

Conflict Recovery - The Four Fundamental Principles (Part 1)

Blessed are those who are willing to enter into the process of being healed, for they will become healers.

Blessed are those who recognize their own inner violence, for they will come to know non-violence.

Blessed are those who can forgive self, for they will become forgivers.

Blessed are those who are willing to let go of selfishness and self-centeredness, for they will become a healing presence.

Blessed are those who listen with compassion, for they will become compassionate.

Blessed are those who are willing to enter conflict, for they will find transformation.

Blessed are those who know their inter-dependence with all of creation, for they will become unifiers.

Blessed are those who live a contemplative life stance, for they will find God in all things.

Blessed are those who strive to live these beatitudes, for they will be reconcilers.

by The Sisters of St. Joseph, Concordia, Kansas

Four Fundamental Principles

There are four fundamental principles that must be kept in mind to help us to self-recovery, relational-recovery and organizational recovery. These are:

“Go To The Balcony” – Withdraw to Reflect

“A Lion’s Heart” – Courage to Act

“Humble as A Lamb” – Humble Enough to Apologize and Forgive

“Wounded Healer” – Reach Out to Reach In

Principle #1

“Go To The Balcony” – Withdraw to Reflect

In the midst of the cacophony of conflicting voices and confusion, pressures and panic, reflection is a tough thing to do. Our natural tendency and default mode is to react and charge.

Under these emotionally charged circumstances, leaders tend to make not-so-wise decisions. Slowing down to reflect and regroup may be the wisest decision to make. I call this 'strategic pauses'.

Hence, it is necessary for leaders to take strategic pauses: Personally, relationally and organizationally. Tough questions need to be asked.

1. Reflection for Personal Recovery

Bearing that personal recovery is the process of restoring personal human dignity and enhancing self-growth with the goal of deepening relationships and managing future conflicting issues more effectively, these are the questions we need to address.

"What's really going on in my life?"
"Why am I so uptight? What's making me so angry and discouraged?"
"What priorities have I neglected that might have led to this situation?"
"What have I done well in the past that had made me effective?"
"What are two things I should do more and two things I should do less to become more effective?"
"What are two things I should stop doing and two things that I should start doing to help me self-recover effectively?"

It would be great if you could speak with wise counsel in and out of the organization who are willing to speak the 'truth in love' to you.

2. Reflection for Relational Recovery

Remembering that relational recovery is the process of cultivating the desire for continual healthy relationships, restoring the joy of building new relationships and becoming productive individuals again, these are some questions we need to ask to find out what's happening to the team and relationships.

"What conflict management culture do we have in the organization that will allow for learning and growing?"
"How have we care-front people in conflict situation - i.e. balance between caring for people and confronting of issues?"
"How have I been motivating people? Is it primarily based on monetary incentives?"
"How have we neglected the human touch in our leadership styles?"
"What organization goal and growth changes do we need to make to keep the relationships strong in the organization?"
"How we doing in helping people find the right job fit, boss-fit, team-fit?"
"What changes must we make to the work load and work pattern so that people can work more effectively and efficiently?"

3. Reflection for Organizational Recovery

Realizing that organizational recovery is the process of rebuilding trust in the team by overcoming the fallout, dissension, cynicism to achieve organization vision, recommit to core values and achieve organization objectives, these are the questions leaders need to ask about their organization:

"What are the causes of the team conflict?"
"How have we lost our vision in the organization?"
"What core values are we sacrificing to achieve our quarterly results? Is it worth it?"
"What must we do and behave differently as leaders to restore trust and build the team again?"
"How open and transparent are our feedback mechanism? What are we doing with the feedback that will restore trust?"
"What external expertise do I need to call upon to help me navigate through this organizational mess?"
"Whose wise counsel can I seek help from now?"

Reflection and staying calm are the most difficult but most necessary activities leaders need to do when caught in highly charged emotional dispute.

Hence, it is important to withdraw yourself mentally and physically from the conflict battle, primarily to calm down your own heated emotions and to think rationally and strategically before deciding the next move. Role-tending is the ability to rethink.

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