POSITIVE RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES FOR CONFLICTS

In solving conflicting feelings, there should be no winner or loser. The objective is to resolve feelings, not win. If either of you has to "win" over the other, you will both lose!! If one of you feels there is a problem to be solved together, you both have a problem. You can't just say "That's your problem".

1. **Share feelings**, don't duck out".

2. **Listen with your heart and spirit** as well as your mind. (Many people feel they are great listeners because they can repeat back word for word what was said. However often their mind is jumping ahead with possible solutions, evaluations, reactions or judgments concerning what is being said. Under these conditions the person sharing feelings will not feel listened to or understood.) **First, feel with the person what is being said.**

3. Don't attack, or hit for sensitive spots.

4. Use "**I Feel**" messages, not "**you are**" messages. (You are...you always...you never...why do you...etc. are accusatory. The recipients will only want to defend themselves.)

5. Don't criticize or accuse the other person.

6. Don't be judgmental, or tell the other person his/her feelings are wrong or stupid or say things like "You can't feel that way." Feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are. They have to be listened to and respected if true communication is to take place!

7. Do not involve third parties who may take sides. You two can solve the problems yourselves. (Clergy or professional counselors are not considered third parties.) **Think of the other person’s needs and feelings and not just defend your own.**

8. **Stick to the immediate subject, the feelings you want to share and what you are upset about. Don’t drag in old garbage from past discussions.** If they've not been resolved before, resolve them and forgive them, so your relationship can move on! Forgiveness is the most divine act man can do.

9. Sit close to each other and try to keep a warm, loving, caring attitude toward each other. You're not fighting each other but trying to solve a mutual problem, a **'WE' PROBLEM.**

10. Sometimes you will agree to disagree but this should be seldom. Compromise the disagreements where possible.

11. Be cautious that sharing feelings does not become a "negative dumping grounds" too often used. At times silence and patience will be your best recourse. Seek strength and positive feelings from appropriate and best sources (including clergy and counselors). Seek direction concerning feelings and timing for when things should be shared. Use patience and kindness in behalf of principle to help soften the heart of whom you will speak to.

12. Remember to use your partnership with clergy and counselors for counsel and direction. Be open and receptive to recommendations. Also heed positive promptings felt. Personal improvement is needed to help resolve feelings.

13. Remember that your feelings are caused by your reactions to the choices of others. If the person you are in conflict with will not choose to work on resolution, then you at least have the avenue to seek appropriate help to control negative feelings within yourself.