

Learning to Get Along with Difficult People

Nine Types of Difficult People

- The Sherman tank will run right over you.
- The star performer is entitled to your undivided attention.
- The megaphone will talk your ear off.
- The bubble buster deflates everyone's enthusiasm.
- The volcano has an explosively erupting temper.
- The cry baby is a chronic complainer.
- The nit picker is an unappeasable perfectionist.
- The backbiter is a master of calculated rumor.
- The space cadet is on a different wavelength.

Eight Truths about Difficult People

- Everybody has a difficult person in his life.
- Everybody becomes a difficult person to someone else.
- We can seldom change them, but we can learn to relate to them.
- We will not get along equally with everyone; some may not like us.
- We should not expect everyone to agree with or like us all the time.
- We must manage our expectations of others and ourselves.
- We often give up too soon on some relationships.
- We get along best when we are mature spiritually and emotionally.

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Realize you can't please everybody
 - John 5:30-31 - “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. 31 If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Refuse to be manipulated
 - Matt. 22:18-20 - “But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? 19 Show Me the tax money.” So they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, Whose image and inscription is this?”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Never retaliate
 - Matt. 5:38-39 - “You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Pray for them

- Matt. 5:44-45 - “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Control your temper
 - Prov. 15:1, 18 - “A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. 18 A wrathful man stirs up strife, But he who is slow to anger allays contention.”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Be quick to forgive and even quicker to ask for forgiveness
 - Matt. 6:14-15 - “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Seven Biblical Responses to Difficult People

- Remember that everything and everyone is under God's power
 - Job 9:2-5 - “Truly I know it is so, But how can a man be righteous before God? 3 If one wished to contend with Him, He could not answer Him one time out of a thousand. 4 God is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who has hardened himself against Him and prospered? 5 He removes the mountains, and they do not know When He overturns them in His anger”

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Take the moral high road (do the right thing regardless)
 - Col. 3:12 - “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering”

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Remember that you're not perfect either (you may be someone else's difficult person)
 - Col. 3:13-14 - "Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Your actions are more important than your feelings (It is better to act your way into a better way of feeling than to feel your way into a better way of acting)
 - Col. 3:8-10 - “But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him”

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Bring Christ with you in every conversation (“How would Jesus say this?”)
 - Col. 3:16 - “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...”

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Pursue personal peace
 - Col. 3:15 - “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”
 - People who constantly stir up tension in relationships do it because they have no peace within themselves
 - People at peace with themselves have no desire to stir things up with others
 - The hardest part of dealing with difficult people is coping with the stress of bearing the burden of being the mature, honorable one in the relationship.

Six Christian Qualities That Enable You to Cope With Difficult People

- Take only authorized actions
 - Col. 3:17 - “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...”
 - Not WWJD; that’s subjective.
 - Rather, what did Jesus tell me to do?

Five Verses That Tell Us Why We Need To Get Along With Difficult People

- 1Peter 2:19-23 - “For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously”