

DEALING with CONFLICT

Throughout the Church's history, the Church has dealt with conflict through reform. Think about how you would deal with the following conflict:

Your family has one computer. You have to finish your history report. Your sister seems to be e-mailing all her friends. You ask her if you could please use the computer. She says, "No way!"

Check what you would do:

Plead with her, make a deal.

Ask her nicely again.

Tell your mother or father.

Walk away upset.

Scream and get angry at her.

Negotiate a compromise.

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

Conflicts occur when people have different opinions or opposing points of view or different needs. It can also occur when people are being selfish and disregard the needs of others. For example, if I want what I want when I want it, and I do not care about your wants, there is a conflict. Most conflicts can be resolved peacefully if those involved are willing to work at it.



RESOLVING CONFLICT

Here are some suggestions to help you resolve conflicts peacefully:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance.
2. Share your opinion, state your need, make "I" statements. For example: "I need to use the computer for about an hour to finish my report. Could you please e-mail your friends later?"
3. Avoid being judgmental, sarcastic, or offensive. Statements, such as "You are so stupid. No one in their right mind would spend hours e-mailing everyone in the universe," invite conflict.
4. Focus on the specific problem or disagreement. Do not bring up stuff from the past, such as "Six months ago I let you play my video games all night."
5. Listen to the other person's point of view. Hear what they are saying. Keep your mind open and be flexible.
6. Focus on the facts. Focus on the needs that are expressed, not just your wants.
7. Be respectful. Use good manners and common courtesy. Name-calling, being stubborn, and being offensive only increase conflict.
8. Try to avoid win/lose situations. Find the best possible solution to the problem. Bring it to a win/win situation so that both needs can be met.

In a small group discuss how to resolve the computer-sharing dilemma.

MY FAITH CHOICE

This week I will practice one of the above skills. I will seek peace in love through respect for God, others, and myself. I will:

PRAY

God, you are the source of unity and holiness. Encourage me to resolve conflicts with peace and respect. Amen

