**Relational Intelligence 101**

**The Laws of Relationships**

**Crucial Conversations - Part 1**

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**Overview**

Relationships are hard, there are no two ways about it!

Have you ever thought to yourself, “If only I could get my heart and head on the same page and at the same time?” Perhaps, you could be better at expressing your emotions without getting upset or so emotional. Well, if you have, be encouraged, you are not alone. Communicating your feelings effectively is harder than it sounds, in fact, managing relationships requires a certain skill set and a great deal of practice. And if that was not precarious enough, add the stress and pressure of what we have experienced this past year and the stakes have just intensified. Insecurity, fear, unmet expectations, and anxiety all add up to a recipe for relational dysfunction.

If we look to the Bible, we will only find amazing and healthy relationships – not so fast! The Bible is full of relational conflicts, problems, upheaval, and misunderstandings to which you are in good company. However, the Bible also provides best practice principles when it comes to relationships. It communicates knowledge and wisdom and how to navigate through relationships to create desired outcomes.

**When you boil down the Kingdom of God and the message of the New Testament, you are left with two basic foundations, a relationship with God and relationships with others. It is imperative that we get this subject right.**

**Strong and healthy relationships require two basic components, crucial conversations and high self-awareness.**

**The New Life**

**Ephesians 4:17-32**

**17**This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, **18**having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; **19**who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

**20**But you have not so learned Christ, **21**if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: **22**that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23**and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24**and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

**25**Therefore, putting away lying, “*LET* EACH ONE *OF YOU* SPEAK TRUTH WITH HIS NEIGHBOR,” for we are members of one another. **26**“BE ANGRY, AND DO NOT SIN”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, **27**nor give place to the devil. **28**Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. **29**Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. **30**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31**Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. **32**And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

**Central Truth**

* The Kingdom is about relationships with God and others
* *Relational intelligence is a muscle and a skill that needs to be developed.*

**Talking points**

1. Overview
2. Main scripture
3. Kingdom ways and culture
4. Laws:
   1. The law of crucial conversations
   2. The law of self-awareness

**Thoughts from the Garden of Eden**

* The first broken relationship was with God
* The first problem in the garden was that Adam was alone
* Soon after that Cain would murder his brother Able—the first murder took place in a family setting.

**The Kingdom Culture Way of Relationships**

* **Selfless as opposed to selfish**
* Meeting the needs of others instead of having my needs met.
* **Giving/generosity versus just taking**
* **Accountability versus deflection**
* Blaming others
* Take 100% accountability for your part, no matter how small it may be
* Deflection is ingrained in human nature with the fall in the garden
* Peter is a biblical example of a person that deflects.
* **Forgiveness instead of hatred**
* **Goodness/kindness versus evil and revenge**
* Overcome evil with good.

**The Law of Crucial Conversations**

*What is a crucial conversation – “A discussion between two or more people where stakes are high, opinions vary and emotions run strong” – Kerry Patterson*

*An intentional discussion that must take place in order to create solutions and results.*

Biblical crucial conversations must have four key ingredients:

1. **Humility**

* A modest view of one’s own importance.

1. **The interest of others**

* Paul told the Philippians that we must consider others as well as ourselves.

1. **Truth**

* The truth must be spoken in love and compassion
* So many people are fake and not their true selves, this makes relationships difficult to navigate.

1. **Respect**

* Relationships require that we honour the other individual.

**Note:** 4 (Respect) is the number of “change”.

* Most people do not want to have, nor do they know how to have, a crucial conversation
* Crucial conversations happen way too late – usually after things are irreparable
* Usually, one person initiates the conversation
* Love is NOT required to have a crucial conversation
* Biblical examples of crucial conversations:
  + God with Adam and Eve
  + Joseph with his brothers in Egypt
  + God with Israel in the Old Testament
  + Jesus with Peter at the shore after the resurrection
  + Paul when he confronts Peter in the book of Galatians
  + Paul with Philemon – the entire book
  + Jesus with the churches in Revelation.

**The Law of Self-awareness**

* To know yourself as you really are – the way you behave under pressure
* Internal emotional motivations and triggers
* *“This is what I am like”* - they include strengths and weaknesses.

1. **How do you see yourself?**

* Many people get into relationships because they do not have self-awareness but are hoping to find it in their relationships - they use it to hopefully find themselves (i.e. girls looking for affirmation in relationships).

1. **How you deal with opposing opinions and how you impact others** 
   1. Most people do not handle this well

* 1. Statements people make:
* “This is the way I am. Deal with it.”
* “I was born this way”.
* “Get used to it, I am not changing”.
* “It is your problem, not mine”.
  1. People love to give you their opinion, they just cannot handle yours.

1. How do you project? The way I see myself I see in others
   1. What I do not like about myself I see in others
   2. The way I see one relationship, I see all of them

* Who I see you to be (i.e. people’s perception of you, is their reality of you)
  1. Pre-determined disposition
* Arriving at a conclusion about others without full investigation - the Bible calls this “judging” others.

**Quotes**

*“Social media has empowered cowards and bullies, people are less bare when they have to look you in the eye”.*

*“If Covid is a dry run for the anti-Christ, the church is doing a poor job”. ~ Dr. Tony Soldano*

*“The first thing broken in the Garden of Eden was relationship”. ~ Dr Tony Soldano*

*“False affirmation is worse than criticism”. ~ Dr Tony Soldano*

*“The Kingdom is administered relationally”. ~ Bishop Tony Miller*

*“What I do not like about myself I see in others”. ~ Dr Tony Soldano*

**Questions & Discussion**

1. What is a crucial conversation?
2. Discuss the three elements of a crucial conversation and provide a biblical example.
3. What is meant by the phrase, “The Kingdom of God is administered relationally?”
4. What is the law of self-awareness?
5. Describe the four ingredients of a crucial conversation.
6. How was Peter a deflector?
7. What are some things that you have projected on others?