

Conflict Assessment Checklists

Expectations

The exercise of free will brings about INTENTIONS, which become EXPECTATIONS.

When expectations are disappointed, conflict results.

In a conflict resolution process, such as mediation, we assess disappointed expectations.

The following checklist guides such an assessment.

- What expectations, if any, have you communicated to the Pastor (associate, parishioner, vicar)?
- How were those expectations communicated? Do you feel they were understood?
- What expectations have you communicated to the Vicar for the Clergy? Were they understood?
- What expectations were communicated to others, to members of a support group, colleagues, or friends, a spiritual director or counselor?
- Has the Pastor (Associate, etc.) shared expectations with you? Do you understand those expectations? Do you feel they are valid or invalid?
- Do you feel mutual expectations are: 1) *Very Clear*, 2) *Somewhat Clear*, 3) *A Bit Fuzzy*, 4) *Unclear*, 5) *Unknown*.
- Have you experienced insecurity or mystery regarding what is expected of you? Describe that feeling.
- What unstated expectations do you hold? Describe.
- What will you do to insure those expectations are made clear to others?
- Have your expectations been disappointed? How?
- Have the expectations of the Pastor (Associate) been disappointed? How?
- Will it be necessary to modify your expectations? How might that happen?

Intentions

The exercise of free will generates INTENTIONS.

Parties sometimes harbor opposing intentions. This creates conflict.

In order to resolve conflict we need to assess party intentions.

- What have you intended or wanted to BE, DO, or HAVE?
- What has the other party intended or wanted to BE, DO, or HAVE?
- Has your intention to BE something been blocked? (Describe)

- Are you blocking another's intention to BE something? (Describe)
- Has your intention to DO something been blocked?
- Are you blocking another's intention to DO something?
- Has your intention to HAVE something been blocked?
- Have you blocked another's intention to HAVE something?
- Have you assessed your intentions against the baseline Will of God?
- Does your exercise of free will align with the Will of God?
- Will you need to modify your exercise of free will and your intentions?

Areas of Conflict

Consider the various settings in which conflict has arisen.

As you assess each setting, reflect on the following questions:

- *In this setting does the potential for conflict exist?*
- *What conflicts might be unique to this setting?*
- *Does conflict already exist? For how long?*
- *Have expectations have been disappointed?*
- *Have intentions been opposed?*
- *What interests need to be satisfied?*

Parish Management

- Is there a dispute regarding *scheduling*?
- Is there a dispute regarding the assignment of *responsibilities*?
- Is there upset regarding how *decisions are made*?
- Are different *working styles* causing conflict? (Employee vs. Entrepreneur; Hierarchal or Collaborative; Collegial or Corporate)
- Has disagreement arisen over the role of the *Pastor* or the role of the *Associate*?
- Is there a dispute concerning the *oversight of a specific ministry*?
- Are other aspects of parish management generating conflict? Describe.

Rectory Life

- Is there a disagreement regarding *accommodations*?
- Has conflict arisen regarding meals? (Menu, preparation, dining, etc.)
- Has a clash emerged regarding *personal amenities*?
- Has a policy regarding *hours* or *restrictions on entry/exit* emerged?
- With regards to *courtesy / civility / kindness* has conflict arisen?
- Are there disagreements regarding the *rectory guest policy*?
- Has a rectory *decision-making style* caused friction?
- Have *cultural differences* caused upset with regard to living conditions?
- Has *illness or stress* caused conflict?

Liturgy

- With regard to liturgical celebration has conflict arisen concerning *autonomy / oversight / mentoring / or supervision*?
- Has the *music ministry* been a source of conflict?
- Has there been disagreement regarding *homiletics*?
- Have there been disputes regarding *guest celebrants*?
- Has the *scheduling* of Masses caused a dispute?
- Have parish evaluations (complaints / special requests) caused upset?
- Are other issues regarding the liturgy causing conflict?

Prayer Life / Spirituality

- Has there been a clash of *personal views* regarding *theology*?
- Is a *religious order background* clashing with a *diocesan background*?
- Is there disagreement regarding time spent in *shared prayer*?
- Have views regarding the value and need for *retreats* caused friction?
- Has conflict arisen with regard to issues related to *spiritual direction or counseling*?
- Have other factors having to do with *spiritual life* caused conflict?

Human Factors

- Has *gossip, detraction, or covert hostility* been the cause of conflict?
- Has *confusion or doubt* caused upset?
- Have disagreements arisen over a vision of *personal Mission*?
- Have *differing goals or visions* of your vocation caused a clash?
- Have an individual's *personal challenges* led to conflict?
- Have *cultural differences* made it difficult to get along?
- Are there other concerns in the area of human relations?

Dispute Resolution

- Is there a need for additional *training in peacemaking*?
- Are you hindered by *personal shortcomings* that cause conflict?
- Do you tend to display *habitual responses* to conflict?
- Do you have adequate knowledge of *diocesan protocols & processes*?
- Do you take advantage of liaison & collaboration with the *Vicar's Office*?
- Are you clear on the difference between *mediation and judicial hearings*?
- Do *cultural differences* require additional Face Work and negotiation?
- Are you comfortable with your knowledge of *Canon Law*? Do you anticipate needing representation?

Negotiation

How comfortable are you when it comes to negotiating the exchange of valuables, tangible and intangible?

Are you comfortable with the idea of *divine collaboration*? Every negotiation balances self-interest, the interests of others, and the Will of God. During negotiation parties seek mutual satisfaction of interests, needs, and desires. How comfortable are you with your negotiating skills?

Barriers to Negotiation

Inadequate Face Work

- Are *Face Saving* issues blocking progress? Describe.
- Is there a need to *Restore Face*? For you or the other?
- Is a party too focused on *Protecting Face*?

- Is there a need to manage *Narrative Accounts* that serve to Protect Face? Are face-saving alterations of the story blocking trust?
- Has someone been *made wrong*? Has their *survival been threatened*?
- Is there a need to validate a party's ability *to be right*?

Insufficient Assessment

- Do the *actual interests* of the parties remain unknown?
- Have *incorrect interests* been assumed?
- Are party interests *not aligned* with the Will of God?
- Have incorrect intentions or interests been attributed to a party?

Lack of Knowledge or Skill in Negotiation

- Do you suffer *fear or uncertainty* with regards to negotiation?
- Do you *lack skill* in negotiation?
- Do you *lack experience* negotiating?
- Has there been a failure to employ a *collaborative* approach?

Interference of a Hidden Third Party

- Are the covert actions of a *hidden influence or destructive third party* driving conflict?
- Has the *actual cause* of conflict been overlooked?
- Does someone *intend to destroy relationships*?
- Do *hidden influences* remain unknown, unexposed?

Confusion or Counter Intention Among Stakeholders

- Is there a *lack of consensus* among team members?
- Do team members harbor counter intentions with regard to team goals?
- Is a *destructive third party* causing dissent among the stakeholders?
- Have you failed to properly assess *stakeholder interests*?