

Identifying the Dispute Part One

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My chosen conflict involves a disagreement with a close friend regarding a financial matter. The dispute started a few months ago when I offered to lend him some money when he had a financial crisis with a condition that it had to be paid back in three months. Initially, we had outlined our agreement regarding repayment and frequency of communication, but no repayment was made, and communication on the issue became relatively infrequent as the deadline neared. When I attempted to bring up the topic, my friend responded defensively, making our interactions tense. Over the following weeks, I also tried to resolve the problem further by presenting other options for repayment and attempting to consider their side of the story. Unfortunately, it is still unresolved, and because of this, our friendship has become distant.

Have you been striving earnestly to resolve this dispute or giving only partial efforts to reconcile?

My efforts to reconcile have been earnest but not consistent. I have talked to him several times to find a resolution that works for both of us, like extending the time and term of the loan or accepting smaller installments. Nevertheless, there were times when I found myself holding back from the follow-up because of the belief that it would lead to further aggression. As much as I have tried to be understanding and patient, my actions have been somewhat defensive. Therefore, this could have been the reason as to why there has not been much progress when it comes to solving the conflict.

What questions, doubts, or fears do you have because of this dispute?

This conflict has left me with several doubts and fears. It brings doubt on whether the friend appreciates the friendship as much as I do and whether the money issues faced are more serious than what has been relayed. I also did not want to raise the issue again if I strained our

friendship beyond repair. Furthermore, I wonder if I was not proactive enough or should have taken more decisive measures. These uncertainties contribute to my confusion and predicament as I struggle to identify what actions I should take in the future.

Have you been looking at this dispute as something that happened by chance, as something done to you by someone else, or as something that God allowed in your life for a specific purpose?

In the beginning, I attributed this conflict to something that was solely brought about by his irresponsibility. In the process, I have also begun to consider my position and whether my reactions have contributed to the problem. Now, I view this conflict as a learning process where I can better understand how to be assertive and compassionate. Faith has also helped me redefine this conflict as a test of patience and a forgiving spirit. The perspective has allowed me to be patient in a way I did not consider before and seek common ground.

Using what you currently know about conflict resolution, which response to conflict have you been using to resolve the dispute?

To my knowledge, avoidance and compromise have been my primary tactics for handling the conflict. For instance, I have refrained from using aggressive language to force the issue to avoid escalating the tension and come up with forms of compromise to ease the repayment process. Although it has reduced conflict at the surface level, it has not resulted in finding a solution. As for the future, it may be wiser to incorporate an emphasis on cooperation and straightforward, candid communication with others into my model. We can solve the conflict and restore our friendship by addressing the root causes.