TURNING CONFLICT INSIDE OUT

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TYPICAL CONFLICT:

You say something.

They respond; you think WHAT?!

You try to explain.

They try to explain.
Sarcasm/snark
(“It’s just a joke!”)

Counterattacks begin.

Defenses go up.

Both sides dig in.

Both sides seek affirmation from friends; gossip starts; camps form.
Repetitive personal persuasion rarely works.
If you aren’t willing to change your opinions, or your behavior, don’t expect someone else to change theirs.
1. KEEP CALM AND TAKE YOUR TIME
- Does this conflict have to be resolved?
- How can we make room for other perspectives?
2. STEP FORWARD RATHER THAN PULL BACK
What elephant?
“I’m right there in the room, and no one even acknowledges me.”
Don’t curse the darkness; light a candle.
3.

THINK THE BEST

vs.

ASSUME THE WORST
SOME COGNITIVE BIASES:

- Naïve Realism: We see reality as it really is.
- Projection Bias: Others share our thoughts, values.
- Illusion of Transparency: We overestimate our ability to know others, and others’ ability to know us.
- Fundamental Attribution Error: Others’ act pursuant to their character, rather than the circumstances.
- Actor Observer Bias: Our behavior is based on the circumstances, and not our character.
- Confirmation Bias: We interpret info. in ways that confirm our preconceptions.
“Just about the most important thing we do in life is interacting with other human beings.”

P.M. Forni
THE TWENTY-FIVE RULES OF CONSIDERATE CONDUCT*

1. Pay Attention
2. Acknowledge Others
3. Think the Best
4. Listen
5. Be Inclusive
6. Speak Kindly
7. Don’t Speak Ill
8. Accept and Give Praise
9. Respect Even a Subtle “No”
10. Respect Others’ Opinions
11. Mind Your Body
12. Be Agreeable
13. Keep It Down (and Rediscover Silence)
14. Respect Other People’s Time
15. Respect Other People’s Space
16. Apologize Earnestly
17. Assert Yourself
18. Avoid Personal Questions
19. Care for Your Guests
20. Be a Considerate Guest
21. Think Twice Before Asking for Favors
22. Refrain from Idle Complaints
23. Accept and Give Constructive Criticism
24. Respect the Environment and Be Gentle to Animals
25. Don’t Shift Responsibility and Blame

* Source: Choosing Civility – The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct by Dr. P. M. Forni (2002 St. Martin’s Griffin). Dr. Forni is a professor of Italian literature at Johns Hopkins University and co-founder of the Johns Hopkins Civility Project.
“We never touch people so lightly that we do not leave a trace.”

P.M. Forni
4. **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY** for making things better, rather than just thinking:

a. “Oh, woe is me!”
b. “I don’t know what else to do!”
c. “Someone else will have to fix this.”
5.

Feedback

or

Collaborative reflection
HOW TO TURN CONFLICT INSIDE OUT:

- Slow down; tolerate difference.
- Step forward rather than pulling back.
- Think the best rather than assume the worst.
- Take responsibility for making things better.
- Reflect together instead of giving feedback.
“What people often mean by getting rid of conflict is getting rid of diversity....We may wish to abolish conflict, but we cannot get rid of diversity. We must face life as it is and understand that diversity is its most essential feature....Fear of difference is the dread of life itself."
CONFLICT RESOURCE DU JOUR:

“Perfect Phrases for Conflict Resolution”

by Lawrence Polsky and Antoine Gershel

McGraw-Hill
2011
ANY QUESTIONS?