CONFLICT & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Disentangling the People from the Problem

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?

2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

- Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (2011). Separate the People from the Problem. In *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (3ᴿᴰ ed., pp. 19–41). New York: Penguin Books.

Questions

1. What does it mean to "disentangle the people from the problem" during a negotiation?

2. Why is understanding the various perceptions of the parties to a conflict so crucial for effective conflict resolution? What suggestions do Fisher *et al* give for you to better understand the perceptions of the other party? What suggestions do they give in order for your perceptions to be better understood by the other party?

3. Why is it important to pay attention to the emotions of the parties during conflict resolution? (Hint: we have seen a lot of this already.) How do Fisher *et al* suggest you deal with the emotions of the other party? How do they suggest you deal with your own emotions?

4. Why is communication so crucial for effective conflict resolution? What three barriers to communication do Fisher *et al* identify? What solutions do they offer for these problems?

5. Putting all this together, why does disentangling the people from the problem encourage wise agreement?