

Strengths:

One of my strengths in resolving conflict is taking the responsibility to express my feelings. I feel it is necessary for me to deal with my anger, frustrations, and hurts. For too long in my life, I have allowed myself to feel guilty for owning my feelings. I have grown to a point that I'm ok with what I feel and will no longer apologize for it. This does not negate the fact that I still have to take responsibility for how I express what I feel.

Physical violence is never allowed is another strength. It doesn't matter what I'm feeling, being violent is not the answer. Even as a child I did not use violence to deal with conflict. I feel that using physical violence continues to fuel the fire instead of being able to use verbal expression to resolve the issues.

I agree that the statement, "sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me" is so untrue. Name calling and derogatory statements do hurt. I can remember how I felt when people called me names. Name calling and derogatory statements have long lasting effects so I make a conscience effort to be mindful of the words that I use to express my feelings during a conflict.

Weakness:

One of my weaknesses in dealing with conflict is learning how to respond instead of react. This is difficult for me because I feel I have to always defend my position or express how I'm feeling in a passionate way. I have not always felt heard or understood so when I'm dealing with conflict, it may appear that I am being aggressive at times, due to my body language, tone and volume of my expression. I am asking God to help me not be quick to react but to step back and think before I respond to the situation. Also, when I do respond, to help me be mindful of my tone, and body language.

Another weakness in dealing with conflict is using "you" statements instead of "I" statements. Because I tend to react instead of responding, my expressions tend to be critical or judgmental. My intention is not to degrade the person but to make sure they understand how what they did or said makes me feel. I need God to help me be free from worrying about what others think of me and the need to be understood.

The Lord is still working with me to learn what fight to fight and when to choose my battles. Sometimes I feel the need to address anything that frustrates me so that I can get my point across. Sometimes I allow Satan to trick me into the trap of using the truth of scripture in the wrong way or at the wrong time. For instance, "Do not let the sun go down while we are still angry" (Ephesians 4:26), however we need to use godly wisdom to realize as Proverbs 10:19 says "when words are many, sin is not absent, but he who hold his tongue is wise." It may not be the right time to confront the issue or even necessary. This is the same trick Satan tried to use on Jesus in the wilderness.