

**GETTING TO YES:  
BRINGING MICHAEL & GABRIEL  
TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE**

Recent conflicts on campus and efforts to move the conflict into a mediation process have prompted me to write this article. Resolving conflict may require acting in counter-intuitive ways.

**“GETTING TO YES”**

In their classic text, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, Fisher and Ury describe four principles for effective negotiation. Fisher and Ury explain that a good agreement is one which is wise and efficient, and which improves the parties' relationship.

Principled negotiation provides a way of reaching good agreements. Fisher and Ury develop four principles of negotiation. Their process of principled negotiation can be used effectively on almost any type of dispute. Their four principles are 1) separate the people from the problem; 2) focus on interests rather than positions; 3) generate a variety of options before settling on an agreement; and 4) insist that the agreement be based on objective criteria. [Book summary written by Tanya Glaser, Conflict Research Consortium.]

*Getting to Yes*, and many alternative dispute resolution processes, take conflict out of the legal arena and offer more constructive means for reaching agreements and maintaining relationships. Fisher and Ury offer very helpful strategies for dealing with uneven power differentials and “trickery.” They do not, however, address some very basic differences in personality types. Presumably a skilled facilitator will take these differences into account and compensate for them. But if we're not self-aware, mediation can produce very unsatisfactory results.

**MICHAEL & GABRIEL**

Michael and Gabriel refer to the archangels of the Bible (see Jude 1:9; Rev 12:7; Luke 1:19, 26). Mary Baker Eddy describes the different roles these two angels represent.

The Old Testament assigns to the angels, God's divine messages, different offices. Michael's characteristic is spiritual strength. He leads the hosts of heaven against the power of sin, Satan, and fights the holy wars. Gabriel has the more quiet task of imparting a sense of the ever-presence of ministering Love. These angels deliver us from the depths. (Science & Health 556:29-3)

Together, Michael, the warrior angel, and Gabriel, the peace angel, deliver us from the depths. Each of us expresses the qualities of the fighter and of the lover. When these archetypes of God's messages take on their shadow qualities, however, there are opportunities for introspection and growth.

Each of us will encounter conflict. Some are energized by conflict and approach it with a "bring it on" attitude; these I refer to as the warriors. Others find conflict troubling and seek to sidestep or minimize it; these I refer to as the peace-makers.

### **WARRIORS MEET WARRIORS IN CONFLICT**

The strengths of a warrior personality are courage, strength, and valor.

When warriors feel threatened they will gird up their loins and prepare for a mighty battle knowing that God's Truth is a mighty sword.

When conflict arises between warrior personalities they know how to confront each other head-on and the strength of their conviction carries them forward without flinching. They respect the other's courage and forthrightness and can frequently leave the battlefield as friends.

### **PEACE-MAKERS MEET PEACE-MAKERS IN CONFLICT**

The strengths of a peace-maker personality are compassion, nurturing, and healing presence.

When peace-makers feel affronted, they will turn the other cheek and forgive, trusting that God's infinite love is reflected in love.

When conflict arises between peace-makers they know how to slow down, listen, reach for understanding and find new common ground. They are able to resolve conflict peacefully and strengthen their relationship.

### **WARRIORS MEET PEACE-MAKERS IN CONFLICT**

Conflict between warrior personalities and peace-maker personalities can be a recipe for disaster. If warriors are not cautious, they may win the battle and lose the war by destroying the very thing for which they are fighting. If peace-makers, on the other hand, are not wise, they can be completely taken advantage of.

When warrior and peace-maker personality types meet each other in conflict they must employ new strategies. Each must have the courage and discipline to make choices that feel counter-intuitive.

Warrior personalities must use the discipline of warriors who know when to draw their weapon and when to put it down. If warriors massacre an entire village of innocents, no matter how great the cause, they have lost. When in conflict with a peace-maker, it is not necessary for warrior personalities to forsake all weapons, but they must have the discipline not to use weapons when they are not necessary. The manner in which warrior personalities get manipulated is to accuse them of being weak—ironically, this accusation usually comes from within their own ranks, or within their own thoughts. When this happens, warriors must simply look within and ask, do I have the strength to do what is right? If the answer is yes, then the demand is to continue to engage without going after the kill.

Peace-maker personalities must call forward the warrior within and make firm demands for justice at each juncture. It is not necessary for peace-makers to sling arrows, but they must have the courage to stand still when arrows are being slung at them and not back down. Peace-makers are susceptible to manipulation by being accused of being uncooperative or unreasonable, frequently this comes in the form of their own self-doubt. When this happens, peace-makers must simply look within and ask, am I willing for this conflict to be resolved? If the answer is yes, then the demand is to continue standing for Principle.

The inevitability of conflict is clear. The usefulness of conflict is to call forth those angel messages of both Michael and Gabriel. Warriors must listen for and heed the directives of Gabriel angel messages. Peace-makers must muster the courage to follow the leadings of Michael angel messages. It is true that our enemies are our most valuable teachers. Let conflict be the proving ground that brings out the best of our highest selves.