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**A Faith-Based Approach
to
Cultivating Harmony With(in) Faith Organizations
and
Resolving ConflictsSM**



Abstract of Presenter's Script (plus Session Handout)



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A Presentation to The Virginia Mediation Network (VMN) Convention
Convention Theme: *"Paths to Cultivating Harmony"*

A Faith-Based Approach to Cultivating Harmony With(in) Faith Organizations and Resolving ConflictsSM

- A. Introduction
- B. Main Message: Four Steps to Cultivating Harmony With(in) Faith Organizations and Resolving ConflictsSM
 - Step 1 Understanding the Needs and Barriers
 - Step 2 Your Value Proposition and Compelling Offer
 - Step 3 A Guide to Maintaining Community HarmonySM
 - Step 4 The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM
- C. Conclusion: "So, What's Next?"

A Faith-Based Approach to Cultivating Harmony With(in) Faith Organizations and Resolving ConflictsSM

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

- Disciple Paul's instructions in Romans 12:18 (NIV)

SIGNALS AN IMPORTANT POINT



IN PRESENTATION

A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- **Acknowledgements**
 - Virginia Mediation Network and Session Sponsor
- **Review of Presentation –**
 - **What NOT to Expect**
 - A Sermon
 - A “Magic Wand”
 - **What TO Expect**
 - An approach to cultivating a relationship with a faith organization
 - A Faith-Based Mediation Agenda for resolving conflicts

1. Who and What?

A) What are two basic goals this presentation aims to achieve for conflict resolution practitioners?

1. How practitioners can:
 - a. Create relationships with faith organizations, and
 - b. Use a 7-Step Faith-Based Mediation Agenda

B) Who will benefit? It will benefit conflict resolution practitioners who desire to:

1. Cultivate conflict-resolution relationships with faith organizations, and
2. Offer faith-based mediation to all age groups, especially the elderly.

C) What “Tools” will be explored? Four tools a practitioner can use to:

1. Help faith organizations develop A Guide for Maintaining Harmony within their community, and
2. Conduct faith-based mediation to help people of faith resolve conflict.

2. Background Information

A) What is Faith-Based Mediation?

Faith-based mediation blends religious teachings about resolving conflict into a mediation agenda.

B) What types of organizations would benefit from faith-based mediation?

As a conflict resolution practitioner, effectively and efficiently connecting with people of all ages requires more than networking and advertising on a business card, stationary, and signage. **In the case of reaching the elderly, one of the most effective ways is by creating relationships with organizations that attract and serve people of all ages, especially the elderly.**

To “narrow the field” of relevant organizations, this presentation will address faith (religious) organizations.



Before getting into the “nitty-gritty” of how to cultivate harmony withing faith organizations and conduct faith-based mediation, it’s important to point out the importance of practitioners recognizing that:

1. Many faith organizations teach **UNIVERSAL LESSONS ON HOW TO PEACEFULLY AVOID CONFLICT**, and
2. Cultivating a relationship with, and harmony within, a faith organization, requires **UNDERSTANDING, SUPPORTING, LIVING, and SPEAKING THOSE LESSONS** when interacting with the organization’s leaders and its members.

Let’s examine some of the conflict resolution lessons taught by some of the top religions and Native American cultures.

Ranked by Size in U.S.

1. Christianity:
2. Judaism:
3. Islam:
4. Hinduism:
5. Buddhism:

The Golden Rule of Maintaining Harmony

- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- What you yourself hate, do to no man.
- Do unto all men as you would wish have done unto you.
- Treat others as you would yourself be treated.
- Hurt not others with that which pains yourself.

NOTE: Native American: Live in harmony, for we are all related.



A 2023 Gallop Poll reported that 75% of Americans (250 Million) adhere to the Christian faith. Given Christian organizations' influence in the United States, I again remind you that this presentation will focus on a mediation approach that aligns with Christian religious teachings.



NOTE: It is essential that practitioners offer conflict resolution services to ALL faith communities, regardless of their population size, religious foundation, practices, teachings, and beliefs.

C) Elderly population facts. Since “Elderly Mediations” was promoted as part of this presentation, let’s briefly explore that area of interest.

1. What is the definition of “Elderly?”

- This presentation defines “Elderly” as a person **age 60 or older.**

2. How big is the elderly population?

- A 2024 **Population Reference Bureau** report projects that the current elderly population of **62 million will increase to 82 million** by 2050 (a **47% increase**), accounting for **23%** of the total U.S. population.
- A 2020 **Faith Community Today** survey showed the elderly population of Christian churches increased an additional 5% since 2008, representing **33% of an estimated 160 Million Christian church-goers.**

3. Why does the elderly population need mediation services? The number of elderly-related conflicts is increasing significantly. The **Dorcas Aid International** 2022 report (“Older People in Conflict Situations”) concluded that as the number of elderly conflicts increases, many are simply overlooked or ignored. Also, the elderly are often hindered by age-related issues that limit their ability to prepare for and deal with conflict.

While one would conclude that there appears to be a significant need for conflict resolution services within the elderly communities, the question is, “How does the practitioner reach those elderly communities?”

B. MAIN MESSAGE: Four Steps to Cultivating Harmony With(in) a Faith Organization

An effective approach a practitioner to use to cultivate a relationship with a faith organization can be summed up in two actions. **(1)** Help the organization leadership team develop a “harmony guide” for their community, and **(2)** Encourage them to engage an easy-to-understand approach for resolving disputes between its members. In many ways, the approach can be condensed into four lessons similar to those my folks taught me about raising crops on our wheat farm in Kansas.

- First, they taught me to *understand what each field needed* to produce the highest and best yield.
- Second, they taught me how to *cultivate and nurture a productive relationship between me, the seeds, and the soil.* In other words, I had to ensure I was planting seed that was healthy and clean of impurities.
- Finally, after *properly preparing the soil and planting the seed*, my folks taught me how to patiently wait before reaping the fruits of my efforts.

Today, we’ll examine the four steps a practitioner can take to develop a relationship with a faith organization.

Four Cultivating Steps

1. Understand **NEEDS** and **BARRIERS**
2. The **VALUE PROPOSITION** and **COMPELLING OFFER**
3. **The GUIDE to MAINTAINING COMMUNITY HARMONYSM**
4. **THE FAITH-BASED MEDIATION AGENDASM**

Your Actions

- **Research and Analysis**
- **Plant Good “Seeds”**
- **Prepare the “Soil”**
- **Gather the “Fruits”**


1. Understanding the NEEDS and BARRIERS

In addition to understanding the conflict issue(s) and expectations of the parties, Faith-Based Mediation also requires understanding the religious teachings that guide the parties' thinking, behavior, and lives.

In other words, to help parties resolve their “human differences,” the practitioner must understand the faith teachings that:

- **Bind the parties together as believers, and**
- **Instruct them on how to resolve their conflicts.**

Gaining an understanding of these teachings begins with examining the needs and barriers associated with an organization and its members.

 **The NEEDS:** Religious organizations need to resolve their conflicts as internal conflicts compromise the effectiveness of their ministries, missions, and community harmony.

70% of the estimated 350,000 Christian churches encounter conflict among members of all age groups! This suggests that, despite their teachings on love, forgiveness, harmony, and reconciliation, conflicts within Christian organizations offer practitioners an opportunity to provide faith-based mediation.

A 2024 **Christianity Today** survey reported that **72%** of the approximately **350,000 Christian churches** and **95% of pastors** reported conflicts within all member age groups (an increase over the **64%** reported in 2020). **The Conclusion: It appears that many Christian communities experience significant levels of conflict.**

Also, the Christian community has a large elderly population that attends church regularly. According to **ChurchAnswers.com**, the **median age of the 160 million** church-going Christians ranges **between 50 and 60, with 54%** attending live church services multiple times a month. It's important to note that religious organizations highly value and respect the contributions of their elderly population. As expressed in **Psalm 92:14: “Even in old age, they shall produce fruit; they will remain vital and green.”**

The contributions of elderly prayer, Bible study, benevolence, volunteerism, compassion, and dedicated support are critical to the success of religious ministries and missions.

Given its population size and high percentage of conflict, Christian organizations are a prime candidate for faith-based mediation, especially among its elderly population.

However, reaching organizations that best suit a practitioner's ability to serve a faith organization's needs and its elder population requires **RESEARCH!**

In addition to Wikipedia.org and CauseIQ.com, multiple websites provide data on the number of churches and religious organizations categorized by state and county. This can help practitioners identify and analyze organizations that best align with their capacity to serve.

Additional analysis of the data will also help practitioners answer questions such as:

1. What specific religious organizations can benefit most from faith-based mediation services?
2. Does the data on the organizations I want to build relationships with include all age groups, not just the elderly?
3. Do I have the resources to expand my services to all age groups, including the elderly?
4. Do I prefer to specialize in providing dispute resolution services exclusively for the elderly?
5. Do I need to collaborate with other practitioners to serve age groups other than the elderly?
6. Do I need to collaborate with an elder law attorney?



THE BARRIERS: As noted earlier, based upon the teachings of some major religious groups in the United States (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism), they **should excel** at resolving conflict. Unfortunately, **they do not**.

Regrettably, in addition to **lacking the skills to resolve conflict**, many religious communities **struggle to effectively address and openly admit to conflicts**. Overcoming this struggle presents a common challenge for practitioners who want to assist religious organizations handle their conflicts.

Additional reasons include religious leaders being more comfortable handling religious matters than dealing with interpersonal issues. This could contribute to their **reluctance to confront and manage conflict**. Also, church members may not **trust** their leaders to address their conflict competently or in a trustworthy manner. As a result, many leaders are **ill-prepared to manage conflicts** within their organizations. Instead, they may often choose to **avoid or overlook conflicts**, hoping that they will resolve themselves.

Delay and inaction do not resolve conflicts. On the contrary, like a contagious disease, the longer a conflict is ignored, the greater the chances of its consequences spreading beyond the disputing parties and infecting the entire church community. Such delays can result in the disputing parties contracting and spreading **The 7-R VirusSM**.

The 7-R VirusSM leads disputing parties to:

- **Recall** the incident emotionally! (with negative impact)
- **Repeat** the negative impact (worrisome days and sleepless nights)
- **Regret** ever dealing with or associating with the other party(s)
- **Recruit** supporters and their opinions (the virus begins to spread ... *"If I were you, I'd..."*)
- **Resent** the entire experience (replace rational thinking with emotions)
- **Revenge** by attacking the person, not the problem! (*"I want my pound of flesh!"* etc.)
- **Recycle The 7-R VirusSM** (until it achieves a divisive, critical mass within the community!)

It is crucial to recognize that church leaders and members **frequently postpone addressing a conflict** until it has escalated to the **Revenge stage**.

Furthermore, they often **expect immediate and positive outcomes** following mediation or restorative justice sessions. If a practitioner fails to meet those expectations, they risk **being criticized** and **becoming the victim** of the leaders' blame and frustration.

Hence, it is crucial to educate church leaders about the faith-based mediation process and its potential outcomes. This way, their expectations can be managed to minimize disappointment with the initial outcome as, even an effectively prepared mediation could be criticized if it doesn't meet the church's expectations.



2. Creating the Value Proposition and Compelling Offer

- **Your Value Proposition** addresses an ongoing problem the organization doesn't want to deal with and needs a solution to resolve it.
 - A practitioner's **Value Proposition** addresses the organizations ongoing problem of dealing with conflict and its negative impact it has on their missions, ministries, and community harmony.
 - **Scripture Reference*** (e.g., emphasizes using scripture teachings when resolving conflict):
 - “All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in the righteousness”
 - 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)
- **Your Compelling Offer** encourages the organization to adopt your recommended approach to solve its ongoing problem.
 - A practitioner's **Compelling Offer** should include two offers. The practitioner's willingness to:
 1. Assist the Christian organization create *A Guide to Maintaining Community HarmonySM* and
 2. Provide Faith-Based Mediation to resolve conflict within the organization.
 - **Scripture Reference*** (e.g., emphasizes forgiveness):

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

 - Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

***NOTE:** Support and validate your **Value Proposition** and **Compelling Offer** with religious teachings.



3. A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM

A Compelling Offer should include A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM

(Template)

A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM

“I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfected united in mind and thought.” - 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV)

(6-P’s for Maintaining Community HarmonySM)

A. Introduction – To include the Guides: Purpose – Goals - Benefits

B. 6-Ps for Maintaining Community Harmony

- 1. Prayer:** Encourage leaders and members to pray for help in improving and maintaining community harmony
- 2. Purpose:** Organization leaders share the organization’s “Value Proposition and Compelling Offer” with its members
 - To support the needs, core values, mission, and vision of the organization
 - To enhance interpersonal and community harmony by encouraging forgiveness and reconciliation
 - To enable leaders and members to more fully focus on, and engage in, its ministries and missions
- 3. Policy:** Includes provisions defining:
 - What constitutes a conflict and when a conflict should be addressed (“Quicker is Better!”)
 - Who should be (and will be) involved throughout the process of resolving a conflict
 - That the policy for proactively and peacefully resolving conflict applies to all members of the organization
 - That the Biblical teachings of Matthew 18:15-18 (and 19-20) will be applied when resolving a conflict
- 4. Protocol:** Defines the steps for managing a conflict, including:
 - Engaging a 3rd Party Mediator to conduct a faith-based mediation
 - Disputing parties agreeing on a church leader to manage their conflict, to include the leader’s authority to:
 - Witness mediation session(s)
 - Disclose information about the conflict if “forgiveness and reconciliation” are not achieved.
 - Defining the actions and potential consequences if a conflict is not peacefully resolved between parties
- 5. Process:** Defines The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM, including:
 - Identifying the parties participating in the process
 - Reinforcing that the Community Harmony Policy applies to all community members
 - Disclosure of confidentiality guidelines and ground rules
 - Review of the 7 -Steps of The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM
- 6. Prayer:** Encourage leaders and members to prayer for continued harmony within their community

C. Implementation Timeframe (A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM)

D. Conclusion – To include a review of:

- The Community Harmony Guide
- Reinforcing its benefits to the organization and its members

Presenting a guide template to the organization’s leadership team will help them develop a 6-P’s document that aligns with the needs, core values, mission, and vision of the organization. In addition to the template helping the leadership team envision the benefits of being more fully focused on its missions and ministries, it will also serve as a step towards developing a deeper relationship between the team and the practitioner.

4. Using The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM

As an indispensable asset, The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM provides a 7-step agenda (acronym **ALL CLEARSM**) that aligns a mediation process with spiritual guidance. It blends the verses of Matthew 18:15-18 into an easy-to-understand agenda to be followed during a faith-based mediation.

Many books in the Christian Bible (Proverbs, Matthew, Romans, Ephesians, Timothy, and James, to name a few) address managing and resolving conflict. However, **Matthew 18:15-18** provides specific Biblical guidance for handling conflict. It describes the process the disciples were taught for dealing with sin-related conflict "When one Christian sins against another Christian."

Let's begin by applying a "**layman's interpretation**" to understand the mediation process prescribed in **Matthew 18:15-18**.



Interpreting Matthew 18:15-18 (Plus Verses 19-20)

(NLT – New Living Translation)

Verse 15 If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person.

(Step 1 – Approaching the offender in private might make it easier for them to admit to the sin and repent.)

16 But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses.

(Step 2 – If the offender refuses to confess and repent, approach the them again in the presence of witnesses whom they respect. Doing so will also validate the issue being addressed.)

17 If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat that person as a pagan or corrupt tax collector.

(Step 3 – "Widen the circle" by involving the church community and offering the offender two choices: (A) repent and remain a member of the community, or (B) be rejected from membership in the community.

18 I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.

(Step 4 – Disciples are reminded that they are granted the authority of the kingdom.)

Verses 19-20 (Reinforcing the Need for the parties to Forgive and to Reconcile) *"I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."*

The first step in blending **Matthew 18:15-18** into The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM is by ensuring that the parties understand:

1. the **7-Step Agenda** (acronym **ALL CLEARSM**), and
2. **Verses 19-20** (to emphasize the Need for the parties to **Forgive and Reconcile**.)



Pre-session Preparation

In addition to all parties understanding their roles and responsibilities, it is also important that they understand what is involved in faith-based mediation.

Similar to preparing for any mediation, it's important to hold a pre-session meeting with each party to discuss, among other topics, the:

- ALL CLEARR AgendaSM,
- Confidentiality guidelines,
- Roles (of parties, mediator, and observing leader),
- Ground rules, and
- Potential outcome(s) of Faith-Based Mediation.



NOTE: It's also important to emphasize that Faith-Based Mediation begins and concludes with prayer.

While preparing for a session, the practitioner should also determine if the parties have:

- Reviewed, and are willing to comply with, the provisions in A Guide for Maintaining HarmonySM.
- Any questions about the actions and consequences defined in Matthew 18:15-18 (plus the encouragement emphasized in verses 19-20).
- Identified a respected leader within the organization to manage their dispute and attend mediation.
- Attempted "peaceful conversations" to resolve their conflict.
- Prayed for a successful resolution of their conflict.
- Opened their minds and hearts to achieving forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Identified any special accommodations they may require (mobility, access, hearing, interpreter, etc.).

Discussing and gathering this information should better prepare all parties for a mediation focused on creating a positive atmosphere compatible with the religious teachings of the organization.

Blending Matthew 18:15-18 into The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM is summarized in the seven-step acronym **ALL CLEARSM**.

 Matthew 18:15-18 (NLT – New Living Translation) <i>(When one Christian sins against another Christian)</i>	
Open Mediation with Prayer	
ALL CLEARSM – The 7-Step Mediation Agenda	Verses
1- ALL parties have privately met and engaged in “peaceful” conversations to resolve the conflict.	15- <i>“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person.”</i>
2- Convene with a mediator and a respected organizational leader 3- Listen to each other’s positions and recommendations 4- Evaluate recommendations, resolve conflict (Forgive) & shake hands 5- Analyze how to (6) Reconcile and (7) Restore the relationship	16- <i>“But, if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses.”</i>
Close Mediation with Prayer	
 HOWEVER... (If the conflict is not peacefully resolved – Mediation ends) Action: The leader who observed the session(s) takes the unresolved conflict to the membership	
6- Repent (the entire membership body appeals to the offender to repent) 7- Reject (the sinner/offender from church membership)	17- <i>“If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat the person as a pagan or corrupt tax collector.”</i>
Verse 18 – “I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”	
Verses 19-20 (Reinforcing the Need for the Parties to Forgive and to Reconcile) <i>“I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.”</i>	

Again, understanding and conducting faith-based mediation requires practitioners to familiarize themselves with religious teachings about forgiveness and reconciliation.

Or, in the words of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, understanding that:

“Without Forgiveness, there can be No Reconciliation!”

C. CONCLUSION – So, What’s Next?

This presentation explored four steps a conflict resolution practitioner can take to help religious organizations cultivate harmony within their communities and conduct faith-based mediation. The four steps are:

1. Understanding the Needs and the Barriers.
2. Creating a Value Proposition and Compelling Offer.
3. Providing A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM, and
4. Using The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM.

Understanding the “culture, beliefs, and teachings” of a faith organizations enables a practitioner to create a Value Proposition, Compelling Offer, and The Community Harmony GuideSM that aligns with the organizations religious teachings.

Doing so also establishes a foundation upon which the practitioner can create a closer relationship with the organization and its leadership team.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, it is essential to recognize that major religions address the need to peacefully resolve conflict. Consequently, practitioners are encouraged to offer conflict resolution services to all faith communities, regardless of their religious foundation and beliefs.

A Closing Poem

St. Peter and The Mediators

Saint Peter sat at the Heavenly Gate to welcome Mediators, both Early and Late; to All, he put questions so he might know Whether to send them Above or Below.

“Whilst Come Thou Strangers”, Saint Peter said; and the Man & Lady, thus addressed, proudly raised up their heads. “Sir! We are FAITH MEDIATORS”, they made reply.

“Ah, FAITH MEDIATORS you say”, and a twinkle irked in Saint Peter’s eye and he made answer in tones that were terse. “Welcome my FAITH MEDIATOR FRIENDS to the Whole Universe!”

“Your place will be 10 Golden Avenue, up near the Dome; enter and make yourself fully at home; and, should you choose to go slumming in Hell; or anywhere else, you could go there as well; for you will not be disturbed by the temperatures there.

For FAITH MEDIATORS can go Anywhere!”

Chuck Boles, M.A.

“Helping Others Make Their Lives BETTER Than They Can Do for Themselves!SM”



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ATTACHMENT – PRESENTATION HANDOUT

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Presentation Handout



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Helping Others make their Lives BETTER than They can do for Themselves!SM

A Faith-Based Approach to Cultivating With(in) Faith Organizations and Resolving ConflictsSM

This presentation outlines four steps practitioners can take to cultivate relationships with(in) faith organizations and includes an agenda for conducting faith-based mediation.

This indicates an important point in  the Presentation!

A. Introduction and Background

1. **Who? and What?** For conflict resolution practitioners who desire to cultivate relationships with faith organizations and offer faith-based mediation services.
2. **Background Information:**
 - a. What is Faith-Based Mediation? Faith-based mediation *blends* religious teachings about resolving conflict into a mediation agenda.
 - b. What types of organizations would benefit from faith-based mediation? _____
 - c. Elderly population facts: _____

B. Main Message: Four Steps to Cultivating a Relationship with(in) Faith Organizations

A. Understanding the Needs and Barriers

- a. **Needs:** _____
- b. **Barriers:** _____



The 7-R VirusSM leads disputing parties to:

- **Recall** the incident emotionally! (with negative impact)
- **Repeat** the negative impact (worrisome days and sleepless nights)
- **Regret** ever dealing with or associating with the other party(s)
- **Recruit** supporters and their opinions (the virus begins to spread ... *"If I were you, I'd..."*)
- **Resent** the entire experience (replace rational thinking with emotions)
- **Revenge** by attacking the person, not the problem! (*"I want my pound of flesh!"* etc.)
- **Recycle** The 7-R VirusSM (until it achieves a divisive, critical mass within the community!)



2. Creating and Validating Your Value Proposition and Compelling Offer

- a. Your **Value Proposition** addresses a problem the organization doesn't want to deal with and needs a solution to resolve it. (*"All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in the righteousness"*) – 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)
- b. Your **Compelling Offer** is a recommendation that the organization adopt your approach to solve its ongoing problem. (*"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?'"* Jesus answered, *"I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."*) – Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)



3. An important part of a Compelling Offer is A Guide to Maintaining Community HarmonySM

(a.k.a. The 6-P's of Maintaining Community HarmonySM)

(Template)

A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM

The 6-Ps of Maintaining Community HarmonySM

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfected united in mind and thought." - 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV)

(6-P's for Maintaining Community HarmonySM)

E. **Introduction** – To include the Guides: Purpose – Goals - Benefits

F. **6-Ps for Maintaining Community Harmony**

7. Prayer: Encourage leaders and members pray for help and guidance in reducing conflict to improve and maintain community harmony

8. Purpose: Organization leaders share the organization's "Value Proposition and Compelling Offer" with its members

- To support the needs, core values, mission, and vision of the organization
- To enhance interpersonal and community harmony by encouraging forgiveness and reconciliation
- To enable leaders and members to more fully focus on, and engage in, its ministries and missions

9. Policy: Includes provisions defining:

- What constitutes a conflict and when a conflict should be addressed ("Quicker is Better!")
- Who should be (and will be) involved throughout the process of resolving a conflict
- That the policy for proactively and peacefully resolving conflict applies to all members of the organization
- That the Biblical teachings of Matthew 18:15-18 (and 19-20) will be applied when resolving a conflict

10. Protocol: Defines the steps for managing a conflict, including:

- Engaging a 3rd Party Mediator to conduct a faith-based mediation
- Disputing parties agreeing on a church leader to manage their conflict, to include the leader's authority to:
 - Witness mediation session(s)
 - Disclose information about the conflict if "forgiveness and reconciliation" are not achieved.
- Defining the actions and potential consequences if a conflict is not peacefully resolved between parties

11. Process: Defines The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM, including:

- Identifying the parties participating in the process
- Reinforcing that the Community Harmony Policy applies to all community members
- Disclosure of confidentiality guidelines and ground rules
- Review of the 7 -Steps of The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM

12. Prayer: Encourage leaders and members to prayer for continued harmony within their community

G. **Implementation Timeframe** (A Guide for Maintaining Community HarmonySM)

H. **Conclusion** – To include a review of:


- The Community Harmony Guide
- Reinforcing its benefits to the organization and its members

NOTES: _____

4. The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM

Resolving conflicts: "When one Christian sins against another Christian"

- Blending Matthew 18:15-18 into The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM is summarized in the seven-step acronym ALL CLEARSM.

<u>The Faith-Based Mediation Agenda</u> SM (NLT – New Living Translation – "When one Christian sins against another Christian")	
Open Mediation with Prayer	
ALL CLEAR SM – The 7-Step Mediation Agenda	Matthew Verses 18:15-18 (Plus 19-20)
1- ALL parties (Offended and Offender) have privately met and engaged in conversation to resolve the conflict.	15- "If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person."
2 - C onvene with a mediator and a respected leader 3 - L isten to each other's positions & recommendations 4 - E valuate recommendations & resolve conflict (Forgive) 5 - A nalyze how to (6) R econcile & (7) R estore the relationship	16- "But, if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses."
Close Mediation with Prayer	
 HOWEVER... Mediation ends if the conflict is not peacefully resolved. <div style="text-align: center;">ACTION</div> The leader who observed the session(s) takes the unresolved conflict to the membership.	
6 - R epent (the entire membership body appeals to the offender to repent) 7 - R eject (the offender from church membership)	17- "If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat the person as a pagan or corrupt tax collector."
Verse 18 – "I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."	
Verses 19-20 (e.g., Enforcing the Need to Forgive and Reconcile) "I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."	

"Without Forgiveness, there can be No Reconciliation!"

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu - Nobel Peace Prize Recipient

NOTES: _____

B. Conclusion: "So, What's Next?"

In addition to conducting faith-based mediation, creating and cultivating relationships with(in) faith organizations can be challenging.

Understanding the "culture, beliefs, and teachings" of a particular faith, how to create a Value Proposition, Compelling Offer, and The Community Harmony GuideSM (not to mention mastering each step of The Faith-Based Mediation AgendaSM) requires understanding, time, patience, practice, and on-going application. It also requires an audience of faith leaders receptive to your proposal and your conflict resolution services!

This presentation focused on helping practitioners establish long-lasting relationships with (and within) organizations of faith and integrate their faith teachings into a mediation process suitable for all age groups.

Finally, it is essential to recognize that all major religions address the need to peacefully resolve conflict. Consequently, ALL practitioners are encouraged to offer their conflict resolution services to ALL faith communities, regardless of their religious foundation and beliefs.

In appreciation of your interest and attention, I leave you with a poem of encouragement!

St. Peter and The Mediators

*Saint Peter sat at the Heavenly Gate to welcome Wayfarers, both Early and Late; to All, he put questions so he might know
Whether to send them Above or Below.*

"Whilst Come Thou Strangers", Saint Peter said; and the Man & Lady, thus addressed, proudly raised up their heads.

"Sir! We are FAITH MEDIATORS", they made reply.

"Ah-Ha, FAITH MEDIATORS you say", and a twinkle irked in Saint Peter's eye and he made answer in tones that were terse.

'Welcome my FAITH MEDIATOR FRIENDS to the Whole Universe!'

"Your place will be 10 Golden Avenue, up near the Dome; enter and make yourself fully at home; and, should you choose to go slumming in Hell; or anywhere else, you could go there as well; for you will not be disturbed by the temperatures there.

For FAITH MEDIATORS can go Anywhere!"



Have Questions? Contact me.

Chuck Boles, M.A.

*"Helping Others Make Their Lives BETTER Than They Can Do For Themselves!"*SM

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