the exercise of open listening is contaminated.

-If any questions are asked, they should only be for the purpose of clarification.

-Your goal is to develop: **UNDERSTANDING, COMPASSION and FORGIVENESS**

-When the person has completed their monologue, thank them sincerely for sharing their perspective with the Council. Announce that you all now need time to digest and internalize that which has been said.

## Step 2 - **TIME**

-Determine a time frame that will lapse before meeting again with this person.

-The time should be a minimum of one week and no longer than four weeks.

-Set a new meeting date and inform all parties.

-Announce the goal of this time interval: To internalize the information received, to pray over it, and to develop....UNDERSTANDING....COMPASSION....FORGIVENESS....by all parties and for all parties.

## Step 3 - **CONFRONTATION**

-With their new informed perspective, the times and dates of these behaviors, the Council will draw up a document which contains a list of only those behaviors which are destructive to community life.

-The list should state times and dates of these behaviors as far as possible.

-The behaviors should be stated factually with no judgmental terms applied. Examples are:

*-Person contradicted treasurer in May, June, and July*

*-Person interrupted speaker and walked out of August lecture*

*-Person failed to prepare assignments in Dec. and Jan. and stated in open forum that the reading material was not worth reading.*

-Next state the destructive impact of these behaviors on the community.

-State that these behaviors must cease.

-State the consequences. Examples of consequences are:

*-removal from group work*

*- the loss of speaking voice at meetings*

*- Censure*

-Read this dated document to the person, point by point.

-After each point is read, have the person feed it back in their own words in order to assure listening.

-Finally, have the person sign the document. Explain that their signature does not imply agreement, rather, only that they have been informed.

-Give one copy to the person and file one in the permanent record.

-End the meeting and live happily in peace ever after.