



Hurting in Professional Settings

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Wondering About Orientations

1. **Connect or Disconnect**

With every human encounter, we have two choices: to close down or open up, to connect or disconnect.

2. **Offense and Defense**

Unless we take steps to find the "common ground" between us, we often end up sticking to our positions of either offense or defense.

"Bad feelings are messages from your inner spirit about something you need to change or pay attention to in your life. Bad feelings are not evidence of inner badness." Rusk, 1993, 55

3. **Freezing Images**

When we freeze our images of others based on what they did, said, or thought in the past, we are self-imposing our limitations onto them. What if they changed; what if we did?

4. **Rankism**

Differences of power, as signified by rank, can lead to stripping of dignity, rather than support, assistance, and shared vision/responsibility. Fuller, 2003

"If you want to govern people, you must place yourself below them" Lao-tzu

Wondering About Behaviors

1. **Summarizing**

Are any of us ever satisfied with someone's summary of us? Summaries never tell the whole story, and therefore, unfairly misrepresent.

"Language bewitchment" can shape what we think is real. . . "because there are convenient human terms like 'good' and 'bad' and 'human nature,' that there are real physical concrete entities to which these words refer." . . .there are not. Robinson & Garratt, 1996, 14

2. **Assassinating**

When we demean, degrade, or deface with our words, we engage in verbal assassination. Ouch!

If they do it with you, they'll do it to you. "Dr. Phil" McGraw

3. Presuming Intent

Microinequities [are the] subtle putdowns, snubs, dismissive gestures and sarcastic tones that douse our motivation, creativity, and sense of well-being. Mary Rowe, 1973

4. Moments of grace

"A moment of grace is the interval of time we take to reframe someone's behavior so that we can react with curiosity, compassion, or openness rather than judgment, annoyance, or defensiveness. Giving someone the 'benefit of the doubt' allows us to delay our reaction to the comment or action with the intent of looking beyond our immediate response. Bennett & Bartholomew, 1997, 210

5. Someone Loves Them!

Notice that when we are really angry at someone, we tend to see them as having 100% negative qualities, and when we are attracted to someone, we see them as having 100% positive qualities. Neither view is accurate. Stephen Batchelor

6. Compassion

Compassion is a critical component for empathy, and empathy is critical to reducing a sense of conflict and adversity. (Dalai Lama)

Wondering About Fear

1. Fear

Are all "negative" emotions fear-based? What is it that we're really afraid of, and is the feeling of fear actually worse than the consequence?

2. Paranoia

Perhaps the worst "disease" that can arise in professional settings is paranoia; it is highly communicable; it can be contracted by air-borne delivery; it attacks our immune systems; and it can extinguish all sense of well-being.

3. Trust

When we gain trust or lose trust, what is it we've really gained and lost. Does trust have more to do with "us" than "them?"

Wondering About Choices

1. Power in Words

What we say to ourselves can be every bit as powerful as what we say to others.

"Be impeccable with your word. Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love." Ruiz, 1997

2. Power of Telling

Speaking for your spirit (Rusk) can be liberating and educational; there is great reward in addressing what is hurting us, rather than swallowing it.

"Shape behavior, rather than shame it." Horn, 1996, 79

"In trying to increase self-esteem, our society may have gone too far in the other direction . . . Maybe it's time to invite the useful aspects of shame back into our culture." Brothers, 2005, 4

3. **Habits of Mind**

"Civility . . . is the set of sacrifices we make for the sake of our common journey with others, and out of love and respect for the very idea that there *are* others. When we are civil, we are not pretending to like those we actually despise; we are not pretending to hold any attitude toward them except that we accept and value them as every bit our equals before God." Carter, 1998, 23

4. **Emotional Contagion**

"Crazymakers are those personalities that create storm centers. They are often charismatic, frequently charming, highly inventive, and powerfully persuasive. And, for the creative person in their vicinity, they are enormously destructive. . . crazymakers are the kind of people who can take over your whole life. . . crazymakers like drama. If they can swing it, they are the star. Everyone around them functions as supporting cast, picking up their cues, their entrances and exits, from the crazymaker's (crazy) whims." Cameron, 1992, 45

Wondering What to Do

1. **Leaning In**

"The key mistake we make when we feel frustrated is to abandon the problem-solving game and turn to the power game instead." Ury, 1993, 132

"... conflict affords people the opportunity to develop and exercise both self-determination and self-reliance." Bush & Folger, 1994, 82

"When [the Master] runs into a difficulty, she stops and gives herself to it. She doesn't cling to her own comfort; thus problems are no problem for her." Lao-tzu

"Any time you can demonstrate your willingness to listen to someone with a minimum of self-defensiveness or criticism, you are cultivating virtues within yourself that have a high payoff in self-respect. Any significant personal change requires exactly this kind of courage: the willingness to feel uncomfortable while acting 'as if' one is more mature and capable than one's familiar self." Rusk, 1993, 70

2. **Looking Beyond**

"...and whether or not it is clear to you, the universe is unfolding as it should." Ehrmann, 1927

Our aims for dealing with conflict need to focus on transforming people, not just changing situations. When this is our focus, the result is bigger than resolution, it is a "supremely important human enterprise [that] embodies and expresses the highest and best within us as human beings." Bush & Folger. 1994, 83

"Value conflict as a positive, seeing it as an adventure or journey, an opportunity for growth and change, an invitation to intimacy and relationship, and an opening for transformation." Bowling & Hoffman, 2003, 54

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