

Clinging + Crankiness + Crying = Conflict

Conflict Resolution = Growth

In PCT conflict is never between two individuals. It is an inability to resolve two conflicting 'wants', 'desires' or 'goals' at the same time by a single individual. For example I want to walk away but I want to stay. I want to hear what you have to say, but I have to leave. I want to stand-up for myself by punching you in the face and I want to maintain a good relationship with you. On the surface each of these situations appears impossible. How can I stay and go? How can I listen when I'm walking away? How can I punch you and have a good relationship with you? Most people view conflict as being between two individuals. When what you and I want is incompatible I am simple disturbance to you and you are disturbance to me. Remembering that conflict is internal can help you remain calm in some very difficult situations.



PCT in ACTION

While visiting a close friend I asked his teenage daughter about her thoughts on leaving her public high school to attend a local private school known for its sports teams. (She is a very skilled basketball player.) Her response was "I want to go, but I really don't want to leave." Reading it here it may seem obvious to you that she cannot do both, but in the moment internal conflict sounds and feels rational. Take a moment to think of some times in your life when you have felt two competing desires when like my friends daughter you have felt like doing two things that appear to be polar opposites.

When in conflict we often look for a solution by framing our thinking as 'either or'. Either I listen-OR- I walk away. There are times that I can unlock the conflict by framing my thinking as 'AND'. For example would there be a way to go -AND- listen? This works especially well when I find myself not living up to my own personal expectation of myself in competing roles; like being the kind of mother I want to be and being the kind of

business owner I want to be. How can I be a good mother -AND- build by business which requires me to travel? Take one of your personal examples and try it out. Does framing it as an 'AND' unlock the struggle to resolve the conflict? Give yourself time to let it ferment... a solution may take time to come to you.

Another way is to have someone help you explore 'the thought behind the thought'. Einstein was right you cannot resolve a problem on the level at which it was created. Exploring your thinking behind the conflict may move it to a higher level where it can be resolved. There are some strong beliefs behind both sides of the conflict, take time to explore them. Have someone keep asking you: When you say that what are you thinking? What's that all about? or Tell me about someone who says what you are saying? Here are some ways for you to help others who find themselves experiencing conflict without experiencing stress yourself. As Tim Carey author of Method of Levels puts it... "Help them without getting in the way."

Ways to help others in conflict:

- ☞ Recognize it's about them, not you.
- ☞ Listen without getting involved in the story.
- ☞ Listen for what's behind what they are saying -what beliefs.
- ☞ Focus on helping them to become clearer on what they want.
- ☞ Ask them to talk in the third person.
- ☞ Ask the stupid questions. Don't assume you know what they mean.

Conflict is one of the basic ways we learn and grow!