

Conflict Resolution: Guidelines and Suggestions for Success

Steps	Actions	Implementation	Additional information
Step 1	Personal reflection	Work on yourself first. Examine your own role in the conflict. Ask "What, if anything, am I not noticing about my own role in the conflict?" Work on telling yourself a story that doesn't vilify the other person. Become curious rather than angry.	
	Take time	Consider discussing the matter with a neutral party. Sleep on it before acting rashly.	Focus on the behaviors, not people. Avoid mentioning names.
	Seek to understand the other person(s)	Try to get to the essence of the problem by asking humanizing questions. "What sort of influences are acting on the person? What is causing the behavior? Do they have the ability to do their job? Are there barriers to be overcome?"	
Step 2	Address the concern directly.	Talk directly with the person (fellow member, minister, etc.) with whom you have the disagreement. Agree on a mutually acceptable time and place to talk one on one and as soon as possible after the incident.	Use "I" statements in your discussion ("I feel...", not "You did..."); use active listening, reflect back what you've heard.
Step 3	Seek assistance if conflict remains unresolved	Consult with the minister or a Conflict Resolution Team (CRT)* member for assistance and direction on taking the next appropriate step. If the conflict is less with a person than with how they are performing a job (staff, religious educator, etc), address the concern to the proper committee. If you feel that safety is an issue, use an appropriate third party or committee to provide a safe environment for the discussion as in Step 2.	Anonymous complaints are not acceptable. Be prepared to take responsibility for your concerns. *The CRT is comprised of 4 members appointed by the BoT to staggered 3-year terms.