Embracing Differences and Overcoming Contention

Questions to Ponder

- How do I make people feel that they belong?
- What steps can I take to embrace differences and overcome contention?

“...I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.”

Doctrine and Covenants 38:27

The task of helping others feel belong and embracing differences can be daunting as a leader. With people from different backgrounds and understanding, contention will undoubtedly arise. We will explore how to deal with these challenges.

How do I Make People Feel that They Belong?

A universal human need is a desire to belong, and it can be seen in all cultures around the world. As a leader, you will need to help foster that sense of belonging in your organization.

Read the following articles and reflect on the following questions:
3 Nephi 11:29 Contention is of the devil
2 Nephi 26:33 All are alike unto God
"The Doctrine of Belonging" Elder D. Todd Christofferson

How has contention affected your relationships and getting things done?

What principles did Elder Christofferson teach about belonging?

**What Steps can I take to Embrace Differences and Overcome Contention?**

You will continue your reading of the Anatomy of Peace this week. We will learn and apply principles of seeing others more fully, overcoming conflict, influencing others for good, and other life-changing principles.

**Part 2: From Peace to War**

You will learn how easily a heart of war can enter into personal and work relationships.

1. Watch this video, [Outward Inclusion](#).
2. Read all of Part 2: From Peace to War (Chapters 8-14)
   - Remember to take notes as you read.
3. Watch [Critical Advice from a Conflict & Mediation Expert](#).
4. Reflect on the following, *Think about the last time you were really upset with someone you care about. While you were upset, what were your thoughts about him or her? What about after you had made up and resolved the conflict? Was the conflict good for your relationship, or bad? Is all conflict bad?*

**Part 3: From War to Peace**

In Part 3, you will learn ways to turn hearts of war to peace because individuals and organizations can change.

1. Read all of Part 3: The Heart of Peace (Chapters 15-21)
2. Watch [Listen and Learn](#).
3. You will apply these concepts in future assignments.

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**Example of Christ: The Beatitudes / Jesus Cleanses the Temple**

WATCH Sermon on the Mount the Beatitudes or READ Matthew 5:3-16. Also WATCH Jesus Cleanses the Temple or READ John 2:13-17.
What do these verses from the Sermon on the Mount teach us about the values and priorities Christ invites us to make a part of our lives?

How can these values be taught, modeled, and incorporated into a culture in which not all people believe in Jesus or in scriptures?

What does it mean to belong in a culture where Christlike values are embraced? When you have felt this kind of belonging, what were people doing that made each person feel like they belonged? When you have felt like you didn’t belong in a group, what do you believe kept you and others from feeling like they belonged?

As we begin this section, we will be focusing on various ways to generate light and drive out darkness. What can Jesus’ example of driving the money changers from the temple teach us about driving darkness from the organizations we lead? In the situations we face, how can we know how to appropriately drive out darkness in His way (usually not by overturning tables😊)?
Mini-Case: Embracing Others As A Ward

NOTE: For the following mini-case discussion, please have each member of the team act as a member of the ward council, ensuring that you have at least one person from the following organizations (as defined in the General Handbook 29.2.5).

Required Participants:

- The bishopric, ward clerk, and ward executive secretary
- Presidents of the elders quorum, Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School
- Optional Participants: The bishop may invite others to attend, such as the ward mission leader, the ward temple and family history leader, the leaders of the ward young single adult committee, the ward music coordinator, and the full-time missionaries.

As you prepare to meet, consider that you are a newly organized ward in which the only people who have been called and set apart are the members currently participating in the ward council.

Your ward has people of all ages, and you are aware of members who are experiencing challenges, including youth who are currently living the party lifestyle, homosexual members who keep the commandments and struggle to feel like they belong, divorced mothers, widows, families struggling with contention, a family whose mother is dying of cancer, a family whose father has lost his testimony and stepped away from the Church while the mother tries to keep the family connected to their covenants and faith, people struggling with sins, emotional struggles, and other unseen challenges, and families who are barely surviving financially.

You feel overwhelmed with the challenges ahead of you, but as you pray together, you also feel the peace that you can learn together, seek learning and revelation, and find ways to work miracles in the lives of the members of the ward. As you counsel together about how to organize your ward to best meet the needs of the members, consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the Church and your ward?
  - The answer to the previous question is often, “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39) If immortality is already assured through the atonement of Christ, what is the purpose of a ward and its members in bringing to pass eternal life?
- How can so few members of a ward council meet the needs of so many individuals and families?
- If you will need the help of others, how can you organize, call, and inspire others to help in the work? What have you seen work in the past? What hasn't worked?

Also, each member of the council should propose a plan for how their organization can help the ward.

Please note: You will be discussing this mini-case in your WhatsApp groups.