



Marriage Rules[©]

“GROUND RULES FOR CONFRONTATION”

By: Larry B. Gelman, Psy. D.

Very few people in this world are born with a “silver spoon” in their mouth. Consequently, if you aren’t given what you want, then you must earn it.

Self-disclosure and empathy are the “points” you must earn which give you the privilege to constructively confront another person in the here-and-now. By demonstrating self-disclosure, you are risking saying what you mean and meaning what you say. By demonstrating empathy you show that you have listened to, heard and respectfully understood what was said by directly communicating your understanding to the speaker.

It is very important that your self-disclosure be genuine. Try not to say things you don’t mean. Try not to be phony. Just be yourself. The purpose of confrontation is to facilitate meaningful dialogue in an atmosphere of mutual respect and concern for the other person. It is crucial that the confronter be concrete in their encounter and not insist on being satisfied only with the conveyance of a brilliant soliloquy.

In addition, the confronter should focus on helping, not hurting, the confrontee. While honesty is important the confronter might do well to recognize that “discretion is the better part of valor”. In other words, a little tact goes a long way, especially in exploring sensitive issues.

Lastly, the confrontee should attempt to listen non-defensively to criticism which, hopefully, will be constructive for them.

Remember that growth is possible only through the successful resolution of conflict. Conflict implies risk and risk suggests the mutual exchange of vulnerabilities.

Your rate of progress will depend on the risk you are willing to take in your interactions with others, as well as the risk you are willing to take with yourself. It is your choice. It is also your action.

These are some of the most important “ground rules for confrontation”. Learn them well!

Dr. Larry B. Gelman is a licensed Clinical Psychologist at Northern Illinois Counseling Associates, P.C. (NICA) located in downtown Crystal Lake, Illinois.

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